

# *Using Sources Tutorial*

## **Tutorial 22: Using Quotations**

**Referencing and Introducing Quotations**  
**Punctuation with Quotations**  
**Explaining Quotations**

This Tutorial includes two files:

- **Lesson (22a\_Using\_Quotations\_Lesson)**

In order to learn the material presented in this tutorial more effectively, as you read you should take notes in a place that you can reference later. If it is convenient, you could print the tutorial and annotate it so you can keep it for future reference.

- **Exercises (22b\_Using\_Quotations\_Exercises)** – located in the same area as the lesson)

- It has highlighted areas for you to answer the exercises using an application such as Adobe Acrobat Reader.
- Download and save this file as your own; you will share it with an instructor after you complete the lesson and exercises.

Please contact the Writing Center with any questions or difficulties:

[csmtwc@smccd.edu](mailto:csmtwc@smccd.edu) or 650-574-6436.

## **Integrating Sources into Your Own Writing: Using Quotations**

*Most college courses require students to summarize readings. Writers use ideas, facts, or quotations from other authors when writing a paper to develop, analyze, and interpret the points they are making in their essays. Keep in mind that the purpose of using such sources is to **support** your ideas and to **show** that you have thought in depth about an issue. Before using sources, such as books, articles, or essays, know how to do the following:*

- summarize an author's writing (see Tutorial 21, *Summarizing*)
- paraphrase from the author's writing (see Tutorial 23, *Paraphrasing*)
- quote from the author's writing

This tutorial will demonstrate strategies for:

- 1. using quotations**
- 2. introducing quotations**
- 3. punctuation with quotations**
- 4. explaining quotations**

We will go over the following steps to help you incorporate quotations into your writing.

### **Steps in Quoting**

1. Decide to use a quotation when the author's words are more powerful than a paraphrase would be.
2. Introduce or lead into the quotation so readers know whose words are being quoted and where the words come from.
3. Copy the exact words of the original.
4. Enclose the quotation in quotation marks and identify the author, title, and page or line number(s).
5. Explain or react to the quotation so that readers understand its connection to other points in your essay.

## **Part One: Using Quotations**

Quotations increase your essay's credibility and validate and support the points you are making.

**Quotations, however, do *not* substitute for your own ideas.** Use quotes sparingly, usually no more than one-fifth of your essay.

Consider these two example paragraphs with quotations:

Example 1: Some people argue that media violence teaches children important life lessons. “The world is uncontrollable and incomprehensible; mastering it is a terrifying, enraging task. Rage can be an energizing emotion, a shot of courage to push us to resist greater threats, take more control, than we ever thought we could. But rage is also the emotion our culture distrusts the most. Most of us are taught early on to fear our own. Through immersion in imaginary combat and identification with a violent protagonist, children engage the rage they've stifled, come to fear it less, and become more capable of utilizing it against life's challenges.”

In your notes, explain what is wrong with Example 1.

Example 2: Some people argue that media violence teaches children important life lessons. According to comic book author Gerard Jones in “Violent Media is Good for Kids” in *Mother Jones*, “Through immersion in imaginary combat and identification with a violent protagonist, children engage the rage they've stifled, come to fear it less, and become more capable of utilizing it against life's challenges.” Watching violent media can help children learn how to deal with their anger, realize they are not helpless, and practice overcoming real-life struggles.

Now write in your notes what improved in Example 2.

Example 1's paragraph consists of an extremely long quotation, yet we do not know who wrote it, what source it is from, or what part of the quotation proves the paragraph's point, because the writer lets it substitute for his or her own ideas and does not explain the quote afterward.

Example 2 is a better paragraph because the writer chooses a clear, precise quotation, introduces the author and source, and explains how the quotation proves the topic sentence's point.

It takes practice to know how to use quotations effectively. First, determine whether you should quote or paraphrase to express an author's argument or ideas. Use quotations if the author's words are:

- so clear and concise that you would need to double the words to paraphrase the text.

