

## Suggested Ways to Introduce Quotations

When you quote another writer's words, it's best to introduce or contextualize the quote. Don't forget to include author's last name and page number (MLA) or author, date, and page number (APA) in your citation. Shown below are some possible ways to introduce quotations. The examples use MLA format.

If your lead-in to the quotation ends in that or as, don't follow it with a comma. The first letter of the quotation should be lower case.

- Examples: Smith points out that "millions of students would like to burn this book" (53).
- Smith argues that " . . .
- Smith emphasizes that " . . .
- Smith interprets the hand washing in MacBeth as "an attempt at absolution" (106).
- Smith describes the novel as "a celebration of human experience" (233).

You can use a full sentence followed by a colon to introduce a quotation.

- Examples: The setting emphasizes deception: "Nothing is as it appears" (Smith 1).
- Piercy ends the poem on an ironic note: "To every woman a happy ending" (25).

You can also begin a sentence with your own words, then complete it with quoted words. Note that in the second example below, a slash with a space on either side ( / ) marks a line break in the original poem.

- Examples: Hamlet's task is to avenge a "foul and most unnatural murder" (Shakespeare 925). The speaker is mystified by her sleeping baby, whose "moth-breath / flickers among the flat pink roses" (Plath 17).

To quote a critic or researcher, you can use an introductory phrase naming the source, followed by a comma. Note that the first letter after the quotation marks should be uppercase. According to MLA guidelines, if you change the case of a letter from the original, you must indicate this with brackets. APA format doesn't require brackets.

- Examples: According to Smith, "[W]riting is fun" (215).
- In Smith's words, " . . .
- In Smith's view, " . . .
- Another way to introduce a critic's words is to use a descriptive verb, followed by a comma. Avoid using says unless the words were originally spoken aloud, for instance, during an interview.
- Examples: Smith states, "This book is terrific" (102).
- Smith remarks, " . . .
- Smith writes, " . . .

- Smith notes, " . . .
- Smith comments, " . . .
- Smith observes, " . . .
- Smith concludes, " . . .
- Smith reports, " . . .
- Smith maintains, " . . .
- Smith adds, " . . .