

Direct Quotations

When a writer takes information word-for-word from another source, it is called a Direct Quotation. There are several different methods of directly quoting other authors. When this is done, credit must always be given to the original author. This is called citing sources. By using various methods, you will make your own writing more interesting. However, keep in mind that you should NEVER start or end a paragraph with a direct quotation. Always lead into it with at least one sentence of your own, and follow up with another that you wrote.

Method one: State the quotation after leading with a sentence of your own.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. “There is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard by boys coming down from the ranches to swim in the deep pool and beaten hard by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water” (Steinbeck 1-2).

Notice that following the quotation, I have identified the author by last name and stated the number of the pages on which I found the quoted information. The brackets indicate that I added those words; they did not appear in the novel itself.

Method two: State the author’s *last* name prior to the quotation. Never refer to the author by first name.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. Steinbeck writes, “There is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard by boys coming down from the ranches to swim in the deep pool and beaten hard by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water” (1-2).

Notice that because I already stated the author’s name, I need only to identify the page numbers after the quotation.

Method three: Use only a partial quote, without first stating the author’s name.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. “There is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard...by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water” (Steinbeck 1-2).

Notice the three dots. This is called an ellipsis and must be used whenever you leave some of the author’s words out.

Method four: Use only a partial quote, not through the end of the sentence, without first stating the author’s name.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. “There is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard...by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening...” (Steinbeck 1-2).

Notice I also had to place an ellipsis at the end of my quotation, to indicate that in the novel, there was more to this sentence. However, please know that if you cut off the BEGINNING of a sentence, you do NOT use an ellipsis. So, you should never write something like this: “...Through the willows, [was] a path beaten hard...” (Steinbeck 1).

Method five: Use only a partial quote, first stating the author’s name.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. As Steinbeck describes, “there is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard...by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water” (1-2).

Method six: Use only a partial quote, not through the end of the sentence, first stating the author's name.

Example: Although this little spot in the woods is currently inhabited by just these two men, it is clear that many others, both human and animal, have, at times, found respite here, as well. As Steinbeck describes, “there is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard...by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening...” (1-2).

Indirect Quotations/Paraphrases

When a writer takes information from another source, but first summarizes or rewords it, this is called Paraphrasing. Even though you are not taking the author's information word-for-word, you are using his or her ideas and still need to give credit by citing the source. There are two main methods of paraphrasing.

Method one: Stating the author's name within the paraphrase.

Example: When the presence of man isn't intruding, though, there are other occupants of this peaceful little haven. Steinbeck reveals that rabbits, raccoons, deer, and heron are often seen drinking from the river and taking shelter in the trees and brush (1-2).

Method two: Not stating the author's name in the paraphrase.

Example: When the presence of man isn't intruding, though, there are other occupants of this peaceful little haven. Rabbits, raccoons, deer, and heron are often seen drinking from the river and taking shelter in the trees and brush (Steinbeck 1-2).

Some additional tips:

1. Never use the author's first name in a citation.
2. Direct quotations can, but most definitely do not have to be, dialog from the novel. If they do include dialog, the dialog is set off by single quotation marks. For example: After close inspection and a quick taste, George stated that it “tastes all right’ [as] he threw a scoop of water into his face and rubbed it about with his hand...” (Steinbeck 3).
3. Never follow up a quotation by writing, “In this quote...” or “This quotation shows us...” Instead, write something like “In this line...” or “This line shows that...”
4. Never put any name, other than the author's, in your citation. For example: After close inspection and a quick taste, he said it “tastes all right’ [as] he threw a scoop of water into his face and rubbed it about with his hand...” (George 3).
5. Use brackets if you ADD anything to a direct quotation. Example: “There is a path through the willows, a path beaten hard by boys coming down from the ranches to swim in the deep pool and beaten hard by tramps [transients and homeless people] who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle up near water” (Steinbeck 1-2).
6. Also use brackets if you CHANGE anything in a direct quotation. Example: “There [was] a path through the willows, a path beaten hard...by tramps [transients and homeless people] who [came] wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water” (Steinbeck 1-2).
7. If you quote directly or paraphrase from more than one page, all pages used must be cited. If they are consecutive pages, put a dash between the first and last page used. Examples: (1-3) or (42-3). If, however, you directly quote or paraphrase from two nonconsecutive pages, it would look like this: (1, 42) or a combination of both: (1-3, 42). It is not acceptable to write (1-42) unless you truly did use information from all 42 pages, which is unlikely.