- so engaging and clever that to paraphrase them would lessen the impact.
- so precise that paraphrasing them would change the meaning.

Rather than paraphrasing from an original text, quoting may allow readers to see, in full, what another author has said about a topic. This can be especially crucial if you are analyzing the author's tone, style, or choice of words, or quoting an authority on the material and want to include the author's voice in an essay.

From what we have discussed, when is it better to use a quotation than to paraphrase? Write the answer in your notes.

**Principle I. Decide whether the author's argument or ideas work better as a quotation or as a paraphrase.**

After you decide what you will use as a quotation, you need to use the proper punctuation. When using an author's words, use quotation marks ("quote") to show that the words came from another source. It is important to give the author's first and last name the first time you mention them.

**Principle II. Use quotation marks when using someone else's exact words. Even if it is only a single word, identify the author of the original text, and put the page number in parentheses.**

Let's look at some examples that illustrate Principles I and II.

Original text from Celeste Fremon's book, *G-Dog and the Homeboys*:

Mexican street gangs have existed in L.A. since at least the 1940s when adolescent *pachucos* of the zoot suit generation used their flamboyant style of dress to stake out identity, as family dislocation and despair invaded the city's barrios. (excerpt from page 17)

Example 3: Celeste Fremon writes, "**Mexican street gangs have existed in L.A. since at least the 1940s when adolescent *pachucos* of the zoot suit generation used their flamboyant style of dress to stake out identity, as family dislocation and despair invaded the city's barrios**" (17).

Example 3 uses an entire sentence by the author, gives her first and last name, surrounds her words with quotation marks, and puts the page number in parentheses. The author, Fremon, writes an engaging and vivid sentence; since she uses precise vocabulary specific to cultural slang and clothing, it would be difficult to paraphrase, so we quoted her entire sentence. Now consider another example that illustrates Principles I and II.

Original text from Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt's book, *The Pact*:

If we have succeeded at all in helping to turn even a single life around or in opening a window of hope, then this book was well worth our effort. (excerpt from page 4)

Example 4: Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt write that if their story inspires others by turning one urban youth away from life on the streets and **“opening a window of hope,”** they have achieved their goal (4).

Example 4 uses a short, quoted phrase by the authors in quotation marks, gives their first and last names and the page number in parentheses, and builds our own paraphrased sentence around the quotation. Because the original text was something that we could easily put in our words, we did so, but we kept a phrase in quotations that seemed to give a sense of the authors' voices. In our own sentence, we also added important background information that was not in the original.

**Please open your 22b exercises file and complete Exercise 1.**

## **Part Two: Introducing Quotations**

The first time that you quote a source, you can choose from these two formulas:

**Formula A: In + title, + author(s) write(s), + “quotation” (page).**

In “Protecting Your Car From Flying Birds,” in *Urban Life*, Bill Baxter and Amy Hansen write, “Pigeons are often considered to be disgusting vermin” (82).

**Formula B: According to + author(s) in title, + “quotation” (page).**

According to Bill Baxter and Amy Hansen in “Protecting Your Car From Flying Birds” in *Urban Life*, “Pigeons are often considered to be disgusting vermin ” (82).

**Principle III.** The first time that you quote from a text, use both the first and last names of the author, the title of the source, and the page number.

### Punctuating Titles

You may have noticed that sometimes titles are in italics and sometimes they have quotation marks around them. What does this mean? Simply, whenever something is a longer work that is published on its own like a newspaper, magazine, book, music album, or a movie, you put it in italics. (When you use handwriting, underline the title to indicate italics.) Whenever something is a shorter work that is published inside something like an article, essay, song, speech, or a poem, you place quotation marks around its title.

**Principle IV.** Titles of longer works such as *books* or *periodicals* are italicized (or underlined when handwritten), but titles of shorter works like “articles” or “essays” require quotation marks.

**Please open your 22b exercises file and complete Exercise 2.**

### What to Do When Quoting from a Source You Have Already Cited in Your Essay

After the first time that you mention an author and cite the sources, simply use the last name of the author when you introduce the quote. You also do not need to put the author’s last name in the parenthesis with the page number.

