

They Say I Say - Chapter 3 Summary

"As He Himself Puts It"

The Art of Quoting

Quoting with Purpose

"Quoting someone else's words gives a tremendous amount of credibility to your summary and helps ensure that it is fair and accurate. In a [sense quotations] function as a kind of proof of evidence.

Providing context to your argument by giving a summary can be very effective, but is strengthened if you provide evidence that you truly understand what you are summarizing by providing a quote.

"Quoting what "They Say" must always be connected to with what "You Say".

Quote Relevant Passages

"Be careful not to select quotations just for the sake of demonstrating that you've read the author's work; you need to make sure they support your own argument."

Quotes aren't meant to just provide some extra bits to top off an essay. They can either be an integral part of your argument, providing you with effective support, or they will cause your writing to appear sloppy if placed introduced at the wrong times.

Frame Every Quotation

"Quotations do not speak for themselves, you need to build a frame around them in which you [speak] for them."

Introducing and not addressing a quote not only wastes your time as a writer, but it also wastes your readers time, making it far more difficult for them to fully comprehend your argument. "Dangling" quotations are introduced with no explanation for why they are presented. Such quotations aren't viewed with any importance and contribute very little to the piece they are in.

Templates for Introducing Quotations

X states, "_____."
As the prominent philosopher X puts it, "_____."
According to X, "_____."
X himself writes, "_____."
In her book, _____, X maintains that "_____."
Writing in the journal *Commentary*, X complains that "_____."
In X's view, "_____":
X agrees when she writes, "_____".
X disagrees when he writes, "_____."
X complicates matters further when she writes, "_____."

Templates for Explaining Quotations

Basically X is warning _____.
In other words, X believes _____.
In making this comment, X urges us to _____.
X is corroborating the age-old adage that _____.
X's point is that _____.
The essence of X's argument is that _____.

Tailor the language used to introduce the quotation, to the contents and tone of the quotations itself.

Can You Overanalyze a Quotation?

"When in doubt, go for it. It is better to risk being overly explicit about what you take a quotation to mean than to leave the quotation dangling and your readers in doubt."

Sometimes excellent life advice, but in the case of analysis, also very important. It's better to provide lots of explanation than too little. You never want to risk leaving the reader confused as to what significance a quotation provides to your argument.