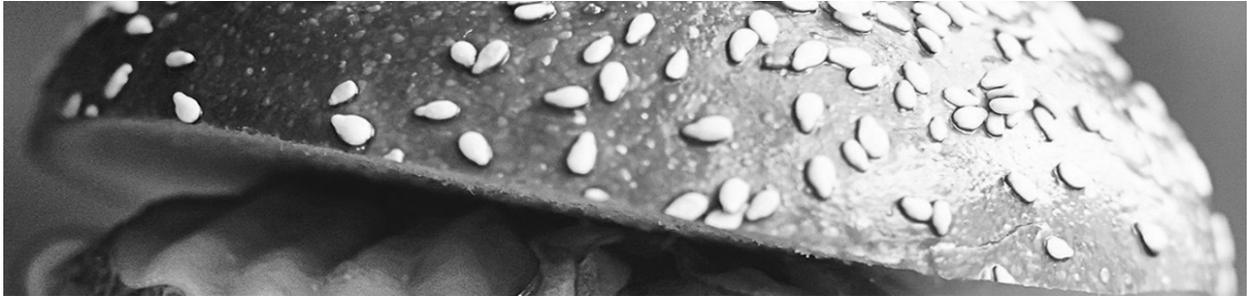


The MLA Quotation Burger

Using quotes in your MLA paper helps support the points you are making, but if you don't set up a 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 analogy is a hamburger.

The Top Bun

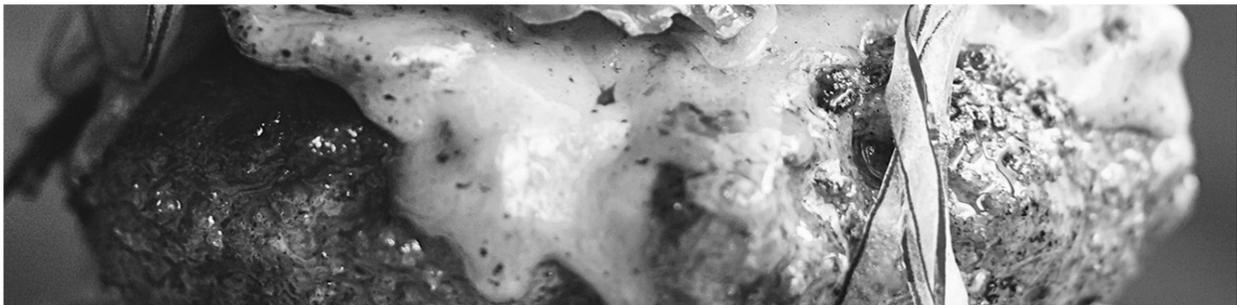


Use a signal phrase. A signal phrase prepares your readers for what is coming. Here are some phrases for introducing quotations:

X writes, “. . .” (208).
X believes, “. . .” (37).
X says, “. . .” (3).
According to X, “. . .” (20).

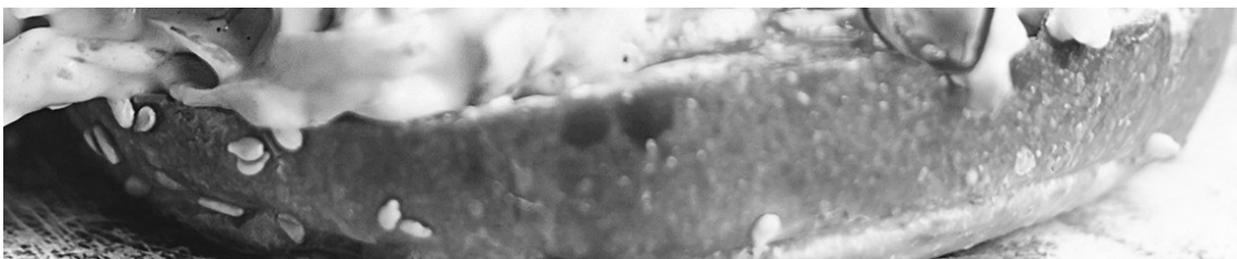
In X's view, “. . .” (9).
X explains, “. . .” (7).
X states, “. . .” (11).
X argues, “. . .” (56).

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 and/or in the paragraph. 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 of the Quotation Burger

Aristotle believes, “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 insists, “The buck stops here” (126). Truman’s words suggest that you should take responsibility for a mistake if you make one.

Abraham Lincoln notes, “No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent” (55). Lincoln’s words carry a clear implication: it is arrogant and tyrannical for anyone to claim control over another as a natural state.

Examples of Signal Phrase Verbs (MLA calls for present or present perfect tense)

acknowledges	rejects	maintains
comments	agrees	suggests
endorses	contends	believes
points out	implies	disputes
adds	reports	notes
compares	argues	thinks
grants	declares	claims
reasons	insists	emphasizes
admits	responds	observes
confirms	asserts	writes
illustrates	denies	

This handout was created by the Writing Centers at YVC.
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