This is the first sentence of my introduction. Introductions are important, as they are the only chance to make a good first impression on the audience. In this paragraph, I should get my reader’s attention with an interesting fact, statistic, or story. I should also make sure I identify my paper’s topic and scope; this may involve my thesis statement. I want to give the reader a good idea of the aspects I will be covering and why I will be covering those. I will avoid clichés and purpose statements, using meaningful attention-getters instead. It is also especially important that my introduction reflect the rest of my paper; after I draft my body paragraphs and conclusion, I will need to go back and re-read and revise my introduction to make sure everything fits.

In my first body paragraph, I will develop my first point, which will probably require me to incorporate some of my research. When I quote a source in my paper, it is as if I am inserting someone else’s voice into my monologue. If I do this without the proper transition, my writing will not flow smoothly and may not make sense to the audience (Miseon and Dolan 62). I will want to be sure to introduce sources properly by using signal phrases. As a Writing Center handout says, writers should “[i]ncorporate quotations into [their] own sentences” (“Using Sources”). In my next paragraph, I could also paraphrase or summarize a source. To do this, I would restate the idea(s) presented in my source, but I would use my own words to express those ideas (Cox).


*Note: See p. 53 in MLA Handbook, 8th ed., regarding optional elements, such as accessed date; see p. 41 for information about supplying the publisher’s name for various kinds of organizations; see p. 48 for information on the use of DOIs versus URLs.