Quotations in academic writing are designed to provide credit to a source or author for an original idea or phrasing. It is important to include quotations because they separate your ideas from those of others.

What requires quotations?

Direct Quotes: You must use quotations when taking information word-for-word from another source (even if that source is yourself). Place only another author’s direct words in quotation marks and cite the source at the end of the sentence.

- Example (MLA style): Persian cats possess an unusual look as they are the only cat breed “with long hair and a flat face” (Stone 6).

Attributive Tags (can also be called Signal Phrases): These are used in a situation in which the author of a source is introduced (occasionally with their credentials, too) using a keyword or tag before or after the quote.

- Example (MLA): Cat expert and enthusiast Lynn Stone asserts it is “important to vaccinate cats to protect them from illness and to feed them the proper diet for each stage in their life” (16).

Citation Note: When using an attributive tag, you do not have to include the author's name in the citation; that information is already in the sentence!

Below are some of the most commonly used attributive tags:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>acknowledges</th>
<th>believes</th>
<th>declares</th>
<th>grants</th>
<th>notes</th>
<th>rejects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agrees</td>
<td>claims</td>
<td>denies</td>
<td>illustrates</td>
<td>observes</td>
<td>reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argues</td>
<td>concludes</td>
<td>disputes</td>
<td>implies</td>
<td>points out</td>
<td>suggests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asserts</td>
<td>contends</td>
<td>emphasizes</td>
<td>insists</td>
<td>reasons</td>
<td>thinks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Information adapted from The Norton Field Guide to Writing by Richard Bullock

Ineffective Uses of Quotations

Dropped Quotes occur when a quotation stands alone in a sentence and does not incorporate your own words. It is necessary to include an introduction to the quote because it helps your reader contextualize the information so they can understand how the information adds to your main point.

- Incorrect: Persians have long coats and a flat face. “The Persian has that remarkable unique look” (Stone 14).

Notice how the information is “dropped” into the middle of what the writer is saying. It’s unclear why the writer felt the need to quote this material and without context it doesn’t directly connect to the other ideas.

- Correct: Due to their long coat and flat face, “[t]he Persian has that remarkable unique look” (Stone 14).

Here the quote is introduced and integrated into the sentence. The reader understands this information is connected.
Other Forms of Attribution Requiring Citation

Paraphrasing is when you put another author’s idea into your own words. Remember that merely substituting in other words is wrong and counts as plagiarism. You must change the sentence structure not just the words! Additionally, because this idea came from another author, you must give credit and include a citation.

- *Example (MLA)*: The author believes Persian cats are both beautiful and unique, making them a perfect cat for a peaceful home (Stone).

Block Quotes are used when it is necessary to incorporate a long section of someone else’s words in your work (for MLA, this is more than 4 lines of text; for APA, this is more than 40 words; for Chicago, this is more than 100 words).

- *Example (MLA)*:
  Under that blanket of long fur and behind those big, bright eyes lurks the gentle Persian. The Persian’s sweet nature and unique looks have made it one of the most popular cat breeds. The Persian’s broad, flat face gives it the look of a calm, wise old owl—with fur. People of all ages enjoy the warmth of their personality and companionship they offer. (Stone 4)

Punctuating Quotes

Periods and Commas: When using quotation marks, end the sentence using a period AFTER the citation parentheses. The only exception for the placement of the period is when you are using block quotes (see other exceptions below). In brief quotes within a sentence, put the comma or period inside the quotation marks, see below:

- *Example (MLA)*: A lot of Persian cats have “gold eyes,” yet “silver Persians have green eyes” (Stone 8).

Question Marks and Exclamation Points: If the punctuation is part of the quote they go inside the quotation marks, otherwise they go before the parenthetical citation.

- *Example (MLA)*: After reading the book about Persians, the author notes that the children exclaimed “cats are cool!” (Jones, 45).
- *Example (MLA)*: Stone remarks that these cats “quickly replaced America’s own Maine Coon breed in popularity,” yet what caused this to occur? (20).

Colons and Semicolons: This punctuation ALWAYS goes after the closing quotation marks.

- *Example (MLA)*: While the origin of the cat remains a mystery, Stone notes “the Persian is an old breed”; yet, the popularity of these cats is rather recent in the United States (18).

* See the reference handouts on MLA, APA, and Chicago for more specific information on how to cite correctly.

Credible Sources

There are two major forms of sources:

- **Primary Sources**: Primary sources include the original document or a copy of it (ex: the US Constitution or the Diary of Anne Frank). These kinds of sources are more credible or reliable than secondary sources.

- **Secondary Sources**: Secondary sources include a document providing an analysis of a primary source. (Ex: an article discussing the interpretation of the US Constitution). These are seen as less credible because interpretations can be wrong, and at the very least are subject to opinion and can, therefore be biased.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Credible and Noncredible Sources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credible Sources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Noncredible Sources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An article from a journal written by authors who have degrees relatable and respected within their field</td>
<td>• Any social media content such as blogs or Facebook posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A peer-reviewed article</td>
<td>• Research articles without citations or outside literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Websites from credible sources (ex: the Department of Justice, Universities, and the Mayo Clinic).</td>
<td>• Materials published over 15 years ago (varies depending on the discipline or your own topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Websites ending in .edu or .gov</td>
<td>• Websites ending in .com and popular magazines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Textbooks</td>
<td>• Sources with disproven theories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Is my Source Credible?**
The quality of the source can be evaluated using OPVL (origin, purpose, value, and limitations).

- **Origin**: Where did the source come from? Who wrote/sponsored it? Is this person/group an expert in the associated field?
- **Purpose**: Why was the article written and what purpose does it have? Is it to convince, report, compare, etc.? Who is the audience? Is there bias?
- **Value**: Is the source either peer-reviewed or from a .edu/.gov website? Are you convinced by the article and does it have appropriate supporting data and evidence?
- **Limitation**: Are there reasons why the source should not be used? Was it published more than 15 years ago? Does it have disproven theories? Is the logic faulty?

**Credible Websites** - What to look for if you want to use them:

- Is there an author? (Having a known author means you can check to see if the person is an expert in their field).
- Has it been updated or published recently? (The more recent, the better!)
- Is the source biased? (Is the source compromised by or affiliated with any political party, religion, or different viewpoint that might sway the facts?)
Quiz!
Pick out the 6 most credible sources and the 4 least credible sources on the U.S. Constitution and decide whether it is a primary or secondary source.

* Hint: There are two primary sources and eight secondary sources.

A. The Bill of Rights from the U.S. Constitution
B. An article and video on History.com titled “The U.S. Constitution”
C. A personal interview with your sister who is taking AP US history
D. The Federalist Papers written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay promoting the ratification of the United States Constitution
E. A webpage on WhiteHouse.gov explaining the importance of the Constitution
F. The Wikipedia page for “The Constitution”
G. “The Constitutional Ambitions of James Madison's Presidency” (2014) by Benjamin A. Kleinerman in the peer reviewed journal *Presidential Studies Quarterly*
H. Lecture transcript from Professor Barack Obama’s course on race in the Constitution at the University of Chicago
J. A Tumblr post written by ConstitutionLover1789 called, “The Constitution Rocks!”

Answers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Credible Sources</th>
<th>Credible Sources</th>
<th>Secondary Sources</th>
<th>Primary Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Works Consulted:
Appalachian State University Writing Center (writingcenter.appstate.edu); Sussex University Writing Center (http://www.sussex.ac.uk/); The *Norton Field Guide to Writing* (Bullock); *Persian Cats* (Stone)