Writing and Study Skills Services – Laurier Brantford
Quotation Integration

When to Use Quotations and Why

- Quotations are exact parts of another text that you have copied into your own writing.
    - To distinguish this in your paper, put the copied text in quotation marks.
- Writers use quotations to provide *textual evidence* and to *strengthen* claims.
- You MUST cite quotations (see citation handouts from the Centre for Student Success).

Include a Lead-In Before Quotations

- A lead-in is a few words provided before a quotation to give the reader some context about *where the quotation is from* and/or *how it connects* to the previous sentence.
    - One way to do this is to clarify where the quotation is coming from
        - According to Smith, "Plato's cave allegory is applicable to modern life" (citation).
    - Another way is to choose words that flow nicely into the quotation
        - The team celebrated when Wayne Gretzky "scored the winning goal as the final buzzer rang" (citation).

Use Effective Reporting Expressions in Your Lead-In

Okay Example: John <u>said</u> that "he did not want to eat his asparagus" (citation).
Better Example: John <u>complained</u> that "he did not want to eat his asparagus" (citation).
The second sentence is better because the word "complained" gives the reader more information about John's tone. Try to characterize the action/tone of the original author by selecting an accurate reporting expression.

Keep Quotations Short

- Only include necessary information in your quotation.

Okay Example: Demitri thought that the city was a "garbage wonderland because it was littered with broken bottles, food scraps, plastic cups, and old tires" (citation).
Better Example: Demitri argued that the city was a "garbage wonderland" (citation).
The second example is better because the writer is then able to explain the quotation in his or her own words rather than letting the quotation do the explaining.

Use an Ellipsis to Remove Part of a Quotation that is Not Needed

- Sometimes the middle part of a quotation provides unnecessary information.
    - Writers can replace this unnecessary information with an *ellipsis* (…)

Okay Example: Damien went to a "writing consultation on Friday at the Centre for Student Success in Brantford and he learned how to properly integrate quotations into his essay" (citation).
Better Example: Damien attended a "writing consultation…and he learned how to properly integrate quotations into his essay" (citation).
The second example is better because the writer made the quotation more concise.

Citing a Quotation that is Divided into Two Parts in One Sentence

- Sometimes an ellipsis will not effectively cut out unnecessary information because a few words must be added between the two parts of the quotation for it to make sense.
    - In this situation, put both parts of the quoted material in quotation marks, but only include the citation after the second part of cited material.

Example: As Smith notes, "Carter admires Julia" because she is "dedicated and inclusive" (citation).

Quoting a Quotation

- Use *double* quotation marks around the part you are taking *from the other text.*
- Use *single* quotation marks around the part that was *already quoted* in the text you are using.
  Original Text: One needs to know how to cite "a quotation within a quotation" (citation).
  Example: Smith explains it is important "to know how to cite 'a quotation within a quotation'"
(citation).

Question Marks in Quotations

1. If the *whole sentence is a question*, place the question mark *after* the citation.
   Example: Did Joey tell you that the teacher said "class is cancelled today" (citation)?
2. If *only the quotation is a question*, put the question mark *inside* the quotation marks.
   Example: "Can you buy us candy?" the kids asked the teacher (citation).

Changing Words within a Quotation

- When you change a word inside a quotation, place the new word in *square brackets*.

Changing Vague Pronouns

- Vague pronouns are words such as he, she, and it.
- Often you can clarify these vague pronouns by replacing them with a proper name.
  Original: Everyone is invited to the birthday party except her.
  Changed: "Everyone is invited to the birthday party except [Rebecca]" (citation).

Changing Tenses

- Sometimes a quotation is in present tense but, in order for it to make sense, you need to change it to past tense.
  Original: Lucas is going to the bookstore on Friday.
  Changed: "Lucas [went] to the bookstore on Friday" (citation).

Don't Forget your Analysis

- Be careful that you do not let quotations take over your essay. To avoid this, remember that you need to *explain the quotation* as well as identify *why the quotation is important*. Also, keep in mind that some disciplines have a preference for the use of summary or paraphrase over quotations.

Possible Points for Analysis:

1. Explain the significance of key words in the quotation.
2. Discuss how the quotation supports and advances your argument.
3. Analyze what the quotation reveals about the person speaking.
4. Discuss whether the quotation reveals any bias or whether it ignores any important information.
5. Highlight any themes or symbols within the quotation.
6. Consider the implications or consequences of what was said.
7. Evaluate the strength of what the person said. (Are they a reliable source of information?)
8. Examine what the quotation reveals about the setting / location.

Remember, the way you approach your analysis will differ depending on the course for which you are writing. For example, English courses may require a more thematic analysis, whereas geography papers may require an analysis of the validity of a claim. However, no matter what type of paper you are writing, make sure that you develop clear, organized, and thoughtful analyses of quotations.