

The Mechanics of Weaving a Quote



Why do we need to use quotes?

You need to utilize quotes in order to support your statements! It is no longer acceptable to make a statement without textual evidence, be it literature based or research based.

Why do we need to weave quotes?

In writing, one of the major goals is to be fluid! If you don't weave quotes, it makes your writing choppy. In addition, weaving quotes allows the reader to understand the purpose of your quote and where it came from.

OPTIONS TO WEAVE QUOTES IN MLA FORMAT

1. Using a colon to introduce a quote

Ruth McBride is described as a walking contradiction: "A black woman in white skin, with black children and a white woman's physical problem" (McBride 260).

NOTE: If you quote a complete sentence, you must capitalize the first word in the quotation. Also, the MLA citation comes after the quote, but before the period.

2. Using a comma to introduce a quote

Ruth McBride tells James, "God is the color of water. Water doesn't have a color" (McBride 51).

3. Integrating the quotation into your own sentence

According to Ruth, she was not living a life without food, but she "was starving in another way. [She] was starving for love and affection" (McBride 83).

Though James felt ashamed of his mixed background as a child, now that he is older he feels that he is "privileged to have come from two worlds" (103).

Ruth McBride believes that "a marriage needs love. And God. And a little money. That's all" (233).

NOTE: When weaving quotes into your own sentence, you must be sure that the grammar of your part of the sentence matches the grammar of the quotation. Use square brackets and ellipses to indicate the changes you make to the quotation.

Ruth knew that "[it wasn't acceptable] to be with a black man and that was that" (232).

4. Setting off a block quote (for quotations of three or more lines)

As James searched for more information about his mother's history, he found her only childhood friend, Frances Moody:

Right away I drove to Portsmouth and met my mother's childhood friend, a slim, brown-haired, soft spoken woman of Mommy's age whose eyes, it turned out, were working just fine. (McBride 273)

NOTE: When using indented quotes, DO NOT use quotation marks, and single-space the quote. Put the MLA citation outside the sentence's punctuation.