

## Integrating Quotes (MLA Style)

A quotation should be effectively integrated into your paragraph by setting it up and interpreting it for your reader.

*This handout adapted from handouts by University of Arkansas's Center for Learning and Student Success [[https://class.uark.edu/\\_resources/pdf/integrating-quotations.pdf](https://class.uark.edu/_resources/pdf/integrating-quotations.pdf)] and Blackburn College's Writer's Block center [<https://blackburn.edu/why-blackburn/lumpkin-learning-commons/lumpkin/academic-support-services/>]*

### When to Quote

- ♣ **Memorable language**—use quotation when the author of your source uses a phrase, sentence, or passage of particularly powerful, vivid, or memorable language.
- ♣ **Clear and concise language**—use quotation when the language in your source is so clear and succinct that any attempt to paraphrase would be ineffective.
- ♣ **Authoritative language**—use quotation to add the authority of experts and prominent figures. Quotations from authoritative sources can be useful in supporting your argument.
- ♣ **Language for analysis**—use quotation to highlight source passages that you will discuss and engage in rhetorical analysis.

### How to Integrate

- ♣ **Integrate quotations into your own sentences.** Do not stand quotations alone as sentences.
- ♣ **Provide signal phrases,** which include the author's name and a signal verb. MLA style uses present tense signal verbs, in-text citations, and full source listings on the works-cited list at paper's end.

Use an introductory phrase separated from the quotation with a comma.

As Rodriguez argues, “The American conversation about race has always been a black-and-white conversation” (406).

“The American conversation about race has always been a black-and-white conversation,” claims Rodriguez (406).

Introduce the quotation with a sentence that sets it up by using a colon (:).

Rodriguez uses his own observation of neighborhoods in California to demonstrate that cultural assimilation happens naturally when people live in close proximity: “Culture is fluid... You breathe it. You eat it. You can’t help hearing it” (409).

♣ **Vary the placement** of your signal phrases and **use a variety of signal verbs**.

Neutral		Argument	Disagreement	Agreement
says	compares	argues	denies	agrees
states	shows	asserts	disagrees	supports
writes	introduces	believes	refutes	confirms
notes	thinks	claims	contradicts	concur
observes	explains	maintains	questions	<b>Concession</b>
indicates	concludes	contends	criticizes	acknowledges
discusses	describes	recommends	warns	concedes
illustrates	comments	points out	complains	grants

♣ **Combine paraphrase with quotation** to capture the idea and language necessary to express your point. Splice the quotation into the flow of your own sentence.

Science has contributed to the “long, sad history” of atrocities justified by “denying the humanity of other people” (Olson 13).

Rodriguez thinks the U.S. should adopt the Mexican model of “a mestizaje society,” which means...(407).

When the girl calls herself a “Blaxican,” Rodriguez argues that “[b]y reinventing language, she is reinventing America” (410).

♣ **Include the credentials of the author** you are quoting in an appositive phrase. What do they do, or what makes them an expert?

William McDonough, *green architect and co-author of Cradle to Cradle*, states, “Nature operates according to a system of nutrients and metabolisms in which there is no such thing as waste” (92).

♣ **To alter a quotation to clarify** or to fit the grammar of your sentence, indicate any changes by placing the altered language in brackets. Be careful not to alter the original meaning.

Furthermore, Pollan argues that “to escape the Western diet, [we must simply] depart the realms it rules: the supermarket, the convenience store, and the fast food outlet” (158).

- ♣ **To shorten the original quotation**, use an ellipsis (three periods with a space between each).

Pollan states, “American gas stations now make more money selling food . . . than gasoline . . .” (192).

- ♣ **To quote someone quoted in your source**, include the phrase qtd. in in the parenthetical citation. The best practice is to search for the original source quoted by your source, if available.

Gladys Block, Berkeley professor and epidemiologist, says, “I don’t believe anything I read in nutritional epidemiology anymore” (qtd. in Pollan 78).

- ♣ If the quotation runs **more than four lines in your typed text**, indent the quotation one inch from the left margin, omit quotation marks, and place the passage-ending period before the in-text citation.

Hamby describes King’s focus and strategy during the final two years of his life:

The Poor People’s Campaign underscored a shift in King’s social vision away from an emphasis upon integration and toward a more class-oriented critique of American social structure. The elements of the new approach, however, were solidly rooted in King’s theology. . . [H]e was expressing more clearly than ever—in his calls for massive aid to the poor, for a new spirit of Christian brotherhood, for the salvation of American society—the Christian socialism of Walter Rauschenbusch that had so long captured his imagination. (211-12)

### Final Tips

- No matter if your “quotation appears at the beginning, middle, or end of the sentence,” the citation goes at the end (409). If the author is not indicated, include the author’s name in the citation (Rodriguez 410).
- If the ! or ? are part of your sentence, put them outside the quotation (“like this”?) Put them inside the quotation if they are part of the quotation (“like this!”).