

WORKING WITH QUOTATIONS

Requirements for Using Quotations

Firstly, ensure that you need to quote in the first place! As a rule of thumb, only quote directly from a text when it is important for your reader to see the actual language used by the author of the source. Otherwise, you should paraphrase the source using your own words.

Once you're sure that you need to quote, remember that for every quotation used in your writing, you need a *lead-in*, *citation*, and *analysis*.

1. Lead-In

The lead-in prepares your reader for the source material you are about to reproduce. Give the author's full name the first time you introduce a source. After that, use the last name only. When necessary, give background or context to your quotations to help orient your reader.

2. Citation

Cite *every time* you quote. Punctuate all of your citations correctly following the guidelines of your chosen citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.).

3. Analysis

Don't let your quotations *speak for themselves*! When you quote, you should treat the quotation as a piece of evidence that needs to be analyzed as well as introduced and presented. A good rule of thumb is that your analysis should be *at least* as long as the length of the quotation.

Incorporating Quotations

An important part of the writing process is choosing how much and how you need to quote.

Remember that you need to fit quotations into your sentence's grammatical structure by:

- Changing your sentence structure to fit the quotation
- Using only part of the quotation
- Deleting words that impede the grammar with ellipses
- Adding words to aid the grammar or clarifying pronouns with square brackets

Note: Be sure only to cut, adjust, or ellipsis quotations in order to adjust grammar—*not* ideas!

Types of Quotations

Block Quotations

- Used for long passages that will be examined at length
- Used sparingly
- Indented and separated with an extra return line before and after the quoted material
- No quotation marks

- Block quote example:

Imprisoned by his duty to the Patusan natives as well as by his self-imposed exile in response to his failure at the Patna, Jim finds himself in the very position which Brown fears the most. Brown, at their meeting, provokes him:

[Y]ou talk as if you were one of those people that should have wings so as to go about without touching the dirty earth. Well—it is dirty. I haven't got any wings. I am here because I was afraid once in my life. Want to know what of? Of a prison. That scares me, and you may know it—if it's any good to you. I won't ask you what scared you into this infernal hole. (Conrad 278-279)

Brown and Jim, as detailed earlier, share that same blood and are confronted with, at this moment, the same prison of Patusan, and a similar, if not identical history of fear. Together they make two sides of the same coin, and their meeting is marked by their mutual, uncanny recognition. Brown says that Jim acts as though he had “wings so as to go about without touching the dirty earth”; Jim, who has already been linked to one of Stein's butterflies, is like, but not like, Brown's beetle, who crawls over the “dirty earth” that Jim professes to rise above. Brown, unlike Jim, is not a romantic, but perhaps is (or at least was) “one of us” (Conrad 1).

Short (One- to Two-Line) Quotations

- Located within a paragraph of your own writing (if longer than five lines of your paper, or several lines of poetry or dialogue, it should be block quoted)
- Used to articulate ideas in the voice of your source
- Requires quotation marks
- Short quotation example:

Brown, like Jim, lays claim to a respectable origin: “They never failed to let you know, too, that he was supposed to be the son of a baronet” (Conrad 256).

Quote Weaving

- Short phrases, key terms, or important descriptive language from the original source that is excerpted and contained within your own sentence
- Efficient way to indicate where you are borrowing key terms and descriptive language without interrupting your own analysis
- Requires quotation marks
- Quote weaving example:

It is “solemn, and a little ridiculous too,” Marlow notes, how both men, despite their white and British privilege in the sea-faring South-Pacific, are “terribly” affected by the same fatal flaw: that of the “assumption of its [the moral identity's] unlimited power over natural instincts” (Conrad 59).

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