To avoid paragraphs like this:

- No one knows for sure what Apple will release next. Brandon Griggs cites Apple CEO Tim Cook using the phrase, at a recent press conference, “exciting new product categories.” “Many observers see those four words as further evidence that Apple is moving beyond laptops, phones and tablets into other areas of computing -- most likely a ‘smartwatch’ that could display messages, or a long rumored connected TV” (Griggs). “The clamoring is annoying and irrational—nobody knows what they want from Apple, exactly, just that they want something new, whether it’s a watch, a TV, a phablet, smart glasses, or who knows what” (Manjoo). Hopefully Apple will release something new soon.

So what’s wrong with this?
What’s wrong with the last paragraph is that there is no clear explanation for what point the paragraph was making by bringing the two different sources together.

- The sources were expected to speak for themselves, and this causes the paragraph to have no idea of its own to develop.
- Even if the paragraph did have a clear idea to develop, there was no indication for how the sources that were included develop that idea.

What’s wrong is that the source information is not synthesized.
Synthesis is the process of relating source’s ideas to each other or to your own thinking.

Consider a synthetic product as an example

- A synthetic product brings together components from different materials and creates something new through the process of combining these components.
- Synthesis does the same thing, but with ideas.

By bringing together/synthesizing ideas from different sources, you create new ideas, creating a combination of ideas that no one else has combined before.
Imagining that you have two sources that are about the same subject but from different perspectives.

1. The first step of synthesis could be to engage with the sources by considering where your sources agree or disagree with each other.
   - This is the observation stage of synthesis, where you consider what components you have and what you can make out of them.

2. Synthesis would not be complete, though, until you explain what the significance is of this agreement or disagreement.
   - This is the stage where you set to work and make something new out of the components that you have.
Engaging with sources means to read sources critically, identifying the main idea of a source but also critically considering or questioning that source.

Once you have a clear understanding of each source, the next step of synthesis is to make connections between the sources.

- Identify where the sources agree.
- Identify where the sources disagree.
- Identify where the sources are based on the same information or use the same terms.
- Identify where the sources use different information or different terms.
Start to ask questions about what you observed in the last stage. Here are some example questions:

- What is interesting about these similarities or differences?
- What is significant? What does this prove? How does this change common ideas? What is the basis of each idea?

Once you develop your own idea through answering questions, now you can synthesize your sources.

- 1. Begin your paragraph with a topic sentence that clearly states your idea.
- 2. Smoothly integrate your sources so that they flow with your surrounding paragraph.
- 3. Explain the connections between your sources, directly stating how these sources support the idea expressed in your topic sentence.
While no one knows for sure what new product Apple will release next, there is some question as to how important it is that Apple release anything new. Brandon Griggs draws significance from Apple CEO Tim Cook’s use of the phrase “exciting new product categories,” at a recent press conference. Based on Cook’s use of this phrase, Griggs states “Many observers see those four words as further evidence that Apple is moving beyond laptops, phones and tablets into other areas of computing – most likely a ‘smartwatch’ that could display messages, or a long rumored connected TV.” Griggs labels this “good news,” both for gadget lovers and for Apple’s stock price. Conversely though, Farhad Manjoo describes calls, like Griggs’, for new products “annoying and irrational.” Manjoo goes on to state “nobody knows what they want from Apple, exactly, just that they want something new, whether it’s a watch, a TV, a phablet, smart glasses, or who knows what. But I wonder if this is a giant distraction from the real story at Apple.” According to Manjoo, this “real story at Apple,” is the iPad, which Manjoo states will sustain Apple’s profits far into the future. This disagreement is significant because...
What does the first sentence of this example do differently than in the first example?

In the first example, did the voice of the author or the voice of the sources dominate the paragraph? Which voice dominates this example? What causes this difference?

How does this example cite the sources differently than in the first example and how does citing sources in this way encourage synthesis?

Where does this example explain the ideas expressed in the sources?

How could you finish off this paragraph/how could you explain what the significance of this disagreement is?