

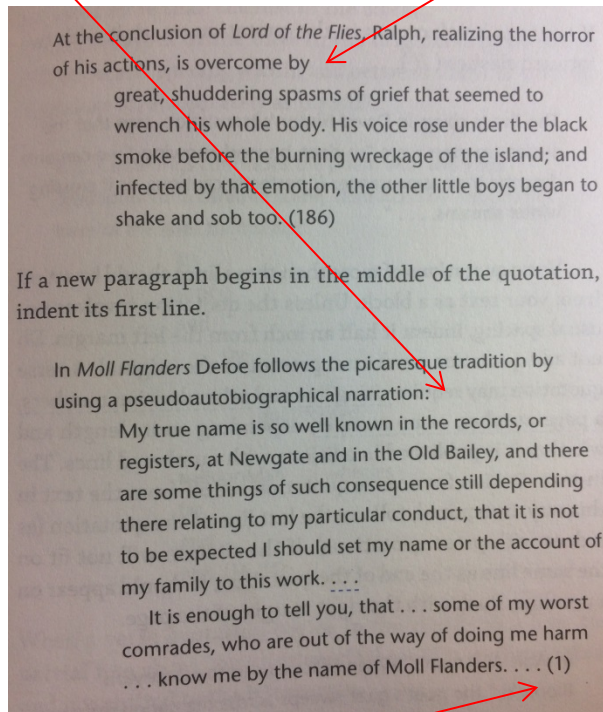
Incorporating Quotations in a Research Paper

The following information is from pages 76-80 (1.3.2, 1.3.3 and 1.3.4) of the *MLA Handbook*, 8th ed., issued by the Modern Language Association of America in 2016.

A. Prose Quotes (1.3.2)

If a prose quotation runs no more than four lines and requires no special emphasis, put it in quotation marks and incorporate it into the text.

If a quotation extends to more than four lines when run into your text, set it off from the text as a block indented half an inch from the left margin. Do not indent the first line an extra amount or add quotation marks not present in the original. A colon introduces a quotation displayed in this way except when the grammatical connection between your introductory wording and the quotation requires a different mark of punctuation or none at all.



A parenthetical reference (in-text citation) for a prose quotation set off from the text follows the last line of the quotation.

B. Poetry Quotes (1.3.3)

If you quote part or all of a line of verse that does not require special emphasis, put it in quotation marks within your text, just as you would a line of prose. You may also incorporate two or three lines this way, using a single forward slash with a space on each side (/) to indicate to your reader where the line breaks fall.

If a stanza break occurs in the quotation, mark it with two forward slashes (//).

The *Tao te ching*, in David Hinton's translation, says that the ancient masters were "so deep beyond knowing / we can only describe their appearance: // perfectly cautious, as if crossing winter streams. . . ."

Verse quotations of more than three lines should be set off from your text as a block. Unless the quotation involves unusual spacing, indent it half an inch from the left margin. Do not add quotation marks not present in the original. A verse quotation may require citing line and other division numbers, a page number, or no number, depending on its length and whether it is published in editions with numbered lines. The in-text citation for a verse quotation set off from the text in this way, if required, follows the last line of the quotation (as it does with prose quotations). If the citation will not fit on the same line as the end of the quotation, it should appear on a new line, flush with the right margin of the page.

◆ In-text citations
for verse
see sec. 3.3.2

In Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," the poet's gaze sweeps across the nation from east to west like the sun:

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and
hurrying tides, and the ships,
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in
the light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass
and corn. (canto 12)

A line too long to fit within the right margin should be formatted with hanging indentation, so that its continuation is indented more than the rest of the block.

If the layout of the lines in the original text, including indentation and spacing within and between them, is unusual, reproduce it as accurately as possible.

E. E. Cummings concludes the poem with this vivid description of a carefree scene, reinforced by the carefree form of the lines themselves:

it's
spring
and
the
goat-footed

balloonMan whistles
far
and
wee (16-24)

When a verse quotation begins in the middle of a line, the partial line should be positioned where it is in the original and not shifted to the left margin.

In "I Sit and Sew," by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, the speaker laments that social convention compels her to sit uselessly while her male compatriots lie in need on the battlefield:

My soul in pity flings
Appealing cries, yearning only to go
There in that holocaust of hell, those fields of woe—
But—I must sit and sew.

C. Drama Quotes (1.3.4)

If you quote dialogue in a play or screenplay, set the quotation off from your text. Begin each part of the dialogue with the appropriate character's name, indented half an inch from the left margin in all capital letters: HAMLET. Follow the name with a period and then start the quotation. Indent all subsequent lines in that character's speech an additional amount. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new line indented half an inch. Maintain this pattern throughout the entire quotation.

1.3.4 DRAMA

If you quote dialogue in a play or screenplay, set the quotation off from your text. Begin each part of the dialogue with the appropriate character's name, indented half an inch from the left margin and written in all capital letters: HAMLET. Follow the name with a period and then start the quotation. Indent all subsequent lines in that character's speech an additional amount. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new line indented half an inch. Maintain this pattern throughout the entire quotation.

Marguerite Duras's screenplay for *Hiroshima mon amour* suggests at the outset the profound difference between observation and experience:

HE. You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing. . . .

SHE. I saw *everything*. *Everything*. . . . The hospital, for instance, I saw it. I'm sure I did. There is a hospital in Hiroshima. How could I help seeing it? . . .

HE. You did not see the hospital in Hiroshima. You saw nothing in Hiroshima. (15-17)

A short time later Lear loses the final symbol of his former power, the soldiers who make up his train:

GONERIL.

Hear me, my lord.

What need you five-and-twenty, ten or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

REGAN.

What need one?

LEAR. O, reason not the need! (2.4.254-58)