**Quotations: Rules and Tips**

***4 rules to remember when quoting a source:***

1. Two lines max – three or four words is best. You’re the author: don’t let your sources write your paper for you!
2. Quotations must be integrated into your own sentence: they should **never** be an entire sentence by themselves.

3) Quotations should be so smoothly integrated into your sentence that if you were to take out the quotation marks, your readers should not be able to tell where your words end and where your source’s begin.

4) Never let a quotation speak for itself. You are the author -- you explain the quote! In the sentences before and after your quotation,

a) explain what the quote means

b) describe the context in which the quote

was spoken – the speaker, location, time,

surrounding events, or whatever else applies.

***Two Tips:***

1) If you need to change the form of a word, put brackets [ ] around the syllables of the word you change.

For example: suppose, in order to make a quotation fit your sentence, you need to make a verb past tense.

“Ends” 🡪 “Ended” = “End[ed]”

“Runs” 🡪 “Ran” = “[Ran]”

“Begin” 🡪 “Beginning” = “Begin[ning]”

2) If you want to include some words from a passage but skip others, use ellipses (. . .) to mark the places where you have skipped words.

For example:

*Source’s original wording:* “Although I perhaps didn’t act in the best way possible – in fact, now that I recollect, I was pretty stupid – but I at least acted according to my best knowledge, on what I thought I knew, at the time.”

*Quotation using ellipsis:* John Glidden claims that “although I perhaps didn’t act in the best way possible . . . I at least acted according to my best knowledge . . . at the time.”

***Footnote Placement:***

Place your footnote immediately after the sentence containing the quotation. Here is an example of a few paragraphs from an article in a recent issue of the *Luther Rice University Journal*. Note the placement of footnotes:

The Gospel accounts of Peter’s denials contain many difficulties which have been frequently cited as contradictions. Harmonization of these narratives has been a matter of debate for many years. In denying the historical accuracy of the Gospels, James Barr says, “Harmonization through the production of multiple events is the most thoroughly laughable of all devices of interpretation.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Barr’s skepticism notwithstanding, the inerrancy of the Bible must be based upon the statements of the Scriptures themselves.

Inerrancy is not dependent upon any commentator’s ability to reconcile precisely every event which is recorded. Human knowledge is finite and fallible.It is only the Bible itself that is inerrant. Inerrancy means that when all the facts are known, the Scriptures in their autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything that they teach….

1. James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)