

CONQUERING QUOTATIONS WITH PUNCTUATION!

Do quotations make you want to cry? Do you shriek in fear at the mere thought of having to wrestle them into your paper? Well, even if this doesn't sound like you, here are some basic rules to follow in order to whip those quotations into submission – with punctuation!

Brackets

- Sometimes you may want to insert something into a quotation for clarification. Place any additional information within square brackets [].

Author Elliot Would argues that "They [Western doctors] are too intent on medicating and not intent enough on fixing them [ailments]" (Heveronian 29).

Single Quotation Marks

- Use single quotation marks to enclose a quotation within a quotation.

Dave Anderson believes that "there is no saying less true than 'it doesn't matter whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game.'"

Block Quotations

- When a quote is three lines or longer, it should be offset in a block. In a block quotation, no quotation marks are used and the period comes before the parenthetical citation.

There was no day more important than this one for him. He had been planning for weeks now, and wasn't going to let anyone stop him now. Except, maybe, for the policeman pounding at his front door. (72)

Comma/Period

- The comma and period always go inside the closing quotation mark when there is no parenthetical reference.

"Really, there is no excuse for aggressive behavior," the supervisor said. "It sets a bad example."

- The period goes outside of the quotation mark when using a parenthetical reference.

"Animals have a variety of emotions similar to humans" (Erikson 990).

Colon/Semicolon

- The colon and semicolon always go outside the closing quotation mark.

He referred to this group of people as his "gang": Heidi, Heather Shelley, and Jessie. Marx did not believe that "a single nation should have a single leader"; nevertheless, he became a leader singled out.

Ellipses

- The ellipses, three spaced dots (. . .), indicates that part of a quotation has been left out. Ellipses are useful when you want to include only the most relevant words of a quotation; however, any omission must not distort the quotation's original meaning.
- For omissions in the middle of a sentence, use an ellipsis.

The character of Sammy was soft-spoken, but he believed strongly in "respect for women, love of country . . . and a bright, sunny day" (87).

- For omissions at the end of a sentence, use an ellipsis followed by a period.

According to Zephron Cochran, "Warp drive is a creation that will change multitudes of lives"

- If a parenthetical citation follows an omission at the end of a sentence, place the period after the final parenthesis.

Of the many fruits available, Abraham Lincoln thought "apples to be the most nutritious . . ." (47).

- When omitting a long passage (stanzas, paragraphs, pages), use a single line of spaced dots as long as the preceding line.
- Omissions immediately following an introductory statement do not need an ellipsis.
In Harris' book, one-to-one conferences are "one of the most important aspects of teaching" (2).

Slash Mark

- The slash mark (/) is used to separate lines of poetry.

In "Driving to Devil's Tower, Wyoming," Heidi Gomez becomes closer to the land as the land comes closer to being alive: "Heat from the highway / Rises from my skin" (28).

Exclamation Point/Question Mark

- When the whole sentence except for the section enclosed in quotation marks is a question or exclamation, the question or exclamation mark goes outside the quotation mark.

Which British writer wrote, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls"?

- When only the unit in quotation marks is a question or exclamation, the mark goes inside the closing quotation mark.

The mediator asked, "What have you learned from this experience?"

- When both the whole sentence and the unit enclosed in quotation marks are questions or exclamations, the question or exclamation mark goes inside the closing quotation mark.

What does Joseph Campbell believe happens when you "Follow your bliss?"

- When using a parenthetical reference with a quote that ends in an exclamation point or question mark, keep the original punctuation inside the quotation and place a period after the parenthetical reference.

Kurt Koffka, a Gestalt psychologist, asked "Why do humans see their minds in terms of elementary parts?" (Gray 74).