Example: Baxter and Hansen state, “Pigeons are often considered to be disgusting vermin” (82).

**Principle V.** When you mention the author for the second time in your essay, use last name(s) ONLY. If the author’s name is part of the introduction to the quotation, you do *not* need to add the name to the page number in parentheses.

When you introduce a quotation without giving the author's name, place the last name in the parentheses before the page number. One way to remember this is to recall that the author's last name needs to be somewhere (either **before the quotation** or **after it** in parentheses):

Child advocates agree with the founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund when **she concludes**, "A nation that doesn't stand up for its children is a nation that is failing. I think we're going to hell because a child drops out of school every nine seconds, a child is arrested every fourteen seconds, every twenty-five seconds a child is born to an unmarried mother, and in the richest nation on earth the economy is booming and we let a child be born into poverty every thirty-two seconds" (**Edelman 705**).

Online sources normally do not contain page numbers, so if you are quoting an article from the web, just put the author's last name in parentheses, so that your source is clear.

According to comic book author Gerard Jones in "Media Violence Is Good For Kids," children need creative and imaginative ways to feel powerful: "What we call 'creative violence' – head-bonking cartoons, bloody videogames, playground karate, toy guns – gives children a tool to master their rage" (**Jones**).

**Principle VI. When you do not use the author's name before the quote, put the author's last name with the page number in parentheses after the quotation. If the source is online and has no page numbers, just put the author's last name.**

When introducing quotations, be sure to use a verb that is appropriate to the context. Is the author making an observation, drawing a conclusion, stating a belief, or arguing a point? By choosing the appropriate verb, a writer can make an author's position clear.

We can introduce quotations with more descriptive verbs such as the ones in the following list, when they logically fit the author's attitude toward the information.

acknowledges	claims	notes	reveals
adds	concludes	observes	says
agrees	contends	points out	states
argues	declares	questions	suggests
asserts	explains	remarks	thinks
believes	implies	replies	writes

**Please open your 22b exercises file and complete Exercise 3.**



## **Part Three: Punctuation with Quotations**

### **Making Changes to Quotations**

Sometimes it may be necessary to make changes in the quotations so that they fit smoothly and logically into our sentences. Be very careful that changes made in a quotation do not alter its original meaning.

When removing words from the quotations, insert **an ellipsis** to show that words have been removed and be sure the sentence makes grammatical sense without the words.

**An ellipsis looks like this:**     ...

Original text from page 401 of Bill Barley's *Scientific Wonders I Have Known*:

After the successful cloning of Dolly the sheep, more and more people became attracted to the possibilities of this new science. At the same time, many were worried about the serious consequences that might ensue if cloning fell into the wrong hands, with some speculating about such catastrophes as the duplication of musician Kenny G. Soon, new laws were being created to prevent any potential abuse.

Example showing text with ellipses:

As Bill Barley explains in *Scientific Wonders I Have Known*, "After the successful cloning of Dolly the sheep, more and more people became attracted to the possibilities of this new science . . . with some speculating about such catastrophes as the duplication of musician Kenny G." (401).

- When adding your own words to the quotations, enclose the new words in **brackets [ ]**, so that readers know what changes you have made and the sentence makes sense:

Original text from page 33 of Helen Keller's "The Most Important Day":

It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought . . . and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

Example showing text with brackets:

According to Keller, "It would have been difficult to find a happier child than **[she]** was as **[she]** lay in **[her]** crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought . . . and for the first time longed for a new day to come" (33).

**Principle VII.**      **These are two ways to make changes to quotations from the original.**

**Use ellipses ... when removing words from the original quotation.**

**Use brackets [ ] when adding or changing a word to the original quotation.**

- When introducing a quotation that contains the author or speaker's whole sentence, use a comma before the quotation, except when you use "that."

**Without "that":**

In President Obama's July 13, 2012 remarks in Roanoke, Virginia, **he states**, "If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help."

