

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

QUOTATION MARKS and ITALICS

Quotation Marks

Learn to use quotation marks to **set off all direct quotations, titles of short works, and words used in a special sense**, and to place other marks of punctuation in proper relation to quotation marks.

To **enclose the actual words of a speaker** (direct discourse):

I said, "That's your worry."

"Bob," he said, "you can't do that!"

"What is the matter?" she asked.

When you use quotation marks, you let your reader know that you are **quoting directly** (that is, you are stating in the exact words) **what someone has written, said, or thought**.

"Will you go to lunch with me?" the note asked.

"I'll be glad to," I told my friend when I saw her. But I thought to myself, "I'd really rather eat alone."

NOTE: since all the words of a speaker are enclosed in quotation marks, an interrupting *he said, she replied*, etc., requires two sets of quotation marks in the sentence. Notice also that, when direct discourse is reported as indirect discourse, the quotation marks are not used.

She asked what was the matter.

Single quotation marks are used:

To mark quotations within quotations. When it is necessary to include one set of quotation marks within another, the internal quotation is placed in single quotation marks, the longer quotation in double quotation marks.

Here is an excerpt from my brother's letter: "Today in class Mr. Blair quoted Wordsworth's line, 'A three-month's darling of a pigmy size,' and said it appeared in one edition as, 'A three-month's darling of a pig my size.'"

When the director said, "Let's try that passage again, beginning with, 'Once more into the breach,' and remember that this is a battle, not a declamation contest," there was an audible Bronx cheer from one of the soldiers.

In print, as a substitute for double quotation marks to improve the appearance of the page. When it is necessary to place quotation marks around a great many single words on a page, an editor will sometimes attempt to improve the appearance of the page by substituting single marks for double marks. The need for this substitution almost never exists in college writing.

Double quotation marks (" ") are used before and after all direct (but not indirect) quotations; a single quotation mark (' ') is used before and after a quotation within a quotation.

Indirect quotation: He asked me if I wanted to attend the Gourd Festival.

Direct quotation: He asked me, "Do you want to attend the Gourd Festival?"

Direct quotation: The advertisement for the Gourd Festival claims that gourd painting is "one of the oldest arts in our country." (A phrase from the advertisement is quoted.)

Quotation within a quotation: Kirby asked, "Have you heard the song 'Follow the Drinking Gourd,' the theme song of the festival?"

Quotation marks may enclose words used in a special sense.

The term "research paper" is broadly applied to anything from a three-source, five-page paper to a one-hundred-source, book-length doctoral dissertation. (Research paper may be either italicized or enclosed within quotation marks.)

NOTE: Avoid the tendency some writers have of using quotation marks freely throughout a paper to call attention to what they consider clever phrasings. Often what they think are clever phrases are really only trite expressions, slang, or colloquialisms that could be better phrased.

To identify words which are being discussed as words, use quotation marks.

The word "garage" comes from the French; the word "piano" comes from the Italian.

"Buxom" originally came from the Old English verb meaning "to bend."

"To be" is the trickiest verb in the language.

NOTE: This use is sometimes extended to include slang terms (*According to her story her brother "socked" her in the eye and "beaned" her with a ruler*). This usage, though occasionally appropriate, is often overdone in student writing. Quotation marks do not make a slang term

appropriate. If it is appropriate it can usually stand without quotation marks; if it is not appropriate, it should not be used.

Ineffective: The woman was "up to" more of her "devilish" ways: she "knocked off" her husband with one shot to the base of the skull.

Better: The woman again showed her vengeful nature: she killed her husband with one shot to the base of the skull.

NOTE: Do not use quotation marks to enclose the titles of your own compositions or for emphasis.

NOTE: Some grammarians underline words used as words or in a special sense. Whichever rule the writer chooses, it is important to be consistent.

Quotation marks are used for titles and individual episodes of television shows, of individual short works (short stories, essays, short poems, one-act plays, articles from periodicals) **and for subdivisions or chapters of books when the title is within a collection or part of a whole.**

As part of the documentation for her library paper on Robert Frost's poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," Jessica used an article from *Saturday Review* by John Ciardi entitled "The Way to the Poem."

I think Kipling's best short story is "Without Benefit of Clergy."

Have you read Emerson's "Self-Reliance"?

To enclose speeches and short song titles, use quotation marks.

I gave a speech in class called "My Local Member of Congress."

It was Cole Porter who wrote "Begin the Beguine."

In bibliography, use quotation marks to distinguish the title of a selection from that of the whole book in which the selection is printed.

Faulkner, William. "Two Soldiers." *Collected Stories of William Faulkner*, Random House, 1950.

NOTE: Titles of books are set in italics or underlined rather than in quotation marks.

For the sake of appearance, **put all commas or periods inside quotation marks. Other punctuation goes inside quotation marks only when it is actually part of the quoted matter.**

"Well," he said, "I'm ready for the samples."

"If you insist," I said. "I'll do it."

The word "skirt," for example, has both standard and slang meanings.

