

Blending Quotations

The learner should know how to effectively blend quotations from a source into a paper.

METHODS FOR BLENDING QUOTATIONS

1. Use a comma to introduce a quotation after explanatory words (he says, she says, she explains, etc.).

*When a quotation is introduced with a phrase such as “*He says,*” “*She asks,*” and the like, the first letter of the quotation must be capitalized.

Jerry reveals that he is becoming more adventurous when he says, "I'd like to go and have a look at those rocks down there" (93).

Mary Bennet claims, “A person may be proud without being vain” (47).

2. Use a colon to introduce a longer quote (one complete sentence or more) that follows a complete stop.

Jerry now longs to challenge himself at the rocky beach and sees the sandy beach as being a place of immaturity: "It was a torment to him to waste a day of his careful self-training, but he stayed with her on that other beach, which now seemed a place for small children, a place where his mother might lie safe in the sun" (98).

3. Simply embed quoted material into your sentence.

*When embedding quoted material, either a complete sentence or fragment, into a longer sentence, if the first letter is capitalized in the original material, it is entered as a bracketed lower-case letter in the citation:

Mary Bennet shares her opinion that “[a] person may be proud without being vain” (47).

Jerry now views the sandy beach as a "place for small children" (98). He says that it is "not his beach" (98).

4. Use an ellipsis to omit unnecessary words or to demonstrate that the quote is only part of a compound sentence.

Jerry now longs to challenge himself at the rocky beach and sees the sandy beach as being a place of immaturity: "It was a torment to him...but he stayed with her on that other beach... a place for small children... where his mother might lie safe in the sun" (98).

5. Use brackets when you alter part of a quote to fit smoothly into your paper.

Jerry feels a need to push himself, "but he [stays] with her on that other beach, which now [seems] a place for small children" (98).

*** Examples are adapted from the Tempe Preparatory Academy Style Guide.**

Leading into, Blending, and Explaining Quotations

Whenever you're using textual support in a paper, it is important to always lead into, blend, and explain each quotation. Take a look at the sample paragraph below. Notice how the writer always follows these three steps:

- 1. Lead into the quotation. In other words, make sure to set the scene or prepare for the coming quotation.**
- 2. Blend the quotation smoothly using one of the approved methods. Generally, it is suggested that you try to embed a piece or fragment of a quote with your own words.**
- 3. Explain the significance of the quotation. (What does this quotation reveal? How does it add to the author's message or theme? How might it connect to the modern world? What impact does it have upon the reader? What mood or tone is created?)**

In Langston Hughes' poem "Dreams," two key metaphors are used to create a message about the importance and power of human aspirations. The first stanza introduces this theme, focusing on the need to hold on to one's dreams. Hughes compares a life without dreams to a "broken-winged bird / That cannot fly" (3-4). This vivid metaphor makes one think of the damage that a lack of hope can do to a person. A man or woman without a goal or dream is stuck on the ground just like that injured bird. Hughes intends to remind us of how painful it can be for the impoverished, hopeless human being who feels trapped in his/her own body, unable to soar. In the second stanza, Hughes explores this theme again. Instead of dreams dying, they "go," leaving behind a life without meaning. Hughes says that without dreams, "Life is a barren field / Frozen with snow" (7-8). The image of the cold, lifeless field suggests a world without meaning or beauty. It seems that Hughes is suggesting that a hopeless person is not only trapped like a "broken-winged bird," but they are also left behind in a sterile, heartless world. Clearly, Hughes is saying that all people need ambitions and hope for the future in order to have a life with meaning.

- Topic and concluding sentences
- Lead in
- Explanation or commentary