

## *How to Introduce Direct Quotations*

Quotations are an important part of many writing assignments in English and the Social Sciences, including close reading tasks, passage analyses and research essays.

Usually, for writing tasks in which the passage is provided for you and you are only writing about that one passage, you do not need to include parenthetical references. For research essays in English, you **must** include parenthetical references that follow proper MLA citation format.

The examples below include parenthetical references, so that you can review the proper format.

---

**There are four main options for introducing quotations:**

➤ **OPTION #1:**

Introduce the quotation by using a colon.

**Example:**

*The memoirist effectively appeals to pathos in the following passage: “One of our prayers is surely powerful because next summer Mickey himself is carried off by the galloping consumption and he doesn’t get a day off from school and that will surely teach him a lesson” (McCourt 172).*

➤ **OPTION #2:**

Integrate the quotation into your own sentence.

**Example:**

*Frankie and his friends saw people in Limerick “dropping one by one of the galloping consumption” (McCourt 171).*

➤ **OPTION #3:**

Use an introductory phrase that names the author or speaker, followed by a comma.

**Example:**

*According to nine-year-old Frankie, “There’s nothing like a wake for having a good time” (McCourt 171-172).*

Other common introductory phrases similar to “According to \_\_\_\_\_” include:

“In the words of \_\_\_\_\_, “

“In \_\_\_\_\_’s view, “

## How to Introduce Direct Quotations

### ➤ OPTION #4:

Use an introductory phrase that names the author or speaker and uses a descriptive verb, followed by a comma. If you use the words 'that' or 'as' in your introductory phrase, do NOT use a comma.

#### **Example:**

*At this point in the narrative, Frankie McCourt confesses, "I envy Mickey, because every time someone dies in his family he gets a week off from school" (171).*

OR

*At this point in the narrative, Frankie McCourt confesses that he "env[ies] Mickey, because every time someone dies in his family he gets a week off from school" (171).*

*Note:* Square brackets around a word or part of a word indicate that you have made some sort of modification in order to fit the word smoothly into your writing. In the above example, the verb tense has been modified.

Here are some additional descriptive verbs for introducing quotations:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| - argues       | - agrees       |
| - asserts      | - endorses     |
| - claims       | - supports     |
| - emphasizes   | - contends     |
| - insists      | - questions    |
| - observes     | - refutes      |
| - reports      | - calls for    |
| - suggests     | - encourages   |
| - comments     | - urges        |
| - remarks      | - warns        |
| - writes       | - recommends   |
| - notes        | - states       |
| - adds         | - demonstrates |
| - maintains    | - explains     |
| - concludes    | - reveals      |
| - acknowledges |                |



#### **Remember:**

Once you have introduced and included a direct quotation, you should then

- rephrase it in your own words to express your understanding;
- draw attention to key words and phrases in the quotation; and
- explain *how* it connects to your argument and *why* it is important!

*Note:* Quotations on this handout are taken from McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.