Integrating Quotations into Your Essay

"By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote."
-Ralph Waldo Emerson
When to Use Quotations

- Use quotations to serve as examples of your main points and observations.
- Choose only important material that effectively supports your point.
When to Use Quotations

- Select quotations carefully and purposefully for a research paper or for literary analysis:
  - to illustrate or explain an opinion or idea
  - to assert a fact
  - to provide authority for an assertion you have made
  - to provide a focal point
  - to show many opinions
Sprinkle your discussion with key phrases and terms, which should be surrounded with quotations marks.

In *Brown*, Richard Rodriguez claims that this muddied color is “complete freedom of substance and narrative” and serves as “the cement between leaves of paradox” (xi).
Use an indirect statement with "that." Notice the punctuation.

*Margaret Mead feels that "the use of marriage contracts may reduce the divorce rate"* (9).
Blend your lead-in and quotation.

Knight views the symbolism in Jones' play as a "creation and destruction pattern" (164).
How to Integrate Quotations

Use a complete sentence lead-in. Follow with a colon and two spaces before the quotation.

Edith Hamilton describes Hera perfectly: "She was the protector of marriage, and married women were her particular care" (223).

Again the main character hears the words spoken by his grandfather: "I never told you, but our life is a war" (154).
How to Integrate Quotations

Use an introductory phrase or clause.

According to Wally Lamb, “The workshop sessions have been a journey rich with laughter, tears, heart-stopping leaps of faith, and miraculous personal victories” (5).

As Bartholomew’s mother continuously intervenes for her ex-husband, she argues that “maybe it’s not his fault at all. . . . Maybe that old cat’s drugging him” (303).
Use the author's name and/or his authority to introduce quotations from secondary sources.

Frank Kermode, a prominent critic, claims that Hamlet "is a delaying revenger" (1138).
Punctuating Quotations

Use a comma for a brief, informal, or grammatically incomplete introduction.

Prufrock thinks, "I am no prophet--and here's no great matter" (line 37).
Use a colon to separate your own complete sentence lead-ins from quotations.

Remember that a complete sentence must be on either side of the colon.
Use an ellipsis [..] to indicate material omitted from the quotation.

Hamlet tells Ophelia, "you jig and amble . . . and make your wantonness your ignorance" (III.i.140-142).
To indicate material omitted at the end of your sentence, put a period with no space in front and then follow with three spaced periods.

Hawthorne writes that "Robin gazed with dismay and astonishment . . . . The effect was as if of two individual devils, a fiend of fire and a fiend of darkness, had united themselves to form this infernal visage" (887).
Punctuating Quotations

If using an ellipsis and a parenthetical page reference at the end of a sentence, put the fourth period after the parentheses.

According to Anne Barton, the last part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* shows "the relationship between art and life . . ." (219).
If omitting a whole sentence, use four dots.

Singer writes that, "His thoughts turned to matters of business, . . . . It was easier to think about practical matters" (279).
Use a line of spaced dots to signal that a line (or more) of poetry has been omitted.

Two lovers they sat on a hill:

\[ \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \]

And could not talk their fill (lines 6-8)
Use brackets [ ] to indicate editorial changes that you must make to clarify the quotation or improve the grammatical structure of your sentence.

Flaubert writes, "She looked carefully for the place where [Elizabeth] had entered the garden" (65).

Flaubert says that "she [has] an excess of energy" (97).
Reproduce your source exactly in a quotation. Use the word [sic] immediately after a problem word or obvious mistake.

"There were no pieces of strong [sic] around the boxes," one witness wrote.
Introduce long quotations with a complete sentence followed by a colon.

In *A Room of One’s Own*, Virginia Wolff speaks about women in literature and history:

A very queer, composite being thus emerges. Imaginatively she is of the highest importance; practically she is completely insignificant. She pervades poetry from cover to cover; she is all but absent from history. She dominates the loves of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact, she was the slave of any boy whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. (60)
Use double quotation marks for a quotation and single quotation marks for an inner quotation.

After his interview with Hester, Dimmensdale sinks into self-doubt:

"'Have I then sold myself,' thought the minister, 'to the fiend whom . . . this velveted old hag has chosen for her prince and master!"' (237).
Always put colons and semicolons outside quotation marks.

The senator announced, "I will not seek re-election"; then he left the room (25).
Punctuating Quotations

Always put periods and commas inside quotation marks, except when there is a parenthetical documentation.

Though Thoreau wrote that most men "lead lives of quiet desperation" (98), much of his book about Walden Pond "expresses joy" (96).
Put other marks of punctuation (question marks, dashes, exclamation points) inside when they are part of the quoted material, outside when they are not.

When King Hamlet's ghost reveals that he was killed by Claudius, young Hamlet exclaims, "O my prophetic soul!" (I.v.40).

What are the implications of Hamlet's statement, "To be, or not to be" (III.i.55)?
Punctuating Quotations

Use a slash (/) with a space before and after the mark to indicate line division in poetry when quoting three lines or fewer.

In "Harlem" by Langston Hughes, the speaker asks, "What happens to a dream deferred? / Does it dry up / like a raisin in the sun?" (1-3).
When introducing a quotation, use no comma after it and no capital to start the quotation unless it begins with a proper noun.

In the closing lines, Birkla asserts that “guided by the compass of her inner strength, [she] finally made her way back home” (140).
How to Trouble Shoot Problems

Keep all tenses the same. Change the tenses in the quotation to correspond to your tenses, putting your word in brackets. When writing about fictional events, change quoted verbs to the present tense.

Incorrect: While the legislators cringe at the sudden darkness, "all eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport."

Correct: While the legislators cringe at the sudden darkness, "all eyes [turn] to Abraham Davenport."
Make sure your sentences are complete.

Incorrect: We learn that there is some restiveness outside the village over lotteries: "over in the north village."

Correct: We learn that there is some restiveness outside the village over lotteries: "over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery; some places have already quit lotteries" (208).
Clarify pronouns that have no clear antecedent.

Incorrect: She does not, it should be noted, question the fairness of lotteries, just of the particular draw: "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair" (209).

Correct: She does not, it should be noted, question the fairness of lotteries, just of the particular draw: "You didn't give him [her husband] time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair" (209).
Make subjects and verbs agree.

Incorrect: Wilfred Owen says that the only prayer said for those who die in battle is war's noise, which "patter out their hasty orisons" (line 7).

Correct: Wilfred Owen says that the only prayer said for those who die in battle is war's noise, which "patter[s] out their hasty orisons" (line 7).
How to Trouble Shoot Problems

Make pronouns and antecedents agree.

Incorrect: The father, Abner, has taught Sartoris "... to stick to your own blood or you will not have any blood to stick to you" (107).

Correct: The father, Abner, has taught Sartoris "... to stick to [his] own blood or [he] will not have any blood to stick to [him]" (107).
The Citadel Writing and Learning Center by Amy Battle

http://www.citadel.edu/citadel/oth erserv/wctr/quotes.html#when

Formatted and revised by Patricia Burgey