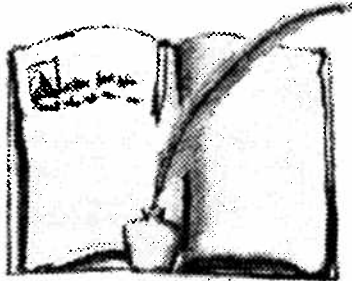


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USING AND INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

Using quotations in your academic writing is in many cases necessary; effectively employed, quotations can also greatly enhance your text. Quotations, however, must be used sparingly, skillfully, and intelligently. This handout is intended to assist you in developing skillful and intelligent ways to incorporate quotations in your writing.

- I. Use quotations sparingly, and only when you have a good reason to do so.
 - (a) Use quotations when the point of your own writing is to discuss features of someone else's writing.

Example:

The remaining six lines of "Second Winter," by contrast, create images that effectively cancel the hope, arrest the movement, and dim the warmth and colour of the octave. In five lines, beginning with the warning word "suddenly," the sestet reduces the vibrant world created by the octave to a winter void that seems doubly chilling because new life has been aborted. Here, the "climate" is a "traitor" that causes "honey" to be "stiffen[ed] in the honeycomb, and the sun to be "frozen." The language used evokes images of cruelty and murder: the "sweet fluid in the stem" of plants is not merely frozen, it is "strangled," while the sun is fixed in a "crown of thorns," suggesting the cruelty of the Crucifixion.

- (b) Use a quotation when the source you are quoting makes a point so eloquently that to paraphrase it would be to do it an injustice.

Example (compare these two sentences):

- Albert Einstein once commented that “Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.”
 - Albert Einstein once commented that inspired people have always been cruelly thwarted by others who lacked their imagination.
- (c) Use a quotation when the words of a recognized authority will add credibility to your treatment of the topic at hand.

Example:

- For those of you scientists who feel that your writing should be deliberately obscure, it is worth noting that Albert Einstein, himself, once advised writers that “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.”
- (d) Use quotations when the only way to avoid inviting mistaken interpretations of your sources is to let those sources speak for themselves.

Example (compare these two sentences):

- In an essay comparing the advantages with the disadvantages of new telecommunications technology, commentator Arthur Black points out that Bell Canada will soon make its response time to telephone calls even faster.
 - In an essay comparing the advantages with the disadvantages of new telecommunications technology, commentator Arthur Black writes, “Bell expects to shave an average of two seconds off the time it takes to respond to a call. Whoopee.”
- (e) Use quotations in support of, but not as the substance of, your own thesis statements.

Compare these two thesis statements:

- The following essay will argue that formal education “makes a straight-cut ditch of a free, meandering brook” (Thoreau, 1950, p.____).
- The following essay argues that the danger inherent in formal education is that it forces learners to reject idealism and far-reaching goals in pursuit of the practical and the particular. As Thoreau once wrote, such education often “makes a straight-cut ditch of a free, meandering brook” (1850, p.____).

II. Keeping principle #1 in mind, include in your text only that portion of a quotation which is genuinely necessary. Indicate that you have eliminated unnecessary information by using ellipses.

Please refer to the attached article, “We’ve forgotten how to play,” as you peruse the use of ellipses in the sentences that follow.

- Black deconstructs the cell phone ad as such: “The moral... is that any business person who doesn’t have a cellular phone... just isn’t committed, business-wise.”

* Ellipses are not needed around single quoted words or phrases; they are required, though, to indicate any omitted material within a quoted phrase.

- Black satirizes the effort the new technology is saving us when he refers to the “hernia-threatening” phone directories we’ll no longer need to use.
- The author concedes that privacy in the cell-phone age is “harder to maintain” than it used to be.

but

- Black paints a picture for us of “four... Business Types” who are “striding... toward the camera.”

If quoted material ending with ellipses comes at the end of your sentence, use a fourth dot to indicate the necessary “period.”

