How to Effectively Incorporate a Quotation into Academic Writing (MLA Format)

ENGL 1101 | J. Aplaca

**When incorporating a quotation into your writing, be sure to do the following:**

1. **Introduce the Quote:** Before inserting a quote, provide context and introduce it. This introduction can be a sentence or more to set the stage for the quote.
2. **Use Signal Phrases:** Begin with a signal phrase that includes the author's name and the source. This helps smoothly introduce the quote into your text.
3. **Present the Quote:** Insert the quote within your text, using quotation marks for short quotes (usually a few lines or less).
4. **Analyze the Quote:** After presenting the quote, provide analysis that focuses on the meaning of the quotation and its rhetorical impact. Explain how the quote connects to your argument, its significance, and the way it reinforces your point.
5. **Cite Properly:** Include the proper citation in MLA format after the quote. (See next page.)

**Some Signal Phrases to Introduce a Quote:**

* ***According to*** [Author's Name],...
* ***In the words of*** [Author's Name],...
* [Author's Name] ***argues that...***
* [Author's Name] ***writes that...***
* ***As*** [Author's Name] ***points out,...***
* ***To quote*** [Author's Name],...
* [Author's Name] ***discusses***...
* ***As evidenced in*** [Source],...
* [Author's Name] ***highlights***...
* ***As*** [Author's Name] ***articulates,***...

**Some Examples:**

Discussing the impact of the American Civil Rights Movement, Williams observes, "The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s played a pivotal role in challenging systemic racism and segregation, ultimately leading to legal reforms and social change" (Williams 128). This quote characterizes the Civil Rights Movement as an instrumental force that actively challenged institutional racism and segregation. By describing it as "pivotal," Williams accentuates the movement's historical significance and its role in effecting substantial legal and societal transformations. This precise language emphasizes the magnitude of the movement's impact on American history and civil rights.

In his research on income inequality, Brown found that "The growing income gap between the rich and the poor is not only a societal issue but also a significant determinant of health disparities" (Brown 92). This quote effectively extends the conversation beyond economic disparities, emphasizing that income inequality plays a pivotal role in influencing public health disparities. By making this connection explicit, Brown broadens the scope of the argument, highlighting the multifaceted impact of income inequality on society.

In their study on the effects of social media on mental health, Smith and Johnson assert, "The increased use of social media platforms has been linked to higher levels of anxiety and depression in young adults" (Smith and Johnson 67). This emphasizes the potential harm of extensive social media engagement. The quote underscores the empirical evidence behind the claim, reinforcing the argument's credibility and its relevance to the discussion of social media's impact on mental health.

**Formatting Your In-Text Citations:**

**1. Basic In-Text Citation Format:** In MLA format, in-text citations should typically include the author's last name and the page number from the source within parentheses, placed at the end of the sentence containing the cited information.

* Example: (Smith 45).

**2. Including the Author's Name in the Text:** You can choose to include the author's name in your sentence itself, which eliminates the need to repeat it in parentheses. In this case, place only the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

* Example: According to Smith, the impact of climate change is significant (45).

**3. No Author:** If the source has no identifiable author, you can use the title of the source instead. If the title is long, you can use a shortened form in your in-text citation.

* Example with a shortened title: ("Impact of Climate Change" 45).

**4. No Page Number:** If the source does not have page numbers (e.g., a website or an online source), students do not need to include any type of locator in the in-text citation. They can simply use the author's last name (or title if no author) within parentheses at the end of the sentence. Alternatively, students may choose to mention the author's name within the sentence itself.

* Example with author's name in the sentence: According to Smith, climate change has far-reaching impacts.
* Example within parentheses: (Smith).

**5. Multiple Authors:** When citing a source with two authors, include both names in your in-text citation, connected by "and."

* Example: (Smith and Johnson 45).

For sources with three or more authors, use the first author's last name followed by "et al."

* Example: (Doe et al. 67).

**6. Indirect Sources:** If you need to cite a source you found quoted in another source (an indirect source), include the original source in your text and then add "qtd. in" before the source you consulted.

* Example: As James Baldwin wrote, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced" (qtd. in Morrison 88).