

## How to Quote Shakespeare

- ❖ Italicize the titles of plays:

*Richard III* or *Othello*

- ❖ Cite line and page numbers up to 101 like this: 34-37; above 100, you repeat only the last two figures: 211-12 (but of course, 397-405 and 96-102). Use arabic numerals rather than roman numerals for citations of acts, scenes, and line numbers:

*Twelfth Night* (1.5.268-76)

- ❖ Always use arabic numerals to refer to acts and scenes:

In 3.1, Hamlet delivers his most famous soliloquy.

(Do NOT say: In Act III, scene i, Hamlet delivers his most famous soliloquy.)

- ❖ Periods and commas ALWAYS go inside quotation marks:

“Periods and commas,” says Dr. Womack, “ALWAYS go inside quotation marks.”

- ❖ If a prose quotation runs four lines or less, put it in quotation marks and incorporate it in the text:

The immensely obese Falstaff tells the Prince: “When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle’s talon in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman’s thumb ring” (2.4.325-27).

- ❖ If a prose quotation runs to more than four lines, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting one inch from the left margin, and type it double-spaced, without adding quotation marks. A colon generally introduces an indented quotation.

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick reflects on what he has overheard Don Pedro, Leonato, and Claudio say:

This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady. It seems her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured. They say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. (2.3.217-24)

- ❖ If you quote all or part of a single line of verse, put it in quotation marks within your text:

Berowne's pyrotechnic line "Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile" is a textbook example of antanacsis (1.1.77).

- ❖ You may also incorporate two or three lines in the same way, using a slash with a space on each side (/) to separate them:

Claudius alludes to the story of Cain and Abel when he describes his crime: "It hath the primal eldest curse upon't, / A brother's murder" (3.3.37-38).

- ❖ Verse quotations of more than three lines should begin on a new line. Indent each line one inch from the left margin and double-space between lines, adding no quotation marks that do not appear in the original. If the quotation starts in the middle of a line of verse, reproduce it that way, do not shift it to the left margin:

It is Jaques, in *As You Like It*, who delivers the famous speech comparing the world to a theater:

All the world's a stage  
And all the men and women merely players:  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. (2.7.138-42)

He then proceeds to enumerate and analyze these ages.

- ❖ If you quote dialogue between two or more characters in a play, set the quotation off from your text. Begin each part of the dialogue with the appropriate character's name indented one inch from the left margin and written in all capital letters. Follow the name with a period, and start the quotation. Indent all subsequent lines in the character's speech an additional quarter inch. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new line indented one inch from the left margin. Maintain this pattern throughout the entire quotation.

A short time later, Lear's daughters try to dismiss all of their father's servants:

GONERIL.                   Hear me, my lord.  
What need you five-and-twenty, ten or five,  
To follow in a house where twice so many  
Have command to tend you?  
REGAN.                   What need one?  
LEAR.   O, reason not the need! (2.4.254-58)