

3-Step Quoting Method Handout



Quotations must never be left floating by themselves—we must anchor them to the rest of the paragraph with the use of an introduction and follow-up explanation. To ensure that our quotes are not set adrift, we use

The Three-Step Quoting Method.

The Three-Step Quoting Method:

1. **Introduce the quote.**
2. **Quote.**
3. **Comment on the quote.**

#1 The Introduction / Lead-in to the Quote

A. Two Main Introduction Styles

There are two main introduction styles: 1) Tell the source of the information that will be quoted, or

2) Explain in the lead-in the author's reason for writing the quoted material.

1. Resource Included

Include the resource information in the introduction (author's name and title of source). Example:

In Henry David Thoreau's essay entitled "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," we read an effective metaphor: "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."



2. Explanatory Statement

Write an introduction that omits all or part of the source data and instead gives an explanatory statement tying the quote to your essay. Example:

When discussing ideas for a meaningful life, Henry David Thoreau writes, "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in" (Thoreau 5).

Notice that only a portion of the resource information is given in the introduction. Rather than giving all the resource data, we explain how the quote ties to our own essay's topic.

B. The Mechanics of the Introduction

1. Write a whole sentence for the introduction; include a colon. Example:

In Henry David Thoreau's essay entitled "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," we read an effective metaphor: "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

2. Write a fragment for the introduction; include a comma. Example:

When discussing ideas for a meaningful life, Henry David Thoreau writes, "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in" (Thoreau 5).

✓ You should use a comma to separate your own words from the quotation when your introductory or explanatory phrase ends with a verb such as "says," "said," "thinks," "believes," "pondered," "recalls," "questions," and "asks" (and many more). You should also use a comma when you introduce a quotation with a phrase such as "According to Thoreau."

3. Write a fragment using the word "that." Do not use a comma after the word "that." Example:

Thoreau suggests the consequences of making ourselves slaves to progress when he says that "We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us."

4. Write a quote that needs no introduction; write an **embedded quote**.

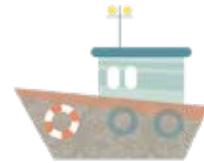
Example of a typical quote:

According to the current Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, "Beyond Academics is a magical place that spurs a child's imagination!"

Example of an embedded quote:

Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, writes that Beyond Academics has a "magical" impact, intensifying a child's creativity.

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#2 Adding the Quote

The Mechanics of the Quote

1. Periods and Commas

In the United States, periods and commas are written inside the ending quotation marks. The rest of the English-speaking world does not follow this rule. Examples:

Old McDonald said, “Animals have rights too.”

“Animals have rights too,” said Old McDonald.

Yes, in America periods and commas go inside the quotation marks—always. Well, almost... not when we cite the quote.

2. The In-Text Citation

To cite the material is to give the source from which the quote was taken. After writing a quote, write the author’s last name and the source’s page number in parentheses and place it after the quote. No page number is given if the source is a website. If the author’s name is not available, write the article’s title.

When we cite a quote, we do not put the period inside the quotation marks; the period goes after the in-text citation. Example:

When trying to persuade Americans to buy cage-free eggs, Old McDonald said, “Animals have rights too” (Smith 10).

Notice where the period is written—after the in-text citation. This is the one time you break America’s rule that periods must be inside the quote. Since the name “Smith” is written within the parentheses, we know that the author’s name is Smith. If the article did not give the author’s name, we put the article’s title in parentheses. Example:

When trying to persuade Americans to buy cage-free eggs, Old McDonald said, “Animals have rights too” (*We’re All Animals* 10).

#3 Commenting on the Quote

The comment must not simply repeat the quote. It must:

➤ Explain the quote’s meaning. Example:

In her article, “IQ Tests Suggest Pigs Are Smart as Dogs, Chimps,” Jennifer Viegas affirms that “Pigs can often outsmart dogs.” The author wishes the reader to value the pig as much as we value our pet dog.

➤ Tie the quote to the paragraph’s main idea. Example:

Viegas goes on to remind us that “even though studies show pigs are just as intelligent and empathetic,” as the animals we call man’s best friend, we regularly undervalue the pig (*Discovery*). Clearly, if pigs are able to bond with humans in ways some humans seem incapable of doing, these animals are more intelligent than many think.

➤ Give a “call to act.” Inspire the reader to do something valuable with the information. Example:

“Mother pigs spend most of their lives in gestation crates, which do not even allow the pigs to turn around,” Viegas states (*Discovery*). Humans and animals have the ability to think—think about their setting, think about their predicament, think about their relationships. An intelligent creature needs mental stimulation. Confining these animals to small spaces is inhuman. Farmers who do this are treating the animals like inanimate objects. We must not support farmers who mistreat pigs.

