QUOTATIONS IN LITERARY ANALYSIS

Your essays should reflect your thought and insight as it is supported by the author's work. The reader must clearly distinguish between your ideas and the author's. Therefore, you must make the distinction clear, but you must also constantly blend the materials in a way that will make your sentences easy to follow.

QUOTATION INTEGRATION

- **Lead into the quote with an introductory phrase; it cannot stand alone!** Quotations need to be introduced. They should NOT be "floating" quotations. Quotations should never be brought in unless you prepare your reader in some way.

  - *Remember that the quoted material must blend smoothly:*
    - AVOID: Othello says that he "have done the state some service" (5.2.337).
    - BETTER: Othello says that he "[has] done the state some service" (5.2.337).
    - BEST: Othello says he has "done the state some service" (5.2.337).

  - *Whenever possible, avoid using brackets, and work the change into your own words.*

  - *Introducing a quotation does not mean telling the reader where the quotation was found!*
    - AVOID: In Act II, Othello says, "Oh my fair warrior!" (2.1.179).
    - CORRECT: Upon his arrival in Cypress, Othello says, "Oh my fair warrior!" (2.1.179).

- **If a quotation ending with a question mark or exclamation point concludes your sentences and requires a parenthetical reference, retain the original punctuation within the quote.**

  - Dorothea responds to her sister, "What a wonderful little almanac you are, Celia!" (7).

  - In Mary Shelly's Frankenstein, the doctor wonders, "how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavored to form?" (42).

- **Remember, when poetry (including dramatic poetry like Shakespeare) is incorporated in your prose, you must indicate the ends of lines of poetry with slash marks (/).**

  - If the first letter of each line is capitalized, so should they be in your paper.

- **Always use ellipses (. . .) to signify that you have taken information out; Use brackets [ ] to signify you have added something for clarification or changed a verb tense.**

- **Remember narration is punctuated differently that dialogue. Narration uses "narration…" Dialogue uses " 'dialogue…' "   A combo would look like "narration… 'dialogue'…"**

- **AVOID…**
  - An example of this is evident when…
  - A confirmation of this occurs at the point where…
  - Hamlet shows this when he says…

TECHNIQUES TO INTEGRATE QUOTES INTO YOUR PROSE:

Vary the technique you use to integrate and introduce quotations, otherwise your writing becomes repetitive and monotonous.

- **Technique #1: Indicate who is speaking. (So and so says or some other verb)**
  - Example: When Claudius finally addresses Hamlet as his son, Hamlet notes, "….

- **Technique #2: Introduce the quotation with a colon.**
  - In this situation, what precedes and follows the colon must be a complete sentence.
  - Example: When Hamlet is finally left alone, he considers death: "Oh that this too too solid flesh would melt, / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!" (1.2.135-137).

- **Technique #3: Use an ellipsis to omit words that would other make the integration of the prose awkward.**
  - As long as you <u>do</u> <u>not</u> <u>change</u> the meaning of the passage, such omissions are perfectly acceptable
  - Ellipses can also be use to reduce a long quotation so that the most important parts are emphasized.
  - To use ellipses after a full sentence, put the period and then the three ellipses marks for a total of four periods.
  - Example: Hamlet feels he must corroborate the Ghost's charge that Claudius is a murderer: "The spirit that I have seen / May be a devil; and the devil hath power / T' assume a pleasing shape. . . . I'll have grounds / More relative than this" (2.2.606-608, 611-612).
  - Note the parenthetical reference lists only those lines that are actually quoted; the ones omitted with the ellipses are not listed in the parenthetical reference.

- **Technique #4: Break up the quotation into its most important pieces and weave these into your prose.**
  - This is similar to the use of ellipses, but it is usually employed when a quotation would contain several ellipses and/or only a few scattered words from a passage would need to be emphasized. If using this method, make sure that your quote accurately reflects the intent of the passage.
  - Example: Hamlet justifies his determination to corroborate the Ghost's charge by noting that the Ghost may in fact be "a devil" exploiting Hamlet's "weakness" and "melancholy" in an effort to "damn" him (2.2.607, 609, 611).

EXPLICATING QUOTATIONS (UNFOLDING; EXPLAINING IN DETAIL):

- Explicating the quotation is the most important of all. Quotations are the heart of a literature paper's argument. Don't assume the reader sees what you do – spell it out.
- Pay attention to nuances and connotations of language – not just what is said, but to who it is said and how
- AVOID…
  - Shakespeare is trying to point out that…
  - This example shows that…
  - This quote demonstrates how…
- JUST STATE YOUR POINT!!!