**Quotation Technique**

Using quotations is a great way to support your argument. Woodrow Wilson once said that he used all the brains he had and all the brains he could borrow. You may not be an expert in your topic, but chances are, you can find someone who is and use that person’s knowledge to give your argument credibility.

**The Quotation Sandwich**

However, throwing in a quotation without introducing it properly or discussing its relevance is not sufficient. Instead, try to make a quotation sandwich. Make a statement of a point to lead into the quote. Give the quote. Then analyze the quote.

**Introducing Quoted Material**

There are two ways to make the quote fit into your paragraph. You can integrate the quote into one of your sentences, or you can use colon after a complete sentence.[[1]](#footnote-1)

According to Smith, the text indicates “a strong understanding of medieval culture” (123).

The text includes many details about medieval life: “the author has a strong understanding of medieval culture” (Smith 123).

**Discussing and Analyzing Quoted Material**

Don’t end a paragraph with a quote, especially not a block quote. Remember to discuss each quotation, even if doing so seems redundant. Make the quote yours instead of making it speak for itself. Ask yourself some questions to figure out what to put after your quote. Why did you choose this quote instead of another? Why did you put a quote at this point in your paper? Is there anything you could add to this information to make it more meaningful to your topic? Questions like these should help you figure out how you want to analyze your quote.

**The Ratio**

Remember that this is **your paper**. You’re using quotes to prove your ideas, not as a substitute for them. For every quoted sentence, you should have two original sentences. There is no set ratio, but I generally try to have twice as many lines of my words for every one line of someone else’s words.

**Using Ellipses.**

Did you remove text here? If so, space your ellipsis dots out with one space between each dot, one before the dots, and one after the dots (**like . . . this**). If one sentence ends and another begins, put a dot before the ellipsis (**like. . . . this**).

Do not put ellipses at the beginning or end of a quote.

1. These examples are in MLA format. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)