- Black objects to technology that forces people to “talk[] directly to a computer...”

But note: If an in-text citation is to follow your quotation, the period with which you

end your sentence will not be part of the ellipses; it will go at the end of your course citation:

- The author objects to technology that forces people to “talk[] directly to a computer...” (Black 16).

III. Introduce quoted material into your text with *attributive phrases*. Such introductions alert your reader to the fact that someone else’s ideas are about to be presented, contribute to the coherence of your writing, and assist you in leading your reader to see your purposes for including the quotation.

Again referring to the attached article, “**We’ve forgotten how to play,**” please compare these two attempts to integrate quoted material into one’s prose:

- Black deplores the fact that technology is gradually divorcing us from physical engagement with our everyday undertakings. “Imagine. Pretty soon we won’t need our fingers any more. We can have them surgically removed at birth.”
- Black deplores the fact that technology is gradually divorcing us from physical engagement with our everyday undertakings, warning that “Pretty soon we won’t need our fingers any more. We can have them surgically removed at birth.”

Clearly, the second passage more smoothly integrates the writer’s prose and the quoted material, and it does so in good part by using the **attributive phrase** “warning that.” Following is a list of other verbs you may find helpful in constructing attributive phrases.

(next page)

Verbs That Help You Attribute Quotations

Attributive phrases use verbs in the present tense. To vary attributive phrases, you might consider verbs such as these:

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| adds | denies | rejects |
| agrees | derides | relates |
| asks | disagrees | reports |
| asserts | disputes | responds |
| believes | emphasizes | reveals |
| claims | explains | says |
| comments | finds | sees |
| compares | holds | shows |
| concedes | illustrates | speculates |
| concludes | implies | states |
| condemns | insists | suggests |
| considers | maintains | thinks |
| contends | notes | warns |
| declares | observes | writes |
| defends | points out | |

(Taken from: Rosen, L., and Behrens, L., *The Allyn and Bacon Handbooks, 2nd Edition*, Instructors Annotated Edition, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1994, p. 585.)

* Remember, too, that varying the placement of attributive phrases improves the flow of your writing. Consider the following passage:

In an essay decrying our preoccupation with keeping ourselves busy 24 hours a day, columnist Arthur Black cites Wordsworth's classic lines "The world is too much with us; late and soon" to question the virtue of technological advancements in the field of telecommunications. To the claim that "any business person who doesn't have a cellular phone... just isn't committed" to his or her job, Black counters, "I actually have a life outside of my work." And, he goes on to proclaim, "I like it that way."

Black is not a Luddite, strictly speaking. Presumably he composes his essay on a word processor, for publication in newspapers across the nation. But while acknowledging that "all this stuff represents 'progress,'" he still finds himself wondering "What's the rush?" and "Where is it we're trying to get to, again?" Says Black, "We used to know... when we were kids" that life is meant to be enjoyed. He concludes, though, with a question that is both melancholy and rhetorical: "How come we forget?"

* Consider, too, that the placement of your attributive phrases can aid you in focusing your reader's attention on the particular words you deem most significant, as in the following sentence:

→ To the promise of "shav[ing] an average of two seconds off the time it takes to respond to a call," Black drawls, "Whoopee."

Another consideration to bear in mind when deciding on attributive phrases that will integrate quotations into your prose is whether the author's identity—or other information about the source—will lend clarity or credibility to the quoted information. In some cases, information about the source becomes a valuable component of the attributive phrase, as in the following examples, taken from Troyka, L., *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writer, 2nd Canadian Edition*, Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1999, pp. 526-7.

SOURCE

Hall, Edward T. *The Hidden Dimension*. New York: Doubleday, 1966: 171.

ORIGINAL MATERIAL

Therefore, people from different cultures, when interpreting each other's behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity, or the emotions.

QUOTATION USING AUTHOR'S NAME

Edward T. Hall claims that "people from different cultures, when interpreting each other's behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity, or the emotions" (171).

