Qr code

Description automatically generatedMLA Formatting - Quotes ---- Click [here](https://youtu.be/K0Dp4EiymWA) for video instructions or scan QR code.

**Parenthetical Citation**

* **Immediately** after each quote, you need to cite your source with 1) the author’s last name and 2) the page number (for prose – novel, short stories, etc.) OR line number (for verse – drama/play, poetry).
  + If there’s no author, use the article / chapter title in quote marks.
  + If there’s no page number (article found online), just skip that part.
* Put a space between the quote mark and the parenthesis.
* Place the period AFTER the parenthesis – NOT inside the quote! THE ONLY PUNCTUATION THAT CAN GO IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ENDING QUOTATION MARK IS A ? OR !. NOTHING ELSE.

Examples:

* with author - “Pretend this is a quote from a short story” (Smith 42), and I’m not done with my sentence yet.
* without author – “Pretend this is a quote from an article with no author” (“Greek Gods” 14).
* poetry/drama – only one line: “Pretend quote from poetry” (Collins ln. 1), meaning that

ln. = line

ll. = lines

the poem is awesome.

* poetry/drama – more than one line: “Pretend this is / a line from poetry” (Collins ll. 11-12)
* poetry/drama – more than one line with ellipses: “Pretend this is / …. / a line from poetry!” (Collins ll. 11, 15).

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**Embedding Quotes Your Words + Quote = Complete Sentence**

* *Anything* that is copied verbatim (word-for-word) is a quotation; it does NOT have to be what someone says/what’s already in quotes in the given text. It can be called a concrete detail, (direct) quote, or evidence.

who

what

why

where

when

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  Description automatically generated**Quotes need to be introduced** so that the quoted material flows naturally and coherently into

your paragraph. Any background information or character names should be introduced (especially if there’s a pronoun in the quote). --- NOT: On page 73, it says…. 🡨What’s happening on that page?

* When written properly, the reader should not be able to hear where the quotation marks are when the sentence is read aloud.
* A properly embedded quotation creates a *seamless* transition from the background information (what’s happening in the story? who’s speaking, if anyone?) to the quoted material.
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    Description automatically generatedSometimes you need a comma before introducing the quote (because you’re introducing dialogue, or your introduction was a dependent clause….see examples). A **TRICK** is to ask yourself, **“If the quote marks weren’t there, would I put a comma here?”** Just because you have a quote doesn’t mean that you always place a comma before it.
* When done poorly, the transition is choppy and/or leaves the reader confused. (example: This is shown by, “I did not deny God’s existence, but I doubted His absolute justice” (Wiesel 42).
  + Do not introduce a quote with:

Jack says, “Blah blah” (Golding 3).

Golding states, “Blah blah” (Golding 3).

THESE ARE **NOT** EMBEDDING!!!

* + - A picture containing text, clipart

      Description automatically generatedThis is shown by, “When he…”
    - This is proven by, “What are you…”
    - The quote “Jack stormed off” is…
* The above examples are choppy and do not make sense when read aloud. Every sentence in a paragraph must make sense, even if it contains quoted material. ALL embedded quotes MUST make a complete sentence (no fragments).
* BAD EXAMPLE: The theme of holding a grudge is expressed when Georg refuses to accept Ulrich’s offer of the wine flask, “No…I don’t drink wine with an enemy” (Saki 432).
  + Who’s the “I” in the quote?
  + What’s happening in this part of the story?
  + Why would he say that?
  + This is NOT embedded because the quote stands alone. Simply placing a comma where the period goes does not fix the problem. Instead, it creates another problem: a comma splice.
* CORRECTED EXAMPLE: The theme of holding a grudge is expressed when Georg refuses to accept Ulrich’s offer of the wine flask. **After the tree has fallen on them, Ulrich feels pity for his neighbor and wants to forgive him, but Georg rejects his offer with the curt reply,** “No…I don’t drink wine with an enemy” (Saki 432).
* In order to make ideas flow, sometimes **you may need to change words within your quote so that the sentence is grammatically correct and coherent.** To do this, use **BRACKETS** [ ] around the alteration to REPLACE a word. You can change pronouns to specific character names, verb tenses, other vague words; you can also add words like conjunctions. (Remember that we write commentary in present tense, so we try to match the verb tense of the quote to present, unless past tense is still necessary.)
  + Example: “In a moment the platform was full of arguing [, and] to Ralph,…this seemed the breaking up of sanity” (Golding 88).
  + YES: Ralph “picks up the conch” (Golding 88).
  + NO: “[Ralph] picks up the conch” (Golding 88.)
  + NO: “He [Ralph] picks up the conch” (Golding 88).

**Examples of Embedding**

1. **As the most chilling and heartbreaking novel *Night* gets started, the author expresses Elie’s feelings towards God as he stands and watches Jews being killed by stating,** “I did not deny God’s existence, but I doubted His absolute justice” (Wiesel 42).

- Notice, there is a comma before the quote because it’s presented as dialogue. I also capitalized the first word for 2 reasons – 1. it begins with “I”; 2. you always capitalize when you start dialogue.

-Notice the cite – just the author’s last name and a number. Also, we use (parenthesis,) not [brackets].

