How to use long and short quotes: Video tutorial

http://www.screencast.com/t/98XGMa7udG7

Transcript

Introduction: Welcome to this mini tutorial on using long and short quotes brought to you by the University of Reading Study Advice team. It is designed for you to go through at your own pace and you can pause it at any time.

What are quotes: A quote is where you take word for word exactly what you have read and use it within your work; as in this example. This tutorial will look at when it's applicable to use a quote, how to incorporate them effectively into your writing and how to reference quotes correctly.

The purpose of quotes: There is a danger in using too many quotes within your work without careful consideration. You need to think carefully about the significance and the meaning of a quote and interpret these accordingly within your own work. Whilst adding lots of quotes in this way may give the impression that you know what others are saying within your field, you could be in danger of your own voice becoming lost and the reader wondering what the point is that you're trying to make. You need therefore to integrate quotes thoughtfully within your work.

Where to use quotes: One way to do this would be to follow a structure when writing. One such structure could be described as a 'quote sandwich'. Here you see the quote is sandwiched between the point that you wish to make and then interpreting and commenting on the quote itself and showing how it supports the point of view that you initially state; as in this example.

Before using a quote you need to think about whether a quote is really required or whether your work would benefit more from you writing the evidence out in

your own words, in what's known as a paraphrase. As mentioned, quotes generally should be used sparingly but there are particular instances when using a quote may be particularly effective.

If you are describing a term, perhaps offering a definition then a quote may be appropriate. The same is true if the choice of words the author used is particularly important, as in words within laws or guidelines, or you wished to analyse the choice of words have been offered. Also if you were going to analyse the quote at some length, offering your own interpretation- perhaps words within literature – then using quotes would be appropriate. You must though ensure you reference these correctly.

Using short quotes: When using a short quote you generally need to remember 4 things: author's surname, year of publication, page number (if appropriate) and quotation marks. This example follows the Harvard style of referencing; your work may look different if you're following a different referencing style. The idea is though, that the reader is given sufficient information to follow your research footprints back to your bibliography and the original source.

Using long quotes: Long quotes, those generally over 4 lines, require slightly different formatting. Again you need the author's surname and year of publication and page number, if appropriate, but in this instance you don't use quotation marks. Instead the text is indented to signify that it is, indeed, a quotation.

Again this gives the reader enough information to follow your trail back to your bibliography and your original source.

Exact wording: Finally, just a couple of conventions to be aware of when using quotes: First, you must use the exact wording of the quote including the punctuation that is used. If you wish to miss any parts of the sentence, you must use ellipses, as in this example.

Adding words: In addition, if you wish to add any additional words, perhaps to make sense of the quote once you have removed some parts of it, or to add back in the context, then use square brackets to indicate the part of the quote that is in fact your own words. Again this example helps to show this.

Summary: To summarise, use quotes sparingly within your work and when you do use them remember to always comment on them. Make sure you use the exact wording and punctuation and indicate when you are omitting or adding

words of your own. Make sure you include quotation marks for short quotations, the author, year and page number and put full details within the bibliography.