

How to Direct quote

DIRECT QUOTATION - Use a quotation when you need to record a source's precise language. The emphasis here is on need. You should quote because the original language is necessary or the sense cannot be conveyed by other words. You may need to use quotation for the following purposes:

1. To capture individual authority or interest: An authority, a well-known person, or another individual should be quoted when his/her own words would be more important or more interesting to your reader.

For example

Hillary Rodham Clinton probably spoke for all mothers when she asked "What power wouldn't I trade for a little more time with my family?"

2. To ensure accuracy: Exact language is often needed to define special terms, describe conditions, or report results. The precise language that scientific, medical and technical sources rely upon for accuracy cannot always be paraphrased or summarized.

For example

"The horizontal axis is the real axis and the vertical axis is the imaginary axis. The number $a + bi$ is represented by a point a units to the right of the origin and b units up"

3. To illustrate unique language: Sometimes language is more important for its uniqueness or emotional power than its ability to convey meaning.

For example

Those of us who are well fed may find it difficult to understand that people who are homeless are grateful for whatever is available. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "Hunger never saw bad bread"

Direct quotation must be written exactly as it appears in the original work. But as long as you don't change the meaning, you may omit words from a quotation if they are not relevant to your point. To show such an omission, use three spaced periods (*known as ellipses*) in place of the deleted words:

ORIGINAL PASSAGE: We cannot guarantee that bad things will happen but we can argue that good things are not happening. It is the contention of this report that increasing numbers of young people are left to their own devices at a critical time in their development.

DIRECT QUOTATION: "We cannot guarantee that bad things will happen, but we can
WITH ELLIPSES argue that good things are not happening...increasing numbers of young people are left to their own devices... at a critical time in their development"

Adapted from:

Handout 3.1

Connelly, M. (2004). *The Sundance Writer: A Rhetoric, Reader, handbok*. (2nd ed).
Massachusetts, Thomson Wadsworth.

Dees, R. (2003). Writing the Modern Research Paper. (4th ed). New York: Longman

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