

Incorporating Sources Practice

For this assignment you'll create a pretend paragraph for a pretend paper using some pretend evidence I made up.

Step 1: Examine the Evidence

Read over the fake evidence I made up for you, found on the next page.

Step 2: Consider the Argument

Now imagine you are writing a paragraph for an argumentative research paper about open adoptions. The paragraph you'll be writing begins with this topic sentence:

Research generally agrees that open adoptions are beneficial for the adopted child.

Consider which parts of the fake evidence will be most useful to you in backing up the claim that open adoptions are beneficial for the adopted child.

(Just so you know, "open" adoptions are those in which the adopted child can have contact with his or her birth parents. Also, please note that I have no idea what the actual effects of open adoptions are—the evidence given is entirely fake.)

Step 3: Write a Paragraph

Lastly, write the rest of the paragraph that comes after the opening line given above, incorporating the fake evidence to support the claim.

You'll need to choose carefully what to include; whether to summarize, paraphrase, quote, or mix methods; and what order to put things in to make the strongest argument in your paragraph. Also consider what background information to give about each source in order to establish its credibility with the reader.

Sarah Conner, a social worker and mother of two from Albuquerque, is in the process of adopting a young boy named John and says his adoption will be an open one, meaning John will know and have contact with his birth parents. Ms. Conner is an enthusiastic supporter of open adoptions, having been adopted herself as a baby and raised knowing her own birth parents. She described her experience this way: “Knowing who my birth mother and father were even from a young age had an enormously positive impact on my life. There were no secrets, no sense that something was being withheld from me. My adoptive parents talked with me early on and together we built a relationship that both acknowledged and benefitted from the fact that I was adopted.”

She went on to note how her relationship with her birth parents made her more empathetic than her peers: “Though I didn’t understand fully at first the reasons why my parents had given me up for adoption, and though that made for hard days sometimes, as a teenager I started to see my mother in a new light. I saw peers making bad decisions, some of which led them to similar situations my mom had found herself in with me, and this helped me understand my mother and also my friends, to appreciate the difficulty we each have growing up. This led me to my current career as a social worker.”

from Dyson, Miles. “Adoption’s Hidden Strength is in Its Openness.” *Time* (24 March 2008): 25–31. Print.

Overall, 3406 cases were analyzed—1657 were from open or semi-open adoptions and 1749 were from closed adoptions. The results of the analysis are summarized in tables 2, 3, and 4....

Children of open adoptions included in this meta-analysis exhibited overall less troubled behavior than those from closed adoptions. As table 3 shows, they were 34% less likely to have been arrested for misdemeanors or felonies, 23% less likely to have abused drugs or alcohol, 21% less likely to have exhibited antisocial behaviors, and 15% more likely to have graduated high school by the time they were 19. Additional analysis revealed that only 26% of open adoptees had had psychiatric counseling during their teens while 37% of closed adoptees had.

from Reese, Derek and Kyle Reese. “Risk Behavior and Adoption: A Meta-Analysis.” *Social Behavior Journal* 27.4 (2007): 233–256. Print.

We administered a questionnaire to former adoptees asking them to rate their experiences as an adopted child. Participants were recruited through the listservs and mailing lists of several major adoption social groups operating across the United States (see Appendix A for more info). The response rate for the questionnaire was 37%, well within the norm for this kind of instrument....

Open adoptees overall rated their experience of being raised in an adoptive home more highly than closed adoptees did. Analysis of the written responses suggests that, at least for a sizable portion of the participants, knowing their birth parents led to greater stability and satisfaction with their lives, although several noted having, in the words of one respondent, “a difficult year or two along the way.” The average response for open adoptees on a five-point scale ranging from “1 – Very unsatisfied” to “5 – Very Satisfied” was 3.8....

When asked what made their experience positive, 57% of open adoptees chose “my relationship with my birth parent(s)” among other things, making it the most cited reason among respondents....

It should also be noted, however, that a significant number of open adoptees wrote extended, often vehement responses about their negative experiences with open adoption, suggesting the need for further studies analyzing why some children respond well and other respond poorly to the system. Also, high ratings and detailed responses were not unknown among the closed adoptee respondents.

from Headey, Lena and Summer Glau. “Satisfaction with Open and Closed Adoption.” *Sociology* 36.2 (2011): 122–154. Print.