

Incorporating Research into Writing: Direct Quotes

A direct quote uses the source's exact words.

Those words may be written or spoken. A direct quote always requires an in-text citation.

- 1. Always have a good reason for using a direct quote.** Otherwise, paraphrase or summarize. For more on paraphrasing and summarizing, see handout “Incorporating Research into Writing: Summarizing and Paraphrasing.” Consider using a direct quote when:
 - a.** The source author has made a point so clearly and concisely that it cannot be expressed more clearly and concisely.
 - b.** A certain phrase or sentence in the source is particularly vivid or striking or especially representative of some phenomenon you are discussing.
 - c.** An important passage is sufficiently difficult or rich that it requires you to analyze it closely, which in turn requires that the passage be reproduced so the reader can follow your analysis.
 - d.** A claim you are making is such that the doubting reader will want to hear exactly what the source said. This will often be the case when you criticize or disagree with a source; your reader wants to feel sure you aren't misrepresenting the source. And you need to quote *enough* of the source so the context and meaning are clear.
- 2. Do not allow quotes to “speak for themselves”.** Your research paper is ultimately about communicating **YOUR IDEAS**. Your research simply helps prove or support these ideas. So you will need to...
- 3. Always make sure you provide an analysis of the quote.** Show your readers that you understand how the quote relates to your ideas by analyzing its significance.
- 4. Avoid dropped quotations.** A dropped quotation is dropped into a paper as if it came from nowhere.

Example: Many people believe that the residents of homeless shelters are just lazy and unmotivated, but such a view may be too simplistic. “Most people who end up in homeless shelters are suffering from schizophrenia, clinical depression, or posttraumatic stress syndrome” (Moriarty 115).
- 5. Use signal phrases to introduce the source material.**

Revised Example: Many people believe that the residents of homeless shelters are just lazy and unmotivated, but such a view may be too simplistic. **According to a recent study by Daniel Moriarty, a Stanford psychologist,** “Most people who end up in homeless shelters are suffering from schizophrenia, clinical depression, or posttraumatic stress syndrome” (115)
- 6. Choose your introductory verb carefully.** If you want a neutral verb, try using these: *writes, says, states, observes, suggests, remarks,* etc. If you want to convey an attitude or emotion, try using verbs such as *laments, protests, charges, replies, admits, claims,* etc.
- 7. Do not use quotes as padding.** If quotes do not have adequate analysis, readers will feel that you don't have a grasp on what that quote means, and they also might feel that you are using quotes as “filler” to take up space.
- 8. You do not need to quote or cite common knowledge information.** For example, you do not need to cite that the earth revolves around the sun or that George Washington was the first U.S. president.
- 9. Avoid wordy or awkward introductions to a quote.**

Example: In Simone de Beauvoir's book *The Coming of Age*, on page 65 she states, "The decrepitude accompanying old age is in complete conflict with the manly or womanly ideal cherished by the young and fully grown." (65).

Revised Example: In *The Coming of Age*, Simone de Beauvoir contends that, "the decrepitude accompanying old age is in complete conflict with the manly or womanly ideal cherished by the young and fully grown" (65).

10. Combine quotes with a paraphrase.

Example: In her critique of soap operas, Tania Modleski argues that some view television as "a vast wasteland" and soap operas as "the least nourishing spot in the desert" (123).

11. Use a few words of a quote for effect.

Example: As William Kneale suggests, some humans have a "moral defense" which is never punctured no matter what the moral treatment (93).

Rules for Punctuating Quotes

Short Quotations:

- If your quotations are *four lines or fewer*, place them in your text and enclose them with quotation marks.
- Remember to include a *parenthetical citation* for each quotation used!
Example: Pearl, who is Hawthorne's symbol of truth, reaches a proportionately happy conclusion, becoming "the richest heiress of her day, in the New World" (243).
- If your quote is *not* introduced with an author's name, put that name in the parenthetical citation.
Example: For example, "One finds violence, hostility and aggression everywhere, including TV, the movies, and in many of our everyday social relations" (Zigler 40).

Long Quotations:

- If a quotation of prose is *more than four lines long*, set it off from your text by indenting.
- If a quotation of poetry is *more than three lines long*, set it off from your text by indenting.
- Introduce the quotation with a complete sentence and a *colon*.
- Indent *1 inch, double space* the lines, and *do not use* quotation marks.
- Include the citation in parenthesis at the end of the quotation *after* the period.
- Do *not* indent the opening line unless the quote begins a new paragraph.
- Use long quotations sparingly, and be sure to follow them with your own analysis or commentary.

Example: Nelly Dean treats Heathcliff poorly and dehumanizes him throughout her narration:

They entirely refused to have it in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no more sense, so, I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it would be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's door, and there he found it on quitting his chamber. Inquiries were made as to how it got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house. (Bronte 78)

Ellipses:

- Use an ellipsis to shorten quotes by removing unnecessary material. Be sure that the new sentence makes grammatical sense and that you are not distorting the original idea of the quote.
Example: "Even to take drugs once or twice," Diamond writes, "I must be strong enough to get past...the misery of my first hangover" (199).