

Integrating Quotations



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Research writing requires you to respond to information found in books, articles, and other media. You can do this by using quotes, or selections from reliable sources, to prove your argument. When used well, quotes lend credibility to your ideas, demonstrate your engagement with the current academic debate on your essay topic, and clearly cite the original author.

Quoting Guidelines

- *Know what you want to prove and make sure the quote supports your point.
- *Keep in mind that quotes DO NOT speak for themselves. Although the meaning of the quote may be obvious to you, its significance must be explained to the reader.
- *Integrate quotes seamlessly into your writing by quoting only what you need and by using “signal phrases” and active verbs to lead into the quotation.

The Quotation Sandwich

When integrating a quote into your writing, try to think of it like putting together a sandwich. Just as the meat of your sandwich is placed between two pieces of bread, your quote also needs to be surrounded by both a lead-in and a follow-up.



Lead-in: Explain to the reader who the author is and/or set up what the quote says.

Quote: Insert your quotation into the text by placing quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quoted lines.

Here is a great example of a properly prepared quotation sandwich:

Poe sets a particular tone in his macabre poem by choosing none other than a raven for his titular bird, sometimes infamously known as “the devil bird,” an animal closely associated with black magic. One author, Byrd Howell Granger, believes that “The ‘many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore’ may very well be books of black magic which the protagonist studies in order to raise the ghost of his beloved” (50). If readers take Poe’s insistence that the arrival of this bird on a dark night is no mere coincidence, particularly because this student pours over old, occult books, one begins to wonder just what sort of knowledge he seeks. It is not clear that the scholar is looking for some means to bring his long-lost love, Lenore, back from the dead?

Turn Over →

*Adapted from: *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (2006)

Integrating Quotes, Cont'd

There are many ways to introduce quotations into your work. Here are three methods:

1. Make a statement that puts the quote into context. This statement should be followed by a colon.

Example:

Reilly concludes that Poe provides us an in-depth look into the psyche of the main character: "All the evidence in the story points to the likelihood that the narrator is a victim of paranoid schizophrenia" (Reilly 18).

2. Use your quote to create a complete sentence.

Example:

Born in 1809 to "a pair of traveling actors," Poe's life was filled with more than his share of grief, tragedy, and heartache (Blair 2).

3. When introducing a quotation, use a signal phrase—a phrase leading into a quotation—followed by a comma.

Example:

In his analysis of the story, Jamil Mustafa remarks that, "This narrator, like others in Poe's tales, is unnamed and possibly unreliable" (1).

Sample signal phrases

In the words of literary critic Harold Bloom, "..."
As the theorist Erik Erikson suggests, "..."

"...", suggests the author, "..."
Brown argues his opinion, insisting "..."

Sample signal verbs

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

Quotations within Quotations

When dealing with a quote within a quote, single quotation marks appear around the second quote.

One author, Byrd Howell Granger, seems to believe that "The many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore' may very well be books of black magic which the protagonist studies in order to raise the ghost of his beloved" (50).

Ellipsis

Remember that being concise is the key to quoting well. When you want to remove non-essential words or ideas from a quote, use an ellipsis.

"We learn from the outset of the story that he has been a 'reveler upon opium'...and his account of bizarre goings-on there might be explained by drug use—or it might not" (Mustafa 1).

For more information on integrating quotations, consult *Rules for Writers*, 7th ed., pgs. 448-456.