QUOTATION USING AUTHOR'S NAME AND SOURCE TITLE

Edward T. Hall claims in *The Hidden Dimension* that "people from different cultures, when interpreting each other's behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity, or the emotions" (171).

QUOTATION USING AUTHOR'S NAME, CREDENTIALS, AND SOURCE TITLE

Edward T. Hall, an anthropologist who was a pioneer in the study of personal space, claims in *The Hidden Dimension* that "people from different cultures, when interpreting each other's behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity, or the emotions" (171).

Occasionally quotations speak for themselves, but at times they do not. Usually the words you are quoting are part of a larger piece, and you know the connection that

the quotation has to the original material.

Your reader may puzzle over why you included the quotation, so a brief introductory remark provides the needed information.

QUOTATION USING AUTHOR'S NAME AND INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS

Anthropologist Edward T. Hall believes that people from different societies perceive personal space in varying ways, claiming that "people from different cultures, when interpreting each other's behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity, or the emotions" (171).

- IV. Be sure to comment on/interpret/discuss the significance of your quoted material, after you have presented it. It is your job as writer to show your reader why you have incorporated a quotation into your writing. Do not leave the quotation to simply "speak for itself."**

Consider the following two paragraphs, both of which discuss Edward Allan Poe's use of setting to create suspense in a short story. Notice that in one paragraph, the writer makes the significance of the quoted material clear to the reader, while in the other paragraph, the quoted material is presented without analysis.

The time of day and year in which "The Cask of Amontillado" is set introduces an element of tension and foreboding to the story. Montresor informs the reader that when he first encounters Fortunato, with revenge on his mind, it is "about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season" (12). As the reader already knows that Montresor intends revenge against his friend, the very mention of "dusk" evokes the sense that darkness, and all that is fearful about the dark, may follow. The added suggestion that this is a season of "supreme madness" introduces an atmosphere of uncertainty and suspense: planted in the reader's mind is the notion that all is not normal and right with the world. The sense of darkness recurs as Montresor proceeds to describe the indoor setting to which he leads his friend. In the vaults where he eventually entraps Fortunato, the hour is late and the light is "feeble" (15). Not surprisingly, Montresor mentions that it is "midnight" when he puts the finishing touches on the entombment of this prey (16). By setting the narrative at a time of day and of year when darkness and irrational behavior are reigning, Poe causes readers to suspect that something menacing is about to happen.

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Fortunato has been “drinking much” (12), and Montresor lures him to his family vaults right “in the middle of the carnival” (13). Later, as the two friends descend the stairs to the vaults, the light is so “feeble” that it “did not enable [them] to see” (15). And finally Montresor informs the reader that “It was now midnight” when his task of entombing Fortunato “was drawing to a close” (16). By setting the narrative at a time of day and of year when darkness and irrational behavior are reigning, Poe causes readers to suspect that something menacing is about to happen.

V. When necessary, utilize brackets within your quotations to integrate them smoothly and economically into your writing. Brackets within quotation marks indicate the inclusion of material that is not part of the actual quoted text.

They can be used in quoted material to summarize passages of the original that you do not wish to include.

- Black objects particularly to the dehumanization he feels is inherent in technology. He uses Bell Canada’s Québécois customers as an example: “This summer [they] won’t be able to raise a human operator.”

They can be used to replace original words with words that fit the quotation more smoothly into your sentence.

- The essay suggests that Wordsworth’s poem speaks to our current dilemma even though “[he] was writing about his country’s loss of innocence nearly 200 years ago.”
- Black, like the protagonist in Ryan’s short story, “actually [has] a life outside of [his] work,” and “like[s] it that way.”

They are used around the word “sic” to indicate that mistakes within the quotation are mistakes of the person being quoted, rather than your own.

- The travel columnist wrote of our city, “St. Johns [sic] has some of the steepest hills I have ever struggled to climb.”