

Title of Your Paper

This handout illustrates the proper method for making references to a text. These samples show you how to use a footnote or endnote, how to quote from the text within your paper, and how to punctuate the reference. (Your paper should be double-spaced.)

1. Sample First Reference:

Example: *Pride and Prejudice* begins with a statement that defines the social universe of the novel: “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.”¹ Although the sentence uses the vocabulary and syntax from the fields of math, logic, philosophy, and law, the sentence’s topic, “a single man[’s] . . . want of a wife,” belongs to a completely different field.

Note: The footnote number appears at the bottom of the page or, as “Endnote(s),” at the end of the paper.

Note: Three dots (an ellipsis) indicate that something has been omitted from the quotation, that you left words from the original out of your quotation because you did not wish to draw attention to them. See the first sentence quoted above to check this.

2. Sample Subsequent References:

Example: Chapter V opens with a description of “a family with whom the Bennets were particularly intimate” (18). By describing Mrs. Lucas as “not too clever to be a valuable neighbor” (18), the narrator mocks Mrs. Bennet.

Note: Sequence of punctuation

intimate” (18).	neighbor” (18),
1 2 3	1 2 3
1. close quote 2. Page # within () 3. period	1. Close quote 2. Page # within () 3. comma

¹ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Penguin, 1996), p. 5. All subsequent references will be to this edition.

Compare, in Example #1, the punctuation when no page # appears in parentheses. Then, end-punctuation (a period above, but also commas) goes inside quotation marks: “must be in want of a wife.” 1. period 2. final quotation marks.

The rule: In American usage (vs. European and British), commas and periods go inside quotation marks; semi-colons and colons go outside quotation marks:

” ; ” : ” ; ” :

unless you have a parenthetical page number to include at the end of the sentence. In that case, the order is the following:

neighbor” (18).

1. close quote
2. page # in ()
3. Punctuation

1

3. Sample Reference with Words Left Out:

(Note: An example of this appears in the first example.)

Example: The narrator tells us that if Elizabeth had “been able to encounter his eye, she might have seen how well the expression of heartfelt delight . . . became him” (291).

The ellipsis here comes in the middle of the quotation, where the words “diffused over his face” appear in the text. The three dots indicate that one or more words are missing. If you omit words from a quotation at the end of one of your sentences, add a dot:

Example: Throughout the novel, we evaluate characters on the basis of the multiple consciousnesses of the first sentence: “It is a truth universally acknowledged. . . .”

4. Sample Subsequent Reference with Material Inserted (Interpolated)

Note: As a general rule, you should not change a quotation. You can, however, insert an explanatory word or two in square brackets.

Example: When the narrator states, “though she could not look, [Elizabeth] could listen, and [Darcy] told her of his feelings” (295), visual communication has yielded to aural and verbal channels.

5. Block Quotation:

Note: When you want to quote a passage that covers more than three lines on the typed page, indent on both sides and single-space the “block quotation.”

Example: Although Elizabeth has been articulate throughout the novel, the narrator

conveys her reaction to Darcy through indirect instead of direct quotation:

[she] immediately, though not very fluently, gave him to understand, that her sentiments had undergone so material a change, since the period to which he alluded, as to make her receive with gratitude and pleasure, his present assurances. (295)

Note: At the end of a block quotation, the period comes before the page citation. Compare with example # 2.

Note: When you use a block quotation, you do not have to (and should not) put quotation marks around it (unless it is dialogue).

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

Before a quotation (*especially* a block quotation), introduce the passage. After it, indicate the specific parts of the quotation you want readers to attend to, the way you interpret the passage, or the reason you use it as evidence at this point in the argument. Otherwise, putting a quotation in your paper can seem like plunking a dead fish in front of your readers without telling them what to do with it: admire it, clean it, or cook it.

Instead of lobbing a “hot potato” at your readers, alert them that a quotation is coming, provide the relevant words, and state the significance of those words. Imagine what people who have never eaten a baked potato would do if you lobbed a hot foil-wrapped one at them—they’d drop it. Do you want them to do that with your supporting evidence? No, you definitely don’t. Warn them before throwing it, then instruct them.

First, alert them that a passage is about to appear; second, punctuate it correctly:

Example: When Mr. Bennet advises his daughter about a happy marriage, his language emphasizes the criteria both father and daughter use: “I know that you could be neither happy nor respectable; unless you truly esteemed your husband, unless you looked up to him as a superior” (303).

Note: This example contextualizes the quotation and names the speaker, Mr. Bennet, as the first element (the introduction) before citing his advice to Elizabeth in the second element (the quotation).

Third, state the significance you see in the passage.

Example: Her father’s wishes for Lizzie appears in the double qualifications that she be “happy” and “respectable” while he recommends most strongly that she “truly

estee[m]” and “loo[k] up to” a husband.