

# 'Quotations' In Essays

\*NOTE\* The following rules apply to quotations and evidence in essays / reports. The rules for **dialogue** in fiction are slightly different.

Keep quotations **short**. Quotations should be of **appropriate** length. Only use a long quotation if you give it lengthy analysis.

Introduce with a colon to be safe (see below for options).

Use single ' or double " but be **consistent**.

Indicate **titles** of films / books / plays with italics: Romeo is a character in *Romeo and Juliet*. (use underline if handwriting)

Don't use the word 'quote' or 'quotation'. Instead, use 'Macbeth's speech', 'these lines', 'Steinbeck's metaphor', etc.

## INCORRECT

Shakespeare uses the **quote** 'with his brandish'd steel, which smok'd with bloody execution, like valour's minion carv'd out his passage'. **This** let me see how brave **he** was. (can't tell who 'he' is or what 'this' is / 'quote' is very poor grammar)

## CORRECT

Shakespeare's mastery of figurative language creates a vivid image of Macbeth's bravery. The sergeant's report of Macbeth's conduct in battle is a good example: 'For brave Macbeth ... with his brandish'd steel ... which smok'd with bloody execution'. The metaphorical description of Macbeth's fiery, murderous sword represents manhood as it was supposed to be: brave, fierce and relentless.

The full stop goes inside if it's part of the quotation, outside if it's part of your sentence.

'This quotation had a full stop of its own.' However, in this case: 'this quotation did not' so I need one here.

Quotations which are longer than one line should be indented. Complete lines of poetry should be laid out as in the poem.

This time the words in the quotation don't fit with my sentence so I introduce with a colon:

This is a relevant quotation which is indented because it is longer than one line long. Remember I don't need to use quotation marks when it's indented. I miss a line before and after the indented quotation.

Quotations are part of the sentence you're writing. If the words **connect**, don't use a colon or comma.

I'm about to introduce some lines from a poem which I will analyse. Luckily, the words in these lines

Connect like a river,  
Flowing to the sea...

So I was able to join it all up without using punctuation.

Similarly, in short quotations, no colon is used if the example flows as part of the sentence:

This 'neat little quotation' is a good example. But there are other ways to introduce quotations. For example, 'the comma.'

If you want to miss out irrelevant parts of a quotation, use **ellipsis** (...)

'This part is useful ... but I skipped a few words in the middle to get to here'

When using long quotations, it's a good idea to **pick out certain words/phrases** in your analysis for closer examination.