

## Citation Matrix

A citation matrix is a tool that can be used to keep track of individual sources when writing an essay. Instead of flipping through pages of articles to remember the location of a great quote, students can use the matrix to keep all resources organized in one place. The writer can record how each source supports an argument, which is particularly helpful when writing essays that include multiple body paragraphs.

### How to Use the Citation Matrix

An example of a citation matrix is included on page 3 of this handout followed by a blank, fillable matrix on page 4. Please note that one row in the table should be used for each source in the essay. There are five columns, and the purpose of each column is explained below.

#### Column 1: Source

The first column includes the full citation for the source. The writer will want to refer to this information when writing the Works Cited or References page.

Sandhu-Longoria, Amritpal Kaur. "Looking for love? Watch out for romance scams that break your heart." *USA Today*, 17, February 2023, pg.5. EBSCOhost, research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=a33e83a7-41e5-3b74-8d14-07ae5d31fb31.

#### Column 2: Relevance to the Topic

The second column explains in one or two sentences why the source is important for the essay. Does it give background information? Does it support or challenge one of the claims?

The article presents substantial statistics and real-life examples of the risks associated with online dating, as well as social media use in general.

#### Column 3: Main Point One and Evidence

This column contains the first argument or main point. It also includes one quote or paraphrased detail that serves as evidence to support that first major idea or claim in the essay. Be sure to include a parenthetical citation with the author's name and page number if available.

By taking on these fake identities, scammers can manipulate dating app users and prey on their emotions.

##### **Evidence:**

"A California man who claimed to be a millionaire, stole \$1.5 million from 19 victims, with many of whom he had a romantic relationship" (Sandhu-Longoria).

**Column 4: Main Point Two and Evidence**

This column contains the second argument or main point. It should include a different quote or piece of evidence from the source that supports this second main point. Again, cite it properly.

While dating apps can host many scammers, it is also crucial to be aware of unfamiliar users on social media so as not to face similar consequences.

**Evidence:**

“At least 40% of people who lost money in a romance scam reported being contacted on social media, with 19% reporting they were approached on a website or app” (Sandhu-Longoria).

**Column 5: Main Point Three and Evidence**

The last column lists the third argument or main point and includes a final quote or supporting detail related to the third main idea.

When creating a dating app profile, it is vital to take precautions and be aware of other users’ behavior to use these platforms safely.

**Evidence:**

“If they try to isolate you from friends and family or request inappropriate photos or financial information, they may try to extort you, the FBI says” (Sandhu-Longoria).

Keep in mind that not every source will support all the arguments or main points — and that is completely normal. Sometimes a source is only helpful for one or two parts of the argument. The goal of this matrix is to clarify where each source fits into the essay and which sources are most useful for specific sections of the paper.

### Sample Citation Matrix

Thesis: Although online dating can be a way to socialize and connect with others, there are several safety risks such as identity fraud, catfishing, and stalking.

Source	Relevance to the Topic	Main Point One and Evidence	Main Point Two and Evidence	Main Point Three and Evidence
Sandhu-Longoria,	The article provides substantial statistics and real-life examples of the risks that come along with online dating as well as social media use in general.	By taking on these fake identities, scammers can manipulate dating app users and prey on their emotions.  <b>Evidence:</b> “A California man who claimed to be a millionaire, stole \$1.5 million from 19 victims, with many of whom he had a romantic relationship” (Sandhu-Longoria).	While dating apps can host many scammers, it is also crucial to be aware of unfamiliar users on social media so as not to face similar consequences.  <b>Evidence:</b> “At least 40% of people who lost money in a romance scam reported being contacted on social media, with 19% reporting they were approached on a website or app” (Sandhu-Longoria).	When creating a dating app profile, it is vital to take precautions and be aware of other users’ behavior in order to use these platforms safely.  <b>Evidence:</b> “If they try to isolate you from friends and family or request inappropriate photos or financial information, they may try to extort you, the FBI says” (Sandhu-Longoria).

**Fillable Citation Matrix**

Thesis:

Source	Relevance to the Topic	Main Point One and Evidence	Main Point Two and Evidence	Main Point Three and Evidence