

Guidelines for Attributing Quotes

Direct quotes add color and credibility to a story, and by using them the writer is putting the reader directly in touch with the speaker. Quotes add interest, provide a personal touch, change the pace of the story, and give insights to an event along with the people involved in the event.

Because quotation marks bring attention to words, emphasize points, reveal character, and display authority and credibility, the writer must be selective about what he quotes. Read my lips---*choose quotes carefully.*

When quoting:

1. Stress the person's answer to the question (i.e. do not repeat the question).
2. Usually what is being said is more important than who said it, so the "attribution" should come at the end of the quote. The exception occurs when the writer needs to distinguish which quote belongs to which speaker.
3. Do not keep the reader wondering who is doing the talking. Ordinarily, the attribution should not be placed at the beginning of the quote. However, if direct quotes from two different speakers follow one another, the writer should start the second with the attribution to avoid confusion.
4. If a quotation requires explanation, the explanation should be placed before the quotation and not after it so that readers can immediately understand what is being said.
5. Avoid using partial quotes. Complete sentences quotations are less confusing to the reader.
6. If the quote is more than one sentence long, place the attribution at the end of the first sentence.
7. Attribute indirect quotes as well as direct quotes.
8. The first time you attribute a direct or indirect quote, identify the speaker by their full name; only cite the last name for second and following references. Consistency counts—
9. Select the proper words of attribution (i.e. words that accurately convey the speaker's actual meaning and behavior).
10. Place only the source's exact words in quotation marks.
11. Do not use information that has been previously cited elsewhere in your writing.
12. Only quote when you understand what is being said.
13. Accurately choose attributing verbs. Verbs should provide the reasoning behind the direct or indirect quote. *Said* is always safe, but other options include:

<i>acknowledges</i>	<i>confirms</i>	<i>feels</i>	<i>proposes</i>
<i>adds</i>	<i>contends</i>	<i>finds</i>	<i>refutes</i>
<i>admits</i>	<i>continues</i>	<i>grants</i>	<i>rejects</i>
<i>agrees</i>	<i>declares</i>	<i>illustrates</i>	<i>reports</i>
<i>argues</i>	<i>denies</i>	<i>implies</i>	<i>responds</i>
<i>asserts</i>	<i>disagrees</i>	<i>insists</i>	<i>says</i>
<i>believes</i>	<i>disputes</i>	<i>maintains</i>	<i>states</i>
<i>claims</i>	<i>emphasizes</i>	<i>notes</i>	<i>suggests</i>
<i>comments</i>	<i>endorses</i>	<i>observes</i>	<i>thinks</i>
<i>concludes</i>	<i>establishes</i>	<i>points out</i>	<i>writes</i>

What **NOT** to attribute:

- matters of public record
- material generally known and available from several sources
- when the writer is a witness

