

Using Quotations

Guidelines:

Anytime you use someone's exact words, you **must** put them in quotation marks and identify whom you're quoting. Direct quotations can help support or illustrate your claims and can increase your credibility. When you use quotations, you're stressing that the exact words of the original text and/or the person you're quoting are particularly important to your point. However, quotations should be used sparingly and not as padding to lengthen your paper. They should be one or two lines or parts of lines from the original text, not whole chunks or paragraphs.

- **USE THEM. Quoting from a text is necessary support for your analysis or interpretation of a work.** They should be used as support for your own *discussion and commentary*, as a way to validate the points you make. They do not substitute for your own ideas; they enhance them.
- **INTERPRET THEM. A quotation by itself is not support.** Every person reads differently and takes different meanings from particular passages. You must explain why you chose to quote that *particular passage* and how *exactly* it supports your point. Your analysis should be *at least* as long as the quotation.
- If someone's ideas but not his/her exact words are important to your point, you should **paraphrase** rather than quote. A paraphrase should not change the ideas but it can eliminate or change words, often in order to condense a long sentence that contains details unnecessary to your point.

Quotation: *In the short story "Thanks for the Ride," Arnold Friend threatens Connie, the protagonist, by saying: "You come out here like a nice lady and give me your hand, and nobody else gets hurt, I mean your nice bald-headed daddy and your mummy and your sister in her high heels" (3).*

Paraphrase: *In the short story "Thanks for the Ride," Arnold Friend warns Connie, the protagonist, that he will hurt her mother, father and sister if she doesn't do what he wants.*

Guidelines for selecting a quotation:

Before you decide to use a quotation, ask yourself this question: Why am I using *this* passage? If you answer one of the following statements, you should include it.

- I am quoting this passage because the author's words are so impressive or so clever that to put them in my own words would lessen their impact.
- I am quoting this passage because the author's words are so precise that to put them in my own words would change their meaning.
- I am quoting this passage because the author's words are so concise that I would need twice as many words to paraphrase this passage.

Guidelines for introducing a quotation

Use signal phrases to introduce your quotations. Your readers need to move from your words to the words of a source without feeling a jolt. Avoid dropping quotations into a text without warning. Instead, provide clear signal phrases usually including the author's name, to prepare readers for the quotation.

Dropped (or widow) quotation:

California law prevents the killing of mountain lions except for specific lions that have been proven to be a threat to humans or livestock. "Fish and Game is even blocked from keeping mountain lions from killing the endangered desert bighorn sheep" (Perry B4).

Quotation with Signal Phrase

California law prevents the killing of mountain lions except for specific lions that have been proven to be a threat to humans or livestock. Tony Perry points out that, ironically, "Fish and Game is even blocked from keeping mountain lions from killing the endangered desert bighorn sheep" (B4).

Varying Signal Phrases

Model Signal Phrases

- In the words of lion researcher Maurice Hornocker, ". . ."
- As Kevin Hansen has noted, ". . ."
- Karen McCall and Jim Dutcher point out that ". . ."
- California politician Tim Leslie offers an odd argument for this view:
- Jerome Robinson answers these objections with the following analysis:

Verbs in Signal Phrases

acknowledges	believes	declares	illustrates	refutes
adds	claims	denies	implies	rejects
admits	comments	disputes	insists	reports
agrees	compares	emphasizes	notes	responds
argues	confirms	endorses	observes	suggests
asserts	contends	grants	reasons	writes

Parenthetical Citations:

At the end of your quotation, you need to tell your readers exactly where you found your quotation. You do this in a parenthetical citation, the page number in parenthesis, at the end of the quotation.

- If you cite the name of the author in the introduction to your quotation, you only need to cite the page number in your parenthetical citation:
 - Frederick Lane points out that for those not exercising self control, "the World Wide Web can be a tremendous time sink" (142).
- If you DO NOT cite the name of the author in the introduction to your quotation, you need to cite the author's name and page number in your citation:
 - For those not exercising self-control, "the World Wide Web can be a tremendous time sink" (Lane 142).

Guidelines for fitting quotations into your sentences grammatically:

Quotations need to grammatically fit into your sentence. In order to make a quoted sentence fit into the syntax of your sentence, you may need to leave out some words.

Indicate such omissions by using an ellipsis (Three dots . . .)

Alan Nelson, Commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, concludes that the Sanctuary movement is “a political movement . . . which takes advantage of the humanitarian instincts of many well intentioned people.”

You may also need to add or change a word in the original sentence in order to make the quotation fit into the syntax of your sentence. Indicate such addition or changed by putting the words in brackets [], not a parentheses.

Original Sentence: “*The cars glide through the darkness in a strange, hallucinatory parade.*”

As used: *Movie reviewer Stephen Farber commented on “the cars [gliding] through the darkness in a strange, hallucinatory parade.”*

Guidelines for Punctuating Quotations

Use quotation marks at the beginning and end of any work, phrase, line, or passage you quote from a written work.

To introduce a quotation:

- Use a comma whenever your quote is short and you’re introducing it with a phrase like “he said” or “he replied.”
- But use a colon in any of these situation: (1) when you’ve made a full statement (a complete sentence) and are now supplying a quotation to illustrate or prove it; (2) when your quotation extends past one sentence; or (3) when you’re indenting an extremely long quotation (a block quotation).

At the end of a quotation:

- Periods and commas always *go INSIDE* closing quotation marks, even if the comma or period wasn’t part of the original quotation.
- Colons [:] and semicolons [;] go *OUTSIDE* closing quotation marks. And so do exclamation points and question marks—if they weren’t part of the quotation.

Guidelines for Punctuating Titles

Use QUOTATION MARKS around titles of **short stories, essays, poems, chapter names** (parts of works).

UNDERLINE or ITALISIZE titles of **books, periodicals, newspapers, plays, movies** and **TV series** (whole works).