

How to Integrate Quotations

Integrating quotations means “to weave the author’s words into your own sentences.” Quotations should not just be thrown into your essay. You may use block quotations in this research paper, but generally do not use them in a standard 2-3 page essay. Use only the best parts of your quotation. Always document ideas and quotations of others (document means the same thing as “cite”).

Here’s an example of an INDIRECT reference and a QUOTATION that is NOT well integrated. Note the use of ellipses to indicate missing material (which is NOT something you will need to do if you correctly integrate quotation).

The turning point in the struggle between Ralph and Jack is the killing of the sow (133-144). The sow is a mother: “sunk in deep maternal bliss lay the largest of the lot ... the great bladder of her belly was fringed with a row of piglets that slept or burrowed and squeaked (134).

- Document ideas and references, especially direct quotations.
- Do NOT put ellipses IN FRONT of a quotation, even if the front is missing.
- Do NOT put ellipses AT THE END of a quotation, even if the back is missing.
- Do NOT use more than one period per sentence.
- ALWAYS make the mixture of the author’s words and your words grammatically correct.
- If you need to insert a word of your own, or if you need to change a letter in order to make the sentence grammatically correct, use brackets []

“[S]unk in deep maternal bliss” (134), the sow is unaware of the danger approaching her.

Here is an example of a tightly integrated quotation.

“[S]unk in deep maternal bliss” (134), the sow is unaware of the approaching and “dreadful eruption from an unknown world” of British boys masked as savages, who will soon be laughing at Jack’s “reeking palms” (135) as they baptized with blood.

Note: This example has three integrated quotations in one sentence. If all the quotes come from the same page, you can put the documentation at the end of the sentence. However, these do not come from the same page. The second quotation is not documented, because it comes from the same page as the quotation that follows it.

This is not hard, only time-consuming. However, it is absolutely necessary that you learn to document your textual evidence, how to choose only the best parts of the evidence, and how to smoothly integrate your evidence into your own writing.

See the reverse for an actual example from a student essay.

Sample from Student Essay

Original:

Montague then asked Benvolio to find out what was upsetting Romeo. When Benvolio and Romeo were talking, Benvolio tells Romeo to just forget about Rosaline. This is said on (pp. 51.11.46-57) “Tut man, one fire burns out anothers burning./ One pain is less’ned by anothers anguish.” This suggests that Benvolio knows that Romeo is playing a game, or that he has never been in love. So he thinks it is very easy to fall out of love.

Revised:

(Note integrated quotation, proper documentation, and tightening of sentences. Note also that the student not quote accurately.)

Telling Romeo to forget about Rosaline, Benvolio argues that “one fire burns out another’s burning; / One pain is less’ned by another’s anguish” (I.ii.46-47), which suggests that Benvolio knows Romeo is playing a game. If falling in love is easy, Benvolio seems to be saying, then so is falling out of love.