

Essay Tips: Direct Quotations and Paraphrasing

Supporting Evidence in an Essay

Evidence can take the form of a direct quotation or paraphrase. Paraphrasing is a great way to avoid overusing quotation in your essay. Paraphrasing also helps to develop your ethos because it shows that you fully understand the sources that you are using and can explain the main points in your own words. A paraphrase can be used in place of a direct quotation in your essay.

What is the Difference between a Direct Quote and a Paraphrase?

Online Source: Your Dictionary

Direct Quotations

- A direct quotation is when you use another person's words (verbatim) to support your argument. A direct quotation can be a sentence or just a few words. It is important to make sure that your direct quotation fits into your paragraph and flows cohesively (makes sense).
- If you are directly quoting an entire sentence but would like to omit a few words from the sentence, you can do so by using ellipses (...) in place of the unwanted words. When removing words from a direct quotation, make sure that you maintain the integrity of the sentence and of the paragraph by double checking to make sure that what you are writing makes sense and flows cohesively.
- If you need to add a word or phrase to a direct quote in order to clarify the meaning or the point that you are making, you can do so by using brackets [].
- A direct quote must be in quotation marks and must include an in-text citation.

Paraphrasing

- Paraphrasing involves taking a set of key facts or opinions and rewording them.
- When paraphrasing, it is important to maintain the original meaning even though you are presenting it in a new form. Basically, you are simply writing something in your own words that expresses another person's original idea.
- Paraphrasing can be done with individual sentences or entire paragraphs.
- Since a paraphrase is not your original thought, credit must be given to the owner by citing the source.
- A paraphrase does not need quotation marks, but it does need an in-text citation.

Blended Quotation

- A blended quotation uses paraphrasing and selective quoting to seamlessly integrate evidence into an essay.
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Blended Quotations

Ellipses: Use ellipses to indicate that words have been removed from within the direct quote. Ellipses are never used at the beginning or end of a direct quote. Ellipses should not take away from the original meaning or integrity of the direct quote.

Brackets: Use brackets to indicate a change in tense (if possible) or to insert clarifying words into the direct quote. Brackets should not take away from the original meaning or integrity of the direct quote.

Direct Quotation using Ellipses:

"His wife served him his morning meal...which she had thought was her culinary masterpiece. She asked, '...isn't it good?' At other times he would have said, considering her feelings in the matter, 'I feel full-up, that's all.' But today he said, 'It isn't good. I'm unable to swallow it.'" (Narayan).

Ellipses



Paraphrased Citation



Blended Quotation (mix of paraphrase and direct quotation):

Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife that he is not enjoying the meal and that "her culinary masterpiece...isn't good" (Narayan).

Integrating Quotes into a Constructed Response or Essay

When direct quotations are integrated into an essay, all words within the quotation must flow and make sense within the context of the essay. Direct quotations do not have to be in complete sentences, rather quote selectively to emphasize the point being made through the commentary. An essay that has too many direct quotations and too little commentary takes away from the credibility of the writer. Remember that literary analysis constructed responses and essays are written in the third person point of view.

Example	Analysis
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife “while his wife served him his morning meal. He showed hesitation over a tit-bit, which she had thought was her culinary masterpiece. She asked, ‘Why, isn’t it good?’ At other times he would have said, considering her feelings in the matter, ‘I feel full-up, that’s all.’ But today he said, ‘It isn’t good. I’m unable to swallow it.’” (Narayan).	<input type="checkbox"/> Good Integration Flawed Integration (select all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation switches tense <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is too long <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is not introduced smoothly <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation does not make sense contextually
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife “It isn’t good. I’m unable to swallow it” (Narayan).	<input type="checkbox"/> Good Integration Flawed Integration (select all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation switches tense <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is too long <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is not introduced smoothly <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation does not make sense contextually
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife that he is not enjoying the meal and that “her culinary masterpiece...isn’t good” (Narayan).	<input type="checkbox"/> Good Integration Flawed Integration (select all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation switches tense <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is too long <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation is not introduced smoothly <input type="checkbox"/> Direct quotation does not make sense contextually

Transitioning from a Direct Quote or Paraphrase into Commentary

To fluidly transition from a direct quotation or paraphrase to commentary, use select words from the quote/paraphrase as a springboard into your commentary. Your commentary should explain and expand upon the purpose of your evidence and then work to connect it back to the claim. Do not transition into commentary using superfluous (unnecessary) wording or labels. Your job is only to discuss and analyze the text.

Example	Analysis
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife that he is not enjoying the meal and that “her culinary masterpiece...isn’t good” (Narayan). This quote shows that Sekhar cares more about telling the truth than about his wife’s feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Flawed Explain why it is good/flawed:
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife that he is not enjoying the meal and that “her culinary masterpiece...isn’t good” (Narayan). I think that this evidence from the beginning of the story proves that Sekhar is not a nice man.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Flawed Explain why it is good/flawed:
Sekhar, in his effort to keep his self-made pact and tell the truth, reveals to his wife that he is not enjoying the meal and that “her culinary masterpiece...isn’t good” (Narayan). His honesty about the meal that his wife took the time to cook for him, and was proud of, shows that Sekhar cares more about being honest than about preserving his wife’s feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Flawed Explain why it is good/flawed: