

Quotation Analysis for Source Use

What is quotation analysis?

Quotation analysis refers to the process of fully integrating source material into our own writing by (1) signaling to the reader that source material is coming; (2) providing the source material; and (3) interpreting or analyzing the source material to make meaning. Using full quotation analysis ensures that we are balancing source material with our own authorial voices and helping our readers understand how the source material fits into our overall argument.

Process

There are three steps to quotation analysis.

Step 1: Introduce and provide source material (quotation).

Lamott, for one, calls perfectionism “the voice of the oppressor” (28).

Step 2: Explain the quotation in your own words (comprehension).

In its revulsion to making mistakes or offering arguments that don’t ultimately pan out, perfectionism can actually be harmful to the writing process.

Step 3: Respond to the quotation (full integration into your point via explanation).

There is reason to be wary. . . . Its “oppressive” nature chokes out experimentation of both ideas and language that would encourage and even elicit our best ideas in drafting.

Complete Example with MLA Citation

Some people take pride in perfectionism, but there is reason to be wary; Lamott, for one, calls perfectionism “the voice of the oppressor” (28). In its revulsion to making mistakes or offering arguments that don’t ultimately pan out, perfectionism can actually be harmful to the writing process. Its “oppressive” nature chokes out experimentation of both ideas and language that would encourage and even elicit our best ideas in drafting.

MLA Works Cited entry:

Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. Pantheon Books, 1994.

Analyze Process

It is important to follow the quotation analysis process and provide credit to your source whether you use a direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. To practice, use the instructions below to analyze (= break into parts) the examples of quotation analysis that follow. Can you identify all three steps of quotation analysis? If you have trouble, check with a tutor for further support.

Step 1: Introduce and provide source material (quotation). [. . . .]

Step 2: Explain the quotation in your own words (comprehension). (. . . .)

Step 3: Respond to the quotation (full integration into your point via explanation). ☺ ☺

Example with MLA Citation

Direct quote: Seth Godin writes that “[p]ersistent people are unable to visualize the idea of light at the end of the tunnel when others can’t see it. At the same time, the smartest people are realistic about not imagining light when there isn’t any” (55). That is, success has a lot to do with accurately reading a situation to determine whether continued efforts will pay off. In the home stretch of a semester, it is tempting to give up, which makes it essential to remember that Week 13 is almost 90% of the way through the journey. The light at the end of the tunnel is in sight.

Paraphrase: According to Seth Godin, tenaciousness is about keeping sight of the finish line, even when that end point is not clear to other people; however, it’s also important to be honest with oneself about how close the finish line actually is (55). That is, success has a lot to do with accurately reading a situation to determine whether continued efforts will pay off. In the home stretch of a semester, it is tempting to give up, which makes it essential to remember that Week 13 is almost 90% of the way through the journey. The finish line is in sight.

Summary: In *The Dip*, Seth Godin argues that success is about discerning the right time to quit and the right time to push through an obstacle on the path of achieving a goal. That is, success has a lot to do with accurately reading a situation to determine whether continued efforts will pay off. In the home stretch of a semester, it is tempting to give up, which makes it essential to remember that Week 13 is almost 90% of the way through the journey. The finish line is in sight.

Source citation:

Godin, Seth. *The Dip: A Little Book That Teaches You When to Quit (and When to Stick)*. Portfolio, 2007.

Challenge for Drafting:

Create a citation for one of your sources:

Quote and page # (if you paraphrase, you still need to cite the author’s idea):

Your quotation analysis example: