

Guidelines for Using TEXTUAL EVIDENCE in a Literary Argument

Quote from the text

when the author's **word choice** is important.

when you are making a very **specific point** about the text.

Use paraphrase or summary.

when you are referring to a **general** fact about the novel.

when you simply need to refer to the **plotline**.

Quote extensively (a block quotation—more than three lines) *ONLY*

when the quotation is **crucial**, perhaps central, to your argument and will lose its effect if paraphrased.

when you have a **great deal to analyze** in the quotation.

when you are writing a relatively **long paper** (perhaps over six pages).

Introducing Quoted Material into Your Prose

Always remember to

transition smoothly and **grammatically** from your prose to the quotation;

connect the quotation to your prose using a **colon or comma**, not a semicolon or period;

punctuate correctly: place periods and commas **inside** quotation marks, semicolons, colons, question marks, exclamation points, and page numbers **outside**:

Even after she finally finds her true love, she defines herself by the actions of a man: "Once upon a time, Ah never 'spected nothin' . . . But you come 'long and made somethin' outa me" (167).