Types of textual evidence or references include direct quotations, paraphrases, summaries and quantitative data (statistics, scales, graphs, tables, etc.). Think of utilizing textual examples as a way to back up and enhance what you are already saying, helping to expand and intensify the points you are proving in your essay or report.

**Strategies for Using Textual Examples**

1. **Introduce the textual evidence:** Provide a bridge between your ideas and the textual example using **signal verbs** and **transitional expressions**. Using the name of the author of the textual example in conjunction with a signal verb or transitional expression can also influence the type of in-text citation you must provide for certain documentation formats.

Authors of texts can

- assert
- disagree
- infer
- question
- claim
- discuss
- note
- remark
- confirm
- emphasize
- observe
- state
- describe
- express
- oppose
- suggest

**Example:** Ira Hebrun claims that “hype is an artificially engendered atmosphere of hysteria” (48).  
{MLA format}

Try using a signal verb for your textual example:

Commonly used transitional expressions:

- accordingly
- despite
- however
- of course
- although
- even though
- in contrast
- on the other hand
- besides
- for example
- in other words
- such as
- consequently
- for instance
- nevertheless
- therefore

**Example:** However, “one of the leading foundations in the field of higher education supports the recent proposal for community-run public schools” (Herrera 327).  
{MLA format}

Try using a transitional expression for your textual example:

2. **Provide the textual evidence:** Follow assigned documentation format (if not sure, ask your instructor) such as MLA, APA, Chicago Style, etc. for correct usage and accurate transcription of textual evidence. Following the textual evidence, many documentation formats require a citation (parenthetical, footnote, endnote) to provide the reader with the source from which you have borrowed the example. This also helps to identify the source in your bibliography.
Which format are you using for this assignment? ___________________________

3. **Comment and connect:** After stating the textual evidence, you should explain the relevancy of the example you have cited to your discussion.

How does the text help to support and enhance your analysis?
Explain:

What purpose is served by using this example in the context of your argument?
Explain:

What is the relevancy of this example to the argument you are making?
Explain:

Is your interpretation connected to an idea in the paragraph or to your thesis statement?
Explain:

**Want to see how it all looks together?**

As Janice Rushing and Thomas Frentz observe “to survive, a human must be technological, and to thrive, he/she must be technologically adept” (147). The new heroes of the movies cannot be sustained without the props of the modern world. Technology supplements their human frailties with cyborg prosthetics that give them an inhuman capacity for human salvation.

(This example is from “Hollywood and the Hero: Solving a Case of Mistaken Identity” by Shannon Palma, excerpted from *The New St. Martin’s Handbook* 3rd edition.)

**Remember,** choose textual examples carefully. Ask yourself, does this text advance my argument or does it merely take up space in the paragraph? Don’t let textual evidence overwhelm your points or take the place of your own explanations and interpretations.