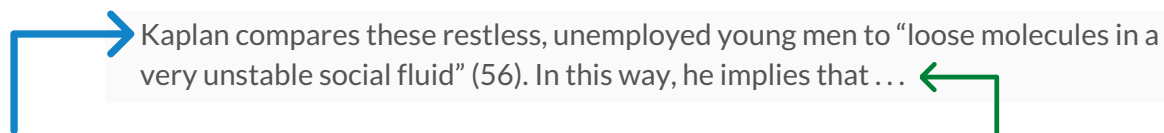


QUOTATIONS

How to write and use quotations effectively

WRITING EFFECTIVE QUOTATIONS:

- Quotations should support a key point or clarify important ideas.


 Kaplan compares these restless, unemployed young men to “loose molecules in a very unstable social fluid” (56). In this way, he implies that ...

- **Put something before:** Enough context should be given so the reader knows where the quote comes from. Quotations can be punctuated in several different ways (see next page).
- **Put something after:** Talk about what the quote means. Interpret or analyze it. Explain how it helps support your thesis.
- Try to avoid summarizing or paraphrasing after a quote.
 - ✗ • She “comes home and starts watching TV” (14). Then she goes to sleep.
 - ✓ • She “comes home and starts watching TV” (14), which suggests life has returned to normal.
- **Add a citation:** Follow MLA or APA format.
- **Tie it together:** Make sure the quotation's grammar, punctuation, and verb tense integrates consistently with the rest of your essay (see next page).
- **It is not necessary to quote plain information** that could be given in your own words.
 - ✗ • The capital of Canada “is Ottawa,” according to Smith (36).

LONG QUOTATIONS (BLOCK QUOTATIONS):

- Occasionally, a long passage will provide such important evidence, or consist of such a well-worded explanation/definition, that you will see the need to quote it completely.
- Set it off from the body of the essay, **double-spaced**, in an **indented** block.
- It is introduced with an appropriate lead-in and a **colon** (:). Quotation marks are not used.
- The citation follows the closing punctuation.
- MLA guidelines define a long quotation as more than **four lines** long, while APA guidelines define it as **40 or more words** long.

A great many serious social and political problems have contributed to the disturbing rise of crime in West African cities:

Disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, refugee migrations, the increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders, and the empowerment of private armies, security firms, and international drug cartels are now most tellingly demonstrated through a West African prism. (Kaplan 87)

These are clearly serious problems that can bring about a weakening of the social order. Since they occur in many regions of the world, it is Kaplan's view that the chaotic problems of the region ...

PARAPHRASING:

- To avoid excessive quoting, rephrase longer passages in your own words while mentioning the author.

Kaplan compares these restless, unemployed young men to atoms floating in space (56). In this way, he implies that ...



QUOTATIONS

Continued

INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS:

Use a complete sentence and a colon before the quote:

- Use this formal method if you want to **place an interpretation or judgement before the quote**.
 - The author uses a violent metaphor: “The moonlight slashed through the window.”

Use a short phrase and a comma before the quote:

- Use this method to stress **whose ideas are being discussed**. Capitalize the first word of the quote.
- Your short phrase can include **a verb**:
 - The essayist **argues**, “Capitalism breeds corruption,” which reveals her radical attitudes.
 - When the narrator talks to another boy about the incident, he **claims**, “It didn’t hurt.”
- Or it can be a phrase **without a verb**:
 - According to the study, “Schizophrenia afflicts about 1% of men and women.”
 - In the author's view, “We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us.”
- To learn about effective verbs to use, see the handouts: **English Exit Exam: Phrasing Tips** and **Essay Writing: Academic Vocabulary**.

Use THAT instead of other punctuation:

- Use this method if you want **less of an interruption** in the flow of your sentence.
- The quote begins with a lower case letter when the first word is not a name:
 - The essayist argues that “capitalism breeds corruption,” which reveals her radical attitudes.

Use short quotations seamlessly with the rest of your sentence:

- This form is useful for **quoting short phrases** from anywhere in the text, even **out of order**.
 - The boy sees himself as “a creature driven and derided by vanity.”
 - The author uses visual imagery to show that the narrator is pessimistic. The narrator “drinks somber black coffee” and wears “grim grey clothes,” demonstrating he is not hopeful.

If needed, modify your quotation to make it grammatically consistent:

- Integrated quotations often have to be **adjusted to fit the grammar of your sentence**.
- **You can shorten your quotation**:
 - The original reading: “I had growing suspicions about the banker.”
 - Your sentence: At this point, Claude has “growing suspicions about the banker.”
- **When you cannot shorten it, use [square brackets] to change the pronoun and verb tense**:
 - A switch from **I** to **he**: The narrator is wistful “because [he] drink[s] at the stream of time.”
 - A switch from **ran** to **runs**: Samia wins her freedom when she “finally [runs] to the beach.”
- **You don't have to quote all the words in a sentence** if you only need the beginning and end. Use an **ellipsis (...)** to skip over text you do not need.
 - The author states, “Some individuals ... exchange lively details with each other.”

For more information, contact the Academic Skills Centre.