Using quotes in your paper helps support the points you are making, but if you don’t set up the quote properly, it can confuse your audience. Your readers need to move from your words to the words of a source without feeling a jolt.

One helpful metaphor is a hamburger.

**The Top Bun:**
Use a signal phrase.
A signal phrase prepares your readers for what is coming. Here are some phrases for introducing quotations:

- X states, “…” (11).
- X believes, “…” (11).
- X says, “…” (11).
- According to X, “…” (11).
- In X’s view, “…” (11).
- X writes, “…” (11).
- X explains, “…” (11).
- X argues, “…” (11).

**The Meat:**
The meat is the quote itself. Choose words and phrases that help support your ideas. Be sure to quote the words *exactly*!

**The Bottom Bun:**
You need to tell your reader why and/or how this quote connects to the point you are making in your paper. Here are some sample phrases for explaining quotations:

- X is saying that…
- In other words, X believes…
- This passage reveals…
- These words suggest…
- X’s point is that…
- X’s words show why…
Examples

Aristotle believed, “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it” (23). In other words, as educated people we should be willing to listen to and respect other people’s thoughts and ideas, even if we don’t agree with them.

Harry S. Truman insisted, “The buck stops here” (126). Truman’s words suggest that if you make a mistake you should take responsibility for it.

Abraham Lincoln noted, “No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent” (55). Lincoln’s words carry a substantial impact; others will have an impact on our lives only if we let them.

(**bol**d*, italics, and underlines used to show the different parts of the quote burger**)