- When introducing a quotation with the word "that," never use a comma between "that" and the quotation.

**With "that":**

In the book *How to Sue Your Own Grandmother*, lawyer Rex Limbergh **notes that** "some people feel that ethical concerns should prohibit us from trying to profit from friends and relatives, but such people are typically unthinking bleeding hearts and should not be taken seriously."

**Principle VIII.**      **Place a comma before the quotation if you quote the whole sentence, but DO NOT use a comma if you use "that" before the quotation.**

**Please open your 22b exercises file and complete Exercise 4.**

### **Part Four: Explaining a Quotation**

When using a quotation, you must always explain the quote's significance to your topic. Point out the ways in which a quotation either argues against or confirms the point you are making. But remember the **reaction or explanation must *always* immediately follow the quote**. After the quote, begin your reaction in a new sentence. You can question what the author says, restate it, criticize it, disagree with it, show how it relates to your experience or to another concept, explain its significance, or give an example

of it. A good rule of thumb is that your explanation should be approximately twice the length of your quotation. Examples of reactions to quotes appear in boldface below.

Example 1: Television violence has an effect on some children's violent behavior. In Ulysses Torassa's article "Kids Less Violent After Cutting Back on TV," Professor James Garbarino claims, "There is clearly a link between television violence and aggression in children. However...it probably accounts for only about 10 percent of children's aggression" (21). **Garbarino admits that there is a link between television violence and aggression in children, but it is relatively small. For this reason, people should not blame television violence for children's violent behavior, if roughly only 1 out of 10 instances are due to media influence. But Garbarino does not fully explain the statistic, so it is unclear how violent those aggressive acts actually are.**

Example 2: Even if a student does not intend to use a weapon, people can get hurt. For example, in the article "Girl Critical," Juan Ramos describes an incident in a Los Angeles school where two students were shot when a gun went off inside a backpack when a student dropped it. John Deasy, the deputy superintendent of the school district says, "He literally dropped his knapsack on the desk and it went off" (6). **In this incident, the student may not have intended to hurt anybody, but accidents can happen with deadly results; therefore, no weapons should be allowed in school no matter the intent or circumstance. There should be no exceptions, and weapons in schools should be completely banned.**

Example 1 begins with a topic sentence that proves the writer's point and follows with a first reference formula that gives the author and source's information. After the quotation, the boldface sentences explain the writer's reasoning that people cannot point to T.V. violence as the cause of children's aggression when an expert says it only "probably accounts" for 10 percent of children's violent actions. Because drawing conclusions from such a vague statement is difficult, the writer notes that the reader may still have questions that the expert's quotation did not answer.

Example 2's topic sentence makes a point about how weapons can still injure people accidentally. In the following sentence, the writer prepares the reader for the quote by sharing an example of a time that occurred in an L.A. school. This smoothly leads into introducing a school official's quote, which the writer follows with an explanation of how the student made the mistake of being careless with a firearm that discharged and hurt two other students; thus, the writer uses this quotation to reaffirm the argument that weapons at school should be completely banned.

**Principle IX. Immediately follow every quotation with your explanation and reaction. Make clear how the quotation relates to your topic and proves your point.**

**Please open your 22b exercises file and complete Exercise 5.**

### **Final Activity**

**Instructions:**

1. Review a classroom essay that you have completed that uses quotations. Do you notice any incorrect patterns such as not introducing the quotation? Maybe you need to review how to punctuate titles or write page numbers? Do you have adequate explanation after each quotation that ties back to the point you want to prove? Perhaps you think your reaction to the quotation makes sense, but your teacher wants more analysis? Comparing your quotations to the example in this tutorial will also help you realize if you are missing anything.
2. Make an appointment for a conference with an instructor working in the Writing Center. To make this appointment, sign up using the same method you use to make essay conference appointments. Be sure to include a comment or note that you are meeting about a tutorial.
3. During this appointment, the instructor will make sure you understand the concepts covered in this tutorial, answer any questions that you might have, review your answers to the exercises, and check to see if you can incorporate the skill into your writing.