

Quotes

To paraphrase or
not to paraphrase;
that is the question.



Direct quotes can . . .

- Emphasize
- Summarize
- Add color, energy and voice
- Add credibility
- Make it personal

Make it personal

“This is the best Mother’s Day gift that I’ve ever received, something that I will cherish and can remember all the rest of my life.”

“I saw an oil slick of blood. I said, ‘Oh my God, they’ re in real trouble.’ ”

“You know, my faith is one that admits some doubt.”

Direct quotes can emphasize

“It is a haunting feeling. Unthinkable. Unimaginable,” said the passenger, minutes after the rescue.

Wayans said he disagrees. The governor and his advisors “have got themselves tied in a knot, backed into a corner,” he said. “I don’t see a lot of options at this point.”

Direct quotes can summarize

An autopsy determined that Mahtook died from “massive blood loss due to multiple alligator bites.”

Communications had been normal, he said. “Then the light spot suddenly disappeared from radar.”

Direct quotes can add color

“They were pouring in like grits.”

“These people were singing, ‘Leanin’ on the Everlastin’,’ but I swear they was leaning on every body part imaginable,” the sheriff said.

“Spearman is a f---ing paranoid schizophrenic, a paranoiac. You can quote me on that.”

Direct quotes can add credibility

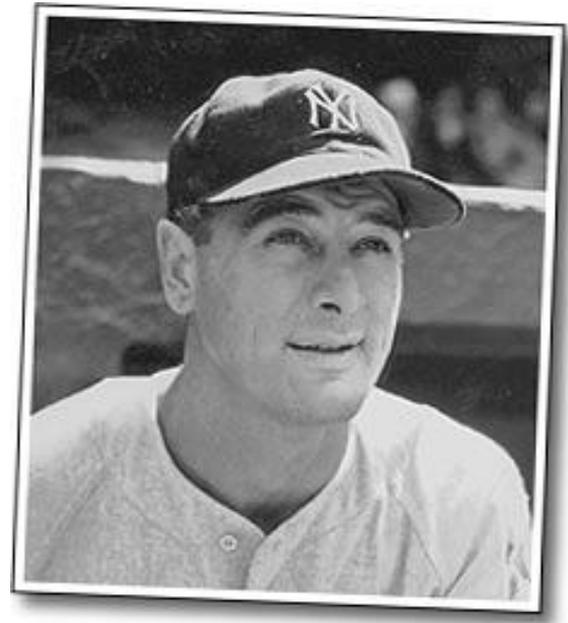
“The man acted just plain crazy,” said Ron Bishop, a narcotics officer with the Atlanta Metropolitan Police Department.

“The terror attack brought a new focus among workers to hazards in their workplaces,” said Heidi Klum, undersecretary of national security for Germany.

Attribution

“Today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth,” said Lou Gehrig, the “Iron Horse.”

(be sure to check the spelling)



Attribution

“Today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth,” said Lou Gehrig, the “Iron Horse.”

>> , said Gehrig, additional information here.

>> , said the 38-year-old first baseman, holder of the record for consecutive games played for 56 years.

>> Gehrig said.

>> , the 38-year-old first baseman said.

>> Gherig chuckled, added, went on, whispered, etc. (No; he said. We just report.)

(be sure to check the spelling)

Partial Quote

- Yankee great Lou Gehrig said he considers himself “the luckiest man on the face of the earth.”

Paraphrase

- Baseball player Lou Gehrig said he considers himself the luckiest man on earth.

Sale of the Atlanta Hawks

- “It’s great for the state and the professional sports in Georgia,” said Will Robinson, a business and Spanish major from Alpharetta, Ga. “Our basketball team sucks. *We need* new owners.”

Ellipses & Brackets

- “We’ve got to have this tax increase in order to hire more teachers . . . and reduce school crowding,” said Teel, a long-time school board member. “The [current budget] is insufficient.”
- OR
- “We’ve got to have this tax increase in order to hire more teachers . . . and reduce school crowding,” said Teel, a long-time school board member. The current budget is “insufficient,” she said.

Some commandments

- Never make up a quote (they are sacred)
- Don't turn a "yes" or "no" answer into a direct quote
- Provide context
- Proof for punctuation
- You don't have to use every quote
- Determine whether you need the quote. Why am I using it? What does it add? Would a paraphrase work better here?
- Don't "emcee" (this isn't broadcast)
- Don't repeat the essence of the quote

Some tips

- Avoid long, windy quotes. If the quote is essential, but more than a few lines, create a block quote:

Some are calling for a criminal charge of incitement, pointing to Trump's reckless rhetoric before thousands of supporters. From his address, he said,

“And you have to get your people to fight. And if they don't fight, we have to primary the hell out of the ones that don't fight. You primary them. We're going to. We're going to let you know who they are. I can already tell you, frankly.”

Vary your attribution

- , according to the police report.
- , police reported.
- , Jarvees told reporters.
- , said Jarvees, speaking with the public after the arrest.
- , according to the arrest warrant.
- , Jarvees said, reading from a prepared statement.

Use attribution to provide additional information

- , said the 21-year-old biology major.
- , said Snow, a junior history major from Albuquerque.
- , said Walker, a student trainer for the Berry Vikings football team.
- , said Michelangelo, while hurrying into the Sistine Chapel.
- , Neil Armstrong said just minutes before the historic moonwalk.
- , said Michael Jackson, while his pet monkey moonwalked in the background.

When in doubt,
just leave it out.

(There is always another way to write what you
wish to say.)



Devise, wit; write, pen;
for I am for whole volumes in folio.
--Love's Labour's Lost