South
Writing
Center
WRITE THIS WAY

Embedding Quotes Like A Pro

From literary analyses to synthesis essays, writing often requires references from other sources to help support a line of reasoning. The use of quotations in writing establishes the credibility of your argument, demonstrates your knowledge of the text, and displays your impeccable writing skills. But are you tired of incorporating information in the format of "the author says, '…'?" Are you bored of constantly resorting to the format, "the text states, '…'?"

Well, don't worry. We've got you covered!

Here are four simple methods of embedding quotes efficiently and effectively:

1. Add your own information to the front and at the end of a quote
   a. For Gatsby, the green light at the end of the Buchanans' dock symbolizes his hope to be with Daisy as "it had seemed very near to her, almost touching her" in a way that Gatsby himself could not (100).

   Make a sandwich with your quote by providing your own analysis in the beginning (the top piece of bread), including your quote (the meat or vegetables), and ending with even more detailed analysis (the bottom piece of bread). This allows you to shorten the actual quote and expand your own thinking. By adding your own information to the front and end of the quote, you will earn sophistication points as your writing is more elevated than if you were to copy the whole quote down.

2. Use a colon quote
   a. Representing the dire side of the American Dream, Fitzgerald portrays the valley of ashes as a dark, desolate wasteland: "The valley of ashes is bounded on one side by a small foul river, and when the drawbridge is up to let barges through, the passengers on waiting trains can stare at the dismal scene for as long as half an hour" (27).

   Write down your idea as a full sentence and add a colon after it. The colon helps signify the incorporation of a quote to support your analysis, allowing more variety in the way you use quotes.

3. Edit your quote using ellipsis or brackets
   a. Nick describes Gatsby's party as an extravagant affair with many attendees; by early evening "the orchestra has arrived. . . [and] the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive" (44).

   Most times you will find that the information from a quote is vital, but there is a lot of unnecessary details added around it. Take only the information you need by adding an ellipsis to show that a part of the quote has been removed. Brackets are as equally as important as ellipsis as they help you edit awkward phrasing from the original information source and allow you to masterfully blend it within your sentence.

4. Paraphrase
   a. Naturally responsible and confident, the oldest child often takes care of younger children and tends to have the qualities of a leader (Shine).

My favorite strategy is to paraphrase the information that you were going to put into quotes. This helps you avoid using the author's words exactly and instead makes your writing feature *your* own thoughts and *your* own opinions. Remember that quotes aren't supposed to be the entirety of your writing; they are only to provide support for your own claims.

Now it is your turn to practice!

PRACTICE:

Try using each of the four methods above to write a sentence that incorporates and analyzes a part of the quote about Gatsby below!

"If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. This responsiveness had nothing to do with that flabby impressionability which is dignified under the name of the 'creative temperament'--it was an extraordinary gift for hope" (4).

1.

2.

3.

4.