"But," Bill objected, "'Knabe,' in German, doesn't mean 'knave'; it means 'boy. '"

That is not the way to spell "eclectic."

He said, "You can always count on Tom to muddle the issue."

If you are **citing a page reference for a quotation, place the comma and the period after the page citation and thus after the quotation marks.**

When Livvie let go of old Solomon's watch, she released herself to life, and "all at once there began outside the full song of a bird" (77).

The semicolon and the colon are placed outside the quotation marks.

He read the instructions on the container labeled "Lunar Soil": "Open only in a sterile environment."

Another container was labeled "Lunar Film"; it had to be decontaminated before it could be passed to the press corps.

The dash, the question mark, and the exclamation point are placed inside the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter, and outside the quotation marks when they apply to the whole sentence.

"What's up?" the laboratory assistant questioned. (The question mark applies to the quoted matter.)

Did you notice the container marked, "This side up"? (The question mark applies to the whole sentence.)

Somebody yelled, "Why don't you go home?" (What was yelled was a question.)

Did he actually say, "Let Williams do it"? (The quotation is not a question, but the whole sentence is; therefore the question mark goes outside the quotation marks, and no other punctuation is used at the end of the sentence.)

Well, how do you spell "eclectic"? (The whole sentence is a question, not the word "eclectic.")

"Get out of my sight!" he yelled. (The quoted part is an exclamation.)

I did, too, say "Friday"! (The whole sentence is an exclamation; "Friday" is not.)

His only answer was "Nonsense!" (Only the quoted word is an exclamation.)

Prose quotations that would require ten or more lines of typing and poetry that would require three or more lines are indented from the rest of the text.

By indenting five spaces on each side and by single spacing the quotation (if you are typing your paper), you can make the quoted passage look very much as it does in the source. Two lines of poetry may be either run into the text (with a slash mark to show the end of the line) or indented. Remember, though, that the indentation from the text replaces the quotation marks. (Quoted material within such a quotation is set off by double marks.)

Arthur Hugh Clough has one final commandment in "The Latest Decalogue": "Thou shalt not covet, but tradition/Approves all forms of competition."

OR

Arthur Hugh Clough has one final commandment in "The Latest Decalogue":

Thou shalt not covet, but tradition

Approves all forms of competition.

In quoting dialogue (conversation), a new paragraph begins each time the speaker changes.

The five-year-old boy proudly announced to his younger brother, "I had a dream last night. I rode up and down on the escalator one thousand times with Mama and Daddy."

"Did I ride the escalator with you?" the brother asked hopefully.

"Nope. You weren't in the dream, " the older boy responded.

"Okay, tonight I'll dream about eating five thousand chocolate ice cream cones, and you won't get any because you won't be in the dream," the smaller boy blurted out.

Commas set off expressions like *he said* that introduce, interrupt, or follow direct quotations.

The guide cautioned, "Quiet, please, while the snakes are being handled."

"Quiet, please," the guide cautioned, "while the snakes are being handled."

"Quiet, please, while the snakes are being handled," the guide cautioned.

If the quotation is two or more sentences, a colon rather than a comma may follow the expression *he said*.

The guide explained carefully: "The snakes are being milked to prepare an antidote for snake bites. Many hospitals use our serum in treating poisonous bites."

If the quoted speech is a question or an exclamation, a question mark or an exclamation point (instead of the comma) follows the quoted passage.

"Quiet!" the guide screamed. "Don't you realize the danger involved in handling poisonous snakes?"

Practice Exercises A

In the sentences below, insert all needed quotation marks. Do not enclose an indirect quotation, but write C to indicate that the sentence is correct without quotation marks.

Example: "What do college students read today?" I asked a professor.

1. The professor first explained that what students read for pleasure usually differs from what they read for class assignments.
2. In freshman English a student may read John Updike's short story A & P, the professor explained.
3. But out of class, the professor continued, the student's taste may turn only to escapist fiction.
4. What about poetry? I asked. Do students today read poetry more than they did a generation ago?
5. Probably not, the professor responded. They read W. H. Auden's As I Walked Out One Evening or Robert Frost's Birches, just as their parents did--because these poems are assigned in English class.

6. I assumed from the professor's answer that students do not take seriously these famous lines by Emily Dickinson:

There is no frigate like a book.
To take us lands away.
Nor any courses like a page
Of prancing poetry.

7. There is one difference between the students of today and their parents, though the professor continued. They do not think of poets as strange. Indeed, many students write poetry themselves and have it published in college magazines.

8. I went to the college bookstore to ask what was the most popular reading material.

9. The manager was quick to reply: Specialized magazines and how-to-do-it books are especially popular. And fiction has never sold better.

10. I remember reading an article entitled *The Television Generation* that explored the reading habits of college students.

11. According to one expert, Edith H. Unnila, assistant editor of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, students do not show any better taste in reading matter than the general public does.

12. Ms. Unnila claims, The real, honest-to-goodness TV generation is in college. They are increasingly apathetic. None of their nonfiction choices except for the Watergate books deal with social or political issues.

