

Embedding Quotations

The Nature of Writing video on integrating quotations offers the following three ways to quote from a text. In embedding a quote, you always use a signal phrase (your words introducing the quote), the quote itself, and then a citation. The kind of citation you use depends on the citation style you're using, whether MLA, Chicago, or something else. The below examples are MLA (Chicago uses footnotes).

1. The **short expression**, including the use of signal phrases, with AND without elaboration.

Katz writes, "The animal liberation movement is rather selective in its application of Darwinism" (99).

NB: You may only use a signal phrase this short when the surrounding sentences do an excellent job of embedding the quote further.

As Katz argues in his scathing attack on organizations that oppose the keeping of animals as pets, "The animal liberation movement is rather selective in its application of Darwinism" (99).

2. The **formal introduction**, when you use a complete sentence in advance of the quotation.

There is one question PETA supporters often face: "[I]f Darwin was right that evolution involves survival of the fittest, why should human beings be so concerned about less evolved animals?" (Katz 99).

Some critics believe that PETA is inconsistent in its use of Darwinian principles:

On the one hand, organizations like PETA suggest that human beings are no more special than other creatures. That's why killing a cow is just as bad as killing a child. In fact, given the problem of overpopulation, the death of human beings may help save the animals. Yet, if Darwin was right that evolution involves the survival of the fittest, why should human beings be so concerned about less evolved animals? (Katz 99)

3. The **run-in quotation**, where your signal phrase runs directly into the quote with no intervening punctuation; no comma or colon before the quotation marks. Instead, your signal phrase and the quote make a complete sentence.

Katz believes that "[t]he animal liberation movement is rather selective in its application of Darwinism" (99).

Radical PETA members feel that "killing a cow is just as bad as killing a child" (99).

Katz feels that Darwin's theory "that evolution involves the survival of the fittest" (99) is ignored by the animal liberation movement.

Common Mistakes

→ Simply plunking the quote down without explaining why you're using it.

Dickens writes, "the halo of scented soap" (193).

→ Including the page number, the word "article," or the title of the article as part of your signal phrase. (There are a few cases in which it's okay to include the title of the article, but they are rare indeed.)

On page 18 of his article "Dickens and Capitalism," Ferdinand Esterhazy writes, "Wemmick's mouth is described as a 'post-office' because all his communication in public remains non-committal and neutral."

→ Using the word "quote" as part of your signal phrases. This is awkward for several reasons. (Try replacing it with the word "passage" or "lines.")

We see this in the following quote: "Joe fell into the deepest disgrace with both, for offering the bright suggestion that I might only be presented with one of the dogs who had fought for the veal-cutlets" (63). This quote shows . . .