

How to Quote and Paraphrase

with *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Purpose of Paraphrasing

- Whenever I discuss a book – in writing or aloud – I need to refer to specific textual moments as evidence for my own assertions.
- Generally, I want to be looking at a specific page (or maybe a few pages) as I formulate my answer.
- I can't include *all* of what the author wrote, so I sum it up in my own words.

What do I paraphrase when I introduce my evidence?

That depends.

- I might need to give a little background, to introduce my own audience members to the textual moment I will use as evidence for my ideas. Sometimes, I don't.
- When I introduce the evidence, I definitely identify the who, where, when of the event in one sentence or phrase.



What do I paraphrase when I explain my evidence?

- When I explain my evidence, I need to zoom in on the important scene, and explain it like it's happening in slow motion.
- Although I summarize the plot reference example in my own words, I want to give *lots* of detail.
- Sometimes, the author's words will be better than anything I could say. That's when I decide to weave a quote into my writing.

Purpose of Using Quotes

- Quotes are *part* of my evidence – a really important part. Using the author's text makes my own writing stronger. Quotes help me deepen my analysis of plot references.
- I choose quotes that ADD to my paper because the language says something so powerful it can't be paraphrased.
- I do not include quotes that convey the exact same information I give in the plot reference summary.

Warnings!

- Quotes *by themselves* are not proof. Quotes have to be presented as part of a paraphrased plot event.
- Quotes never, never *replace* my own analysis of the literature. I have to explain how the author's text supports my idea.
- Having extra quotes is nice, but choosing the *right* quotes is more important. Having many unrelated quotes in a paper is distracting and might confuse my argument.

How to Weave Quotes

- I must choose the most important words of the quote to include.
- Then, I weave them into my own writing in the middle or end of a sentence.
- The sentence should make sense on its own. The only way a reader knows I'm quoting someone else is because he sees the quotation marks.

Example 1: Quote repeats summarized information

Original text from scene on 213:

Calpurnia said, “This was all ’round the back steps when I got here this morning. They—they appreciate what you did, Mr. Finch...”

Atticus’s eyes filled with tears. He did not speak for a moment.

Paraphrased summary with quote woven in:

The day after the trial, many people have left food at the Finches’ back door to thank Atticus for defending Tom Robinson. He is so touched that he cries and is silent before he can comment. Scout says, “Atticus’s eyes filled with tears. He did not speak for a moment” (Lee 213).

Example 1: Fixing the Problem

The day after the trial, many people have left food at the Finches' back door to thank Atticus for defending Tom Robinson. He is so touched that his “eyes fil[l] with tears” and “He [does] not speak for a moment” (Lee 213).

Note that changes to the original text are in brackets [], so the reader knows that there has been a change.

Example 2: Paraphrased Event needs more detail

Original text from scene on 7:

...his mother...had entered his picture in a ...contest and won five dollars. She gave the money to Dill, who went to the picture show twenty times on it.

“Don’t have any picture shows here, except Jesus ones in the courthouse sometimes,” said Jem. “Ever see anything good?”

Dill had seen *Dracula*, a revelation that moved Jem to eye him with the beginning of respect.

Paraphrased summary of whole scene:

When they meet, Dill describes going to the movies to see *Dracula* to Jem and Scout, who have never seen a movie. Jem is very impressed.

Example 2: Fixing the Problem

Paraphrased summary with quotes woven in:

When they meet, Dill makes an effort to impress his new friends by explaining how “his mother...had entered his picture in a...contest and won five dollars” (Lee 7). He claims he used the money to go “to the picture show twenty times on it” (Lee 7). When Jem reveals that he has only seen “Jesus” movies, Dill declares that he saw *Dracula* (Lee 7). This “revelation...move[s] Jem to eye him with the beginning of respect” (Lee 7).

Example 3

Original text from 75:

“Then why did Cecil say you defended n---s? He made it sound like you were runnin’ a still.”

Atticus sighed. “I’m simply defending a Negro—his name’s Tom Robinson.”

Paraphrased with woven quote:

When Scout asks why people are saying her father is doing something wrong, he explains that he is “simply defending a Negro” named “Tom Robinson” (Lee 75).

Example 4

Original text from 203:

→ See Atticus's closing speech.

Paraphrased with woven quote:

Atticus addresses the jury in a familiar and friendly tone when he reminds them that “The state has not produced one iota of medical evidence” to prove that Tom Robinson had raped Mayella Ewell (Lee 203).

In-text citations

- Of course, I cite every quote from the book!

How To Cite

- In parenthesis, I give the author's last name, 1 space, and the page number. I put this after the quote and before the period.
 - Dill announces that he is “goin’ on seven” (Lee 7).
- There are, of course, all kinds of special rules. If you aren't sure, it is better to include (author page#) every time.

Special Rules

1. If the author's name appears in the student's sentence, then it does not have to appear again in the ().
2. If the source of the original text is a web source without pagination, then there is no page number to list.

Special Rules (cont'd)

3. *Within a paragraph*, if two or more quotes in a row come from the same page of the original text, you only need the () after the last quote.

Purpose of MLA in-text citation

- to carefully identify someone else's words and ideas, and not claim them as my own
- to identify the original source of the quoted material
- to refer the reader to the correct entry on the Works Cited page

Works Cited

- Yes, the essay for *To Kill A Mockingbird* WILL include a proper Works Cited page!!!
- In this case, that page will include only 1 book, so the title will be...

Work Cited