

## Embedding Quotations

Quotations from your sources should fit smoothly into your own sentences. This is called **embedding** or integrating quotations. Observe the difference between these sentences:

*“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt said, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt’s claim that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself” resonated with Americans.*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt opened his first inaugural address with chilling words: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”*

The weakest of the four sentences is the first one because a quotation cannot stand alone as its own sentence. It needs to be embedded into an existing sentence that is written in your own words.

### Strategies for Embedding Quotations

- Use a signal phrase. A **signal phrase** includes the name of the author and either “according to” or a **signal verb**. A signal phrase ends with a comma, unless it comes at the end of the sentence. It typically comes before the quotation but can also come after or even in the middle of it:

*According to Gee, “One thing we build with language is significance” (98).*

*Gee writes, “One thing we build with language is significance” (98).*

*“One thing we build with language is significance,” according to Gee (98).*

*“One thing we build with language,” Gee writes, “is significance” (98).*

Note: To give variety to your writing, you should use a variety of signal verbs. Here is a list of some common signal verbs:

writes	emphasizes	suggests
argues	remarks	states
claims	continues	agrees
observes	contends	disagrees

Note: Do not use “says” as a signal verb when quoting written text.

- Use a complete sentence followed by a colon:



***Fahnestock summarizes the most emphatic parts of a sentence:*** “If the opening and ending of a sentence are positions of relatively greater emphasis, elements in the middle of the sentence are deemphasized” (206).

***We do not use just one dialect or register:*** “Often...speakers and writers shift into a different language variety” (Fahnestock 87).

Note: Notice that the first sentence does not cite the author’s name while the second sentence does. This is because the writer of the first sentence has already included the author’s name in the sentence, so it does not need to be repeated in the citation. In the second sentence, however, the citation must include the author’s name to show which author is being quoted.

- Make the quotation fit the grammar of the sentence. Words like “that” or “which” can be useful here:

*Glaser reminds us that “your aim