

SEVEN STEPS TO THE THE SYNTHESIS PARAGRAPH

1. Topic Sentence (topic + controlling idea)
2. Source A (quote or paraphrase)
3. Analysis of (2) - explain how this quote or paraphrase supports the author's thesis, and then explain how it supports your thesis.
4. Transition - one or two lines transitioning from Source A to Source B
5. Source B (quote or paraphrase)
6. Analysis of (5) - explain how this quote or paraphrase supports the author's thesis, and then explain how it supports your thesis (and, perhaps, how it compares with (2))
7. Summary Sentence (draw your own conclusion from your analysis of the evidence in this paragraph)

SAMPLE SYNTHESIS PARAGRAPH

Privacy and technology is an issue that finds common concern in both government and corporate mishandling of personal information, according to Thomas Colbridge and Catherine Price. In his attempt to define the parameters of reasonable privacy for citizens, Colbridge explains that US Supreme Court Justice Marshall Harlan has “established a useful two-prong test to determine if a reasonable expectation of privacy exists: (1) Do individuals have an actual (subjective) expectation that their activities will remain private? and (2) Is their subjective expectation of privacy one that society is willing to accept as reasonable (objectively reasonable)?” (377). Colbridge’s description of the “two-prong test” shows that, according to case law, privacy is both an individual and a social issue. The individual’s right to privacy is upheld only when society is willing to accept that individual’s privacy as “objectively reasonable.” This means that the government may override an individual’s expectation of privacy if the claim can be made that “society” is unwilling to accept that expectation of privacy. Colbridge suggests that because the right to privacy is objective, the individual does not have legal recourse to resist government searches. Price, however, claims that corporations are even more guilty of mishandling of private information than is the government, because there is no “two-pronged test” by which corporations might check themselves for privacy violations. Price lists data-broker websites, pizza-delivery places, and moving companies among the major violators of individual privacy, as these corporations have willingly sold medical information, purchase records, phone numbers, and addresses of their clients, simply because there is no law that prohibits such profiteering (391-2). Price claims that though citizens believe that the fourth amendment protects their privacy, corporations have recognized that the constitution only protects the right to privacy against unreasonable searches by the government; corporations are not restricted from intruding on citizens’ private lives, and many have capitalized on this loophole already. Both Price and Colbridge have demonstrated that the constitutional right to privacy seems to have been reduced to a myth. The government and the corporations have found loopholes in the fourth amendment, though the average individual seems to remain uninformed.