13. I could not keep from thinking to myself, Does this mean that a classic essay like Aldous Huxley's *Who Are you?* is doomed to extinction?

14. If Ms. Unnila is right, I thought, then we can rely only on a few dedicated intellectuals to preserve our best literature, as Arnold Bennett has asserted in his essay *Why A Classic Is a Classic*.

Italics

Italics refers to a type that slopes upward to the right. It has taken over many of the functions once performed by quotation marks. When a manuscript is typed or handwritten, underlining is used to indicate italics. Thus if the material is printed, the printer will italicize or use italic print for all underlined words.

1. Use italics to designate titles of separate publications, such as books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, long poems, and other compositions, such as published speeches, movies and videotapes, television and radio programs, plays, works of visual art, operas and musicals, ships and aircraft.

Examples:

Book

War and Peace, Bleak House

Our book club is reading *Mapp and Lucia* next month.

Newspaper

Chicago Sun-Times, Madison County Gazette

Do you subscribe to the *Kansas City Star*?

Magazine or Periodical

Vogue, Time, Philadelphia Inquirer

Be sure to read "My Brother, the Clown" in *Reader's Digest*.

Pamphlet

The Truth About Alcoholism, 10 Steps to Better Writing

I left a copy of *Garden City Attractions* at the front desk.

Book-length Poem

Beowulf, The Song of Roland

My favorite character in *Paradise Lost* is Satan.

Collection of Works

Fables for Our Times

Darrel Bowlin's short story collection, *Second Wives' Walking Club*, explores the rocky relationships among blended families.

Published Speeches

Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*

My mother was present when Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his *I Have a Dream* speech.

Television or Radio Program

60 Minutes, Seinfeld, The Shadow

The Simpsons is on every Sunday night.

(Note that episode titles of a television or radio program are enclosed in quotation marks: *The X-Files* episode called "Home" has been shown only once on television.)

Film

The Quiet Man, Pulp Fiction

Michelle Pfeiffer will star in *The Deep End of the Ocean*.

Play

Death of a Salesman, Hamlet

The drama students will present *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* this semester.

Work of visual art

the *Mona Lisa*, Michelangelo's *David*

Every year thousands of people visit the Chicago Art Institute to view Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*.

Musical

Guys and Dolls, The Fantasticks

The musical *Phantom of the Opera* is the longest running production on Broadway.

Opera or full-length musical composition-

The Gillespie Opera Company recently staged Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

NOTES:

1. Do not underline the title of a composition unless certain words (or all the words) in the title would be underlined anyway. A composition is not a publication.
2. Do not italicize or capitalize "the" in newspaper or magazine titles. (Mary reads the *Kansas Update*.) Do italicize the first article (a, an, the) in a book title. (He enjoyed *The Last of the Just*.)
3. Many newspapers and some magazines and other publications enclose such names and titles in quotation marks instead of using italics; some use all capital letters. Although not wrong, these alternative practices are not recommended.
4. Italicize foreign words that are not yet anglicized.

Example: It was a *fait accompli*.

5. Italicize *ibid.*, *loc.*, *cit.*, *op. cit.*, *sic*.
6. Do not italicize common abbreviations: A.M., P.M., vs., i.e., e.g., etc. Consult the dictionary when in doubt about words which may not be considered part of the English language.

7. Italicize words, letters, figures, or symbols referred to as such.

Examples:

The t in *often* is silent.

His *4's* and *7's* are indistinct.

Many people confuse *to* and *too*.

She received two *A's* and three *B's*.

8. Use italics for emphasis, where it cannot be conveyed by the order or choice of words. The overuse of italics for emphasis is considered immature and should be avoided

Examples:

"You are *so* right," he remarked. (Only italics will convey the speaker's oral emphasis.)

I said that he *was* a good football player. (The emphasis of *was* conveys important meaning.)

Practice Exercises

Add italics or quotation marks where necessary.

1. Tom named his plane *The Blue Goose*.
2. Sue told her mother, "I'm not going to classes today."
3. Don't forget to dot your i's and cross your t's.
4. *Ibid.* and *Op. Cit.* are terms used in end notes for research papers.
5. *Rage of Angels* by Sidney Sheldon became a t. v. movie.
6. My favorite song is *Let it Be* by the Beatles.
7. Why do you always have to watch *Saturday Night Live*?
8. Did she say "Don't take it with you"?
9. He was on the *Titanic* when it sank.
10. *C'est La Vie* were her last words.
11. I read *It Is My Life Too* in the March edition of *Readers Digest*.
12. *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* by Robert Frost is a symbolic poem about our choices we make in life.
13. Put the i before e in the word *receive*.
14. *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller is a play about the futility of life.
15. She used too many and's in her presentation.
16. The closing song at the dance was *Good Night, Ladies*.
17. You must see *Tootsie* the movie of the year.
18. Bole received 3 D's and 1 C on his report card.
19. My little girl sings *Mary Had a Little Lamb* over and over again.
20. *Op. Cit.* means in the place cited.