**Integrating Quotations into Sentences**

Source: <http://facultyweb.ivcc.edu/rrambo/eng1001/quotes.htm>

You should never have a quotation standing alone as a complete sentence, or, worse, as an incomplete sentence, in your writing. The quotation will seem disconnected from your own thoughts and from the flow of your sentences. …

**There are at least four ways to integrate quotations.**

1. Introduce the quotation with a complete sentence and a colon (:).

Example: In "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For," Thoreau states directly his purpose for going into the woods**:** "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."…

Example: Thoreau ends his essay with a metaphor**:** "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

This is an easy rule to remember: if you use a complete sentence to introduce a quotation, you need a colon after the sentence. Be careful not to confuse a colon **(:)** with a semicolon **(;)**. …

2. Use an introductory or explanatory phrase, but not a complete sentence, separated from the quotation with a comma.

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

Example: According to Thoreau**,** "We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us."

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. Make the quotation a part of your own sentence without any punctuation between your own words and the words you are quoting.

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."

Example: Thoreau argues **that** "shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous." …

Notice that the word "that" is used in three of the examples above, and when it is used as it is in the examples, "that" replaces the comma which would be necessary without "that" in the sentence. You usually have a choice, then, when you begin a sentence with a phrase such as "Thoreau says." You either can add a comma after "says" (Thoreau says, "quotation")  or you can add the word "that" with no comma (Thoreau says that "quotation.")

4. Use short quotations--only a few words--as part of your own sentence.

…

Example: Although Thoreau "drink[s] at" the stream of Time, he can "detect how shallow it is."

When you integrate quotations in this way, you do not use any special punctuation. Instead, you should punctuate the sentence just as you would if all of the words were your own. …

OVERALL

All of the methods above for integrating quotations are correct, but you should avoid relying too much on just one method. You should instead use a variety of methods.

Notice the Punctuation!

Notice that there are only two punctuation marks that are used to introduce quotations: the comma and the colon **(:)**. Note that a semicolon **(;)** is not used to introduce quotations.

Notice as well the punctuation of the sentences above in relation to the quotations. If there are no parenthetical citations in the sentences (no author's name and page number in parentheses), the commas and periods go inside the final quotation mark ("like this."). …

Semicolons and colons go outside of the final quotation mark ("like this";).

Question marks and exclamation points go outside of the final quotation mark if the punctuation mark is part of your sentence--your question or your exclamation ("like this"?). Those marks go inside of the final quotation mark if they are a part of the original--the writer's question or exclamation ("like this!").

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