

Introducing Quotations

Directions: Use the following notes to help you decide how to choose and use textual evidence to best support your thesis. Once you have selected passages that support your ideas, properly integrate and format your citations.

How to Choose and Use Quotations

Use the _____ portion of a quoted passage to support your point.

Don't quote less relevant parts of a passage; use only what supports your point _____, even cutting the quote down to only the most _____ words from a sentence. This allows you the _____ in your paper to fully explain the significance of the quote. Your _____ should be the dominant one in your paper.

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly reveals her conflicted feelings about how to raise Tom when she says, **"Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says. I'm a laying up sin and suffering for us both, I know. He's full of the Old Scratch, but laws-a-me! he's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow. Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks. Well-a-well, man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble, as the Scripture says, and I reckon it's so. He'll play hookey this evening"** (Twain 74).

or →

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly reveals her conflicted feelings about how to raise Tom when she says, **"Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks"** (Twain 74). Conventions of 19th century American society dictated that one must beat or spank children to teach them lessons, but throughout his novel Twain reveals Aunt Polly's anxiety about physically abusing Tom.

Explain the quotation.

Don't assume the _____ you are using a piece of textual evidence is obvious to your reader.

For every line of a source you quote, expect to write _____ or _____ lines of your own _____ and explanation after it.

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly reveals her conflicted feelings about how to raise Tom when she says, "Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks" (Twain 74). Conventions of 19th century American society dictated that one must beat or spank children to teach them lessons, but throughout his novel Twain reveals Aunt Polly's anxiety about physically abusing Tom. Aunt Polly's "conscience" is in conflict with her "heart," like many Americans who felt forced to choose between social stability and social justice during this tumultuous time in history.

Don't change the meaning of the quotation.

Take the time to ensure that you _____ the passages you choose to support your thesis, both in their _____ in the larger work, as well as how the author may have intended the passage to be interpreted. See how excerpting just a part of Aunt Polly's monologue misrepresents Aunt Polly's complex and conflicted feelings:

Aunt Polly believes that physically abusing children is acceptable: "Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says."

Clearly the writer has misinterpreted the text here. Read the passages _____ and _____ a quote you want to use to clarify the author's intended meaning.

Integrating Quotations in Your Paper

You must consider what type of essay you are being asked to write and choose appropriate reporting verbs to introduce another author's words in your essay.

Choose an appropriate reporting verb for your paper: objective or subjective analysis.

Determine whether your assignment is asking you to be informative (objective) or persuasive (subjective) and independently, or with a tutor, decide which reporting verbs might be most appropriate to use when quoting another author: Circle three verbs that you could use to report an author's words, neutrally. Underline three verbs that offer an opinion about an author's words.

Acknowledges	Cautions	Continues	Explains	Notes	Remarks
Addresses	Charges	Criticizes	Expresses	Objects	Replies
Adds	Claims	Critiques	Finds	Observes	Reports
Admits	Clarifies	Declares	Grants	Offers	Responds
Advises	Compares	Demonstrates	Identifies	Opposes	Reveals
Agrees	Complains	Describes	Illustrates	Points Out	Says
Analyzes	Concedes	Determines	Implies	Posits	Shows
Announces	Concludes	Disagrees	Indicates	Postulates	Specifies
Answers	Concurs	Discusses	Insists	Presents	States
Argues	Confirms	Disputes	Interprets	Proposes	Suggests
Asks	Considers	Elaborates	Introduces	Raises	Thinks
Asserts	Contends	Emphasizes	Maintains	Refutes	Translates
Believes	Contests	Examines	Mentions	Rejects	Writes

MLA convention requires that you write in _____ tense.

Integrating Verbs into Quotations

Sentence Format	Objective	Subjective
_____ phrase with a colon: "...” (Matis 104).	Influenced by extensive research, scientists agree that the theory holds true so far: "...” (Mungawa 7)	Garcia criticizes Lelands’s logic: "...” (12).
Using an introductory phrase and _____ "...” (Jones 23).	McGain asserts , "...” (222). "...” Barber observes (56).	Always the gentlewoman, Barret only implies her opponent’s idiocy when she cautions , "...” (118).
Using phrases to "_____ the sentence” (Cruz 17).	Elia claims no impartiality and agrees he is “not the right person to make this decision.”	Brown obstinately believes that “all errors of this type are unacceptable.”

Properly Formatting Quotations in MLA Format

Once you have selected quotes that support your ideas, proper citation of their sources is important in order to avoid plagiarism or misrepresentation of information. The following examples are excerpted from the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (6th ed.), section 3.7.

Integrating Quotations

Quotes need to be integrates into your own writing – here are three ways to incorporate quotes:

- Shelley held a bold view: “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).
- Shelley thought poets “the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).
- “Poets,” according to Shelley, “are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).

Block Quotations

Use “block quotes” if the quote you are using runs more than _____ lines in your paper.

Block quotes are introduced with a _____, each line is indented _____ tabs’ length, and the quote does not require _____. The parenthetical reference is included at the end, _____ of the final punctuation:

At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to the now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (186)

Special Punctuation

If the quote includes question or exclamation marks used by the author, include that special punctuation, but maintain the capitalization, lower case letters, and periods of your own writing:

- “How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe. . . ?” wonders the doctor in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (42).
- Dorothea Brooke responds to her sister, “What a wonderful little almanac you are, Celia!” (7).

Quotations within Quotations

Use single quotation marks to indicate quoted dialog or text within a passage you are quoting:

- “Read ‘Kubla Khan,’” he told me.

Editing Quotations

If you remove words from a quote that you cite,* replace those words with an ellipsis: three periods with a space between each (. . .). If the ellipsis falls at the end of a quotation, omit the first space.

- In surveying responses to plagues in the Middle Ages, Barbara W. Tuchman writes, “Medical thinking . . . stressed air as the communicator of disease, ignoring sanitation or visible carriers” (101-02).
- In surveying responses to plagues in the Middle Ages, Barbara W. Tuchman writes, “Medical thinking, trapped in the theory of astral influences, stressed air as the communicator of disease. . . ” (101-02).

* *If you edit an author’s words, be sure that you honestly represent the author’s ideas, and maintain correct grammar.*