

INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS FROM SOURCES

Problem

Writers often use quotations from sources to support and develop their own claims and arguments. Less experienced writers risk letting other authors' words, ideas, and claims overwhelm their own, or use quotations out of context in ways that are confusing or change the author's original meaning. Common problems include the following:

- Doing a "drop and run": throwing in a quotation without introduction or comment.
- Letting the quotation have the last word, which forces the reader to figure out the significance of the quotation.
- Quoting information that would better be summarized or left out.

Solutions

ALERT THE READER WHO YOU ARE QUOTING WITH A SHORT SIGNAL-PHRASE LEAD-IN AND COMMA.

Example:

Theater critic Rohan Preston observes, "Director Lou Bellamy has a way of looking so deeply into the theatergoer's soul that audience members often call out involuntarily to characters—responding to their queries and whims, offering advice and succor."

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Although there are "procedural aspects related to the measurement of conditioned inhibition of fear potentiated startle," Engelmann argues that researchers should also be concerned with "the actual conditioning procedure that is used" during training (35).

VARY THE VERBS USED TO SIGNAL QUOTATIONS.

argues	demonstrates
agrees	emphasizes
asserts	illustrates
claims	implies
comments	observes
compares	notes
declares	responds
disagrees	states
disputes	suggests

INTEGRATE PART OF THE QUOTATION INTO YOUR COMPLETE SENTENCE.

Example:

Rohan Preston suggests that Bellamy is a skillful director because he “has a way of looking so deeply into the theatergoer’s soul that audience members often call out involuntarily to characters.”

WRITE A COMPLETE SENTENCE STATING YOUR CLAIM OR OBSERVATION, and follow with a colon and the quotation.

Example:

Preston demonstrates that Director Lou Bellamy knows how to get the audience involved: “members often call out involuntarily to characters—responding to their queries and whims, offering advice and succor.”

FOLLOW THE QUOTATION WITH ONE OR MORE SENTENCES THAT COMMENT ON IT. This practice will help your readers understand what is significant about the quotation. You can paraphrase the quotation, and/or you can draw readers’ attention to significant words and phrases by quoting them in your sentence.

Example:

In her study of Division I student-athletes, ethnographer Julie Cheville notes the identity-related challenges that come with playing a team sport: “the perpetual dilemma for players and coaches is to recognize and sustain identities of difference in the midst of public pressures to be the same and conceptual pressures to think the same” (55). In other words, student-athletes must struggle to maintain their own senses of self while still integrating seamlessly into the team. Student-athletes are not the only ones involved in this identity struggle; rather, “public pressures” and “conceptual pressures” can work against their own and their coaches’ abilities to see them as individuals.

USE SQUARE BRACKETS TO ADD WORDS NECESSARY FOR UNDERSTANDING THE QUOTATION. USE ELLIPSES TO REMOVE UNNECESSARY WORDS.

Example:

Engelmann summarizes a current theory about the relationship between learning and anxiety disorders: “When these [learning] processes fail to work properly... , a state of chronic fear or anxiety may develop because the animal cannot discriminate between periods of safety and danger” (1-2).

For more information:

Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. *A Writer’s Reference*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2011. 379–385, 505–510. Print.

“Incorporating Quotations into Sentences.” *UW-Madison Writing Center Writer’s Handbook*. UW-Madison Writing Center, 2009. Web. 13 Jun. 2012.

Works Cited:

Cheville, Julie. *Minding the Body: What Student Athletes Know About Learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2001. Print.

Engelmann, J.M. “Backward Conditioning with Single or Multiple Unconditioned Stimulus Presentations Measured by Fear-Potentiated Startle in Rats.” Honors Thesis. University of Minnesota, 2005. Print.

Preston, Rohan. “Audience Can’t Help Talking Back to the Incisive ‘Diva Daughters.’” *Star Tribune* 15 Feb. 2004: 4B. Print.