



## Integrating Quotes into your Essay

Integrating the words or ideas from another source is a big part of academic writing. Students must be careful not only to avoid plagiarism, but also to enable readers to fully understand your use of a quote or a paraphrase from a source.

Never insert a quote or a paraphrase abruptly into your writing without first introducing the quote (or paraphrase), citing it, and explaining it. This means that you will never begin or end a paragraph with a quote. This method is often referred to as the **ICE** method of integrating quotes: **Introduce, Cite, and then Explain.**

1. **Introduce.** When introducing your quote, you will provide the context of this quote as well as show the source of the quote. The quote cannot do the work for you; you must provide your reader with some idea of why you have chosen to use this quote. You should also tell your reader who is speaking or where this quote came from and the relationship this person or source has to the point you are making. That is, why should your reader take this quote seriously? Is the speaker or the source an authority on the topic?

### Here is an example:

This provides the reader with some context, or the points that you are making by including this quote.



In the beginning stages of the juvenile justice system, it operated in accordance to a paternalistic philosophy. This can be understood through the published words of Judge Julian Mack, who had a hand in the establishment of the juvenile justice system. In 1909, he stated...



This part provides the reader with who this quote is coming from as well as his relationship or authority on the topic.

After including the source of the quote, be sure that you use a signal verb to indicate that the source's words are next. In the example above, you can see that "he stated" has been used to signal the source's words. Other signal verbs include:

adds	remarks	exclaims	announces	replies	claims
comments	responds	estimates	writes	points out	predicts
argues	suggests	proposes	declares	criticizes	proclaims
notes	complains	observes	thinks	presents	concludes

For other options, see our list of [signal verbs](#).

### Templates for introducing quotations:

- X states, "...."
- As the prominent philosophy X puts it, "...."
- According to X, "...."
- X himself writes, "...."
- In her book,...., X maintains that "...."
- In the article,....., X claims that "...."
- In X's view, "...."

X agrees when she writes, "...."  
 X disagrees when he writes, "...."  
 X complicates matters further when she writes, "...."

2. **Cite.** Directly after your quote, you will need to provide the in-text citation. For APA format, this includes the author’s last name only, the year of the publication, and the page number (or paragraph number if there is no page number listed).

**Here is an example:**

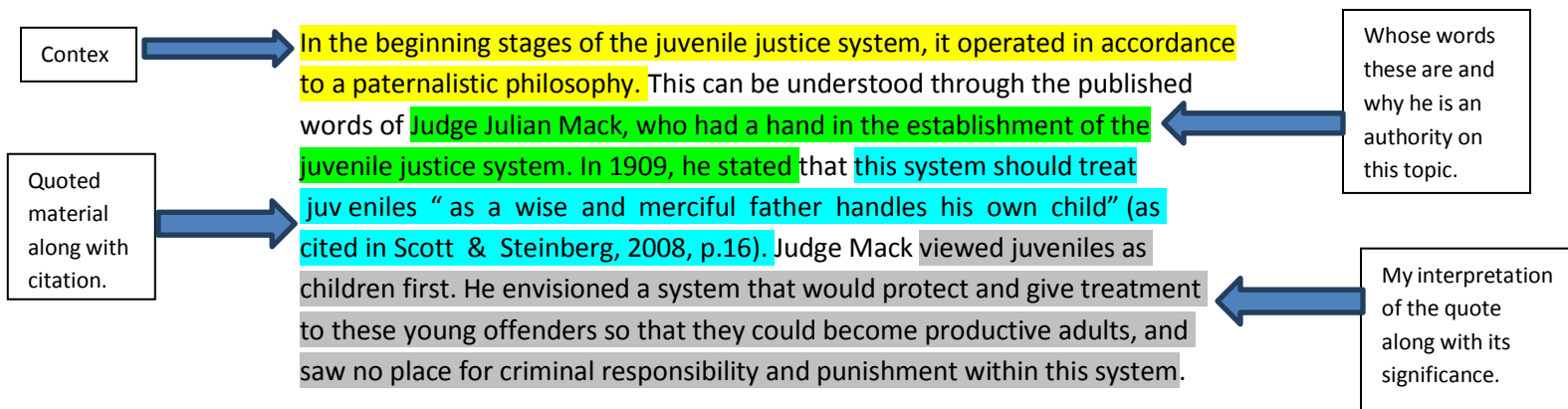
In 1909, he stated that this system should treat juveniles “as a wise and merciful father handles his own child” (as cited in Scott & Steinberg, 2008, p. 16).

3. **Explain.** After the quote, you will need to explain the significance of the quote. How might it relate to your thesis? Your reader should not have to interpret the quote and what it means or how it helps to support the point you are trying to make. Never leave any room for interpretation. It is your responsibility as the writer to interpret the quote for your reader and provide the significance.

**Using the same quote as above, here is an example of the ICE method:**

Judge Mack viewed juveniles as children first. He envisioned a system that would protect and give treatment to these young offenders so that they could become productive adults, and saw no place for criminal responsibility and punishment within this system.

Now, if we look at each step together, this is what we see:



**Top 6 Rules of Thumb**

1. **Quote the Good Stuff.** Beware of using quotations that do not mean anything or add substance to your essay.  
 If a source says something so well that you couldn't possibly change it, use it!  
 If a source backs up a point you made, use it!  
 If you *understand* what a source is saying, use it! You will have to analyze it later, so understanding it will help you.
2. **Avoid Over-quoting.** Remember "less is more." Do not pad your essay with other people's ideas.

3. **Keep Quotations Short.** Keep your quotations 1–2 sentences long or use a few key words/phrases. If you need it all, turn the quotation into a "block quotation," but use them sparingly! "Block" the quotation if it's more than 40 words long. Block the quotation by having it start on a new line and in the same position as a new paragraph.

Example (Note: Block quotations should not be double– spaced):

In the chapter "Chicken Man," McBride (1997) narrated his rebellion as a teenager with honesty but without remorse:

I was obviously hiding, and angry as well, but I would never admit that to myself. The marvelous orchestrated chaos that Mommy had so painstakingly constructed to make her house run smoothly broke down when Daddy died, and Mommy was in no fixing mood. (p. 140)

4. **Copy Quotations Correctly.** Misspellings and use of incorrect grammar when it's obvious that the source couldn't have made those mistakes affects your own credibility as a writer. Accuracy indicates care for one's work.

Use brackets when you alter a word or phrase from the quotation. Example: Picciano (2001) stated, "[Distance learning] technologies [have] certain benefits and certain limitations and, as indicated earlier, a best technology does not yet exist" (p. 61).

Use an ellipsis when you omit words or phrases from the quotation. Use an ellipsis with brackets [...] when you omit an entire sentence. Example: When Fuller (2005) returns home, she explained, "...I was dislocated and depressed" (p. 72).

5. **Do Not Start a Paragraph with a Quotation.** A paragraph should begin with your ideas. The first sentence of a paragraph is known as the *topic sentence* or *assertion*, both of which support the focus of the essay. In turn, the quotation supports the topic sentence.
6. **Do Not End a Paragraph with a Quotation.** Always conclude the paragraph with *your ideas*. The last sentence should be part of your analysis of the quotation.