

INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

- In a formal or literary essay, you must use support to strengthen your argument. You may, and should, use quotations as support. Be sure that all quotations are properly cited with parenthetical references and with entries on the Works Cited page.
- Quotations from novels, poems, plays, short stories, articles, etc. must be smoothly incorporated into the text.

There are three main ways to incorporate quotations into the text of your essay:

1. Quotations that are only a few words long and which are not introduced with a colon. These quotations should flow smoothly with your sentence.

Example:

In Atticus' summation, he claimed that Tom Robinson's only crime was the fact that he had the "unmitigated temerity to feel sorry for a white woman" (Lee 204).

2. Quotations that are less than three lines long and are introduced with a colon. Again, these quotations should flow with the text of your essay but they follow an independent clause (a sentence) and provide further explanation and support for the reader. These quotes are not indented.

Example: In his summation, Atticus explains that Tom Robinson committed no legal crime; however, he was guilty of violating a social code when he admitted that he felt compassion for Mayella Ewell, a white woman: "And so a quiet, respectable, humble Negro who had the unmitigated temerity to 'feel sorry' for a white woman has had to put his word against two white people's" (Lee 204).

3. Quotations that are longer than three lines. These quotations are:

- a) introduced with a colon,
- b) indented,
- c) set off from your text,
- d) double-spaced; and,
- e) the punctuation goes before the parenthetical reference.

Example: In his summation, Atticus explains that Tom Robinson committed no legal crime; however, he was guilty of violating a social code when he admitted that he felt compassion for Mayella Ewell, a white woman. He also points out the differences between Robinson and his accusers:

So a quiet, respectable, humble
Negro who had the unmitigated
temerity to 'feel sorry' for a white
woman has had to put his word
against two white people's...The
witnesses for the state, with the
exception of the sheriff of Maycomb
County, have presented
themselves...to [the] court in the
cynical confidence that their
testimony would not be doubted.

(Lee 204)

4. Poetry and Shakespeare are quoted in the same way as prose quotations; however, use a backslash (/) to indicate the end of a line of poetry. NOTE: You would use the backslash only if the quotation is shorter than three lines.

Example: In Dylan Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night", the voice in the poem pleads with his father to fight death: "Do not go gentle into that good night/Rage, rage against the dying of the light".

If the quotation from the poem is longer than three lines, follow the format outlined above (in number 3) but follow the poet's original line divisions. Do NOT use quotation marks if the quote is indented.

Example: Romeo outlines, to Friar Lawrence, the extent of his misfortune:

Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.

Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,

An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,

Doting like me, and like me banished,

Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair

And fall upon the ground as I do now

Taking the measure of an unmade grave. (3.3.67-74)

TIPS:

- A) Do not overuse quotations. They are used to support your argument, not to overtake it.
- B) Use ellipses (...) if part of the quote is omitted. (See #3 above for an example.)
- C) Use quotations that are relevant to your argument.
- D) When introducing a quotation, NEVER say "This quote shows" or "the following quote shows". Refer to the examples above for smooth introductions to quotations.
- E) Never end a paragraph with a quotation. You must always provide further comment. YOU should have the last word.

F) If you need to change word(s) within a quotation, use square brackets.

Example: “[He] paused and took out his handkerchief.”

G) Remember to italicize the title of a book (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) and use quotation marks for poetry, short stories, or articles within a larger work (“Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night”).