

Integrating Quotations

Always choose quotations that are appropriate for your writing. Quotations should support your ideas, not replace them.

Strategies for Using Quotations

Use the strategies below to make the most effective use of quoted material in your writing.

■ **Use quotations to support your own thoughts and ideas.**

Effective quotations can back up your main points or support your arguments.

Bigger reads about himself in the newspapers and begins to believe certain things that have no basis in truth. He is referred to as someone who looks “as if about to spring upon you at any moment” (260). The papers also remark that Bigger “seems a beast utterly untouched” (260). Unfortunately, he has no control over what is printed or over what other people believe about him.

■ **Use quotations to lend authority to your writing.** Quoting an expert shows that you have researched your topic and understand its significance.

Albert Einstein observed the growth of nuclear power with concern, stating, “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.” His disturbing comment reminds individuals that a nuclear war would result in unthinkable destruction.

■ **Use quotations that are succinct and powerful.**

Distinctive quotations add value to your writing.

Pianist Benny Green defines a jazz musician as “a juggler who uses harmonies instead of oranges.” The test of jazz is how these harmonies, tossed about seemingly at random, actually hold together in a smooth, if loosely defined, pattern.

Common Quotation Problems to Avoid

Avoid these problems as you choose quotations.

■ **Plagiarism**

Cite sources for all quotations and paraphrases.

■ **Long quotations**

Keep quotations brief and to the point.

■ **Overused quotations**

Use a quotation only when you cannot share its message as powerfully or effectively in another way.