2. **Meryl Streep, a very talented actress, explained to us that** “we are the choices we make” (Streep) **to show that the decisions we choose to make on our journey defines who we are as people.**

- Notice, there’s no comma before quote? Why? The word “that” takes its place. It’s not true dialogue. I’m restating what someone else said. Why didn't I capitalize the first word of quote? You don’t if your quote starts after the word “that.” Again, it’s not true dialogue. It’s not from a book, so there’s no page number.

3. “Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see” (Twain), **meaning that everybody understands kindness.**

**-** Notice the comma after the citation because immediately following is a dependent clause explaining the quote. It’s just a famous quote, so no page number.

4. “I did not deny God’s existence, but I doubted His absolute justice.” – *Night*, Elie Wiesel, pg. 42

* **Wiesel’s weakening faith is evident in his novel** ***Night*** **when he** “doubted [God’s] absolute justice” (Wiesel 42) **during the terrors of the Holocaust.**

- Notice, there is no comma before the quote. I am truly embedding his thoughts into my own. It’s part of my sentence. If there were no quote marks there, I wouldn’t naturally put a comma between a subject and verb “he doubted.” I also don’t capitalize it because I wouldn’t naturally do that if the quotes weren’t there. And it’s not dialogue.

- All embedded quotes should equal a complete sentence. You should never have a fragment.

- Notice the [brackets] are used to here to show I changed a word in the quote.

5. **When the littluns realized they wouldn’t be rescued by their parents,** “they began to cry” (Golding 87).

- The comma is necessary before the quote because it’s introduced with a dependent clause.

- I didn’t capitalize the word “they” because it’s not dialogue. When I asked myself, “If the quote marks weren’t there, would I capitalize this word?” my answer was no.

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**Ellipses**

Ellipses show the deletion of words. There are two kinds:

1. the deletion of words is understood because of the parallel sentence structure:
   1. The babysitter ate four slices of pizza, and the child, two. (Which words are deleted and how do you know?)
2. the deletion of words through the use of dots:
   1. **3 dots are used to show the deletion of words WITHIN ONE sentence**

Ralph “picked up the conch… and began to pick his way over the tumbled scar” (Golding 38). - from *Lord of the Flies* Only a few words were deleted within one sentence.

b. **4 dots are used to show the deletion of words in MORE THAN ONE sentence**

Liesel, thinking her papa was asleep “whispered, ‘I think I’m going to hell’…. and she kissed his scratchy cheek. ‘You’re not going to hell,’ Papa replied” (Zusak 256). – from *The Book Thief*  (5 sentences were deleted because they were unnecessary to this particular quote because it was highlighting an event and the reaction.

* When you delete words within a quote, the sentence must still be grammatically correct and coherent.
* Delete any punctuation associated with the deleted words.
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  Description automatically generatedNEVER use ellipses at the beginning or end of a quote. Only use them in the MIDDLE of your quoted material. (ex.: “blah blah…blah”) Use ellipses sparingly as too many of them can interrupt the flow of your essay.

“…Blah blah blah…” (Golding 3).

* NEVER change the meaning of the quote.

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**Quote within a Quote (Narration + Dialogue) in one quote**

* You only use quote within a quote when you’re pulling words from a text that include BOTH narration AND dialogue/something already in quotes.
* Do not quote entire conversations. All of the quote marks and back and forth becomes very confusing. Instead, summarize the conversation and quote only one person’s words – the most important part.
* When you start a quote, you open with 2 quote marks: “ . When you are looking at your given text and you see a quote mark that you’re going to include, you need to put ONE quote mark where your text has two: ‘ . You will close that one quote when your text closes the double quote. And you’ll close your double quote when you’re done writing words from the text.

Examples:

**Original Quote:**

By sheer will power she overcame her outburst and answered in a calm voice while wiping the tears from her wet cheeks:

~~“Oh, nothing. Only~~ I don’t have an evening dress and therefore I can’t go to that affair.”

(“The Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant, pg. 227)

**What my quote looks like:**

“By sheer will power she overcame her outburst and answered in a calm voice while wiping the tears from her wet cheeks: .… ‘I don’t have an evening dress and therefore I can’t go to that affair’” (Maupassant 227).

Notice I opened with a double quote to indicate these are not my words. I put ellipses where I deleted words. I opened a single quote where I saw quotes in the text. I closed the single quote when the text closed its quote. And then I closed my double quote because I’m done with copying words from the text. I saved the period until AFTER the parenthetical citation, which includes ONLY the author’s last name and the page number.)

**Original Quote:** “I’ll retrace our steps on foot~~,” he said, “~~to see if I can find it.”

(“The Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant, pg. 230)

**What my quote looks like:** Mme. Loisel was frantic about her lost borrowed necklace, so her husband told her, “I’ll retrace our steps on foot…to see if I can find it” (Maupassant 230).

Because I deleted the narration part of the original quote, I do not need a quote within a quote. I am ONLY quoting M. Loisel’s words.

“‘Dialogue’ and narration”(Golding 3).

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“Dialogue only” (Golding 3).

“‘Dialogue only’” (Golding 3).

“Narration only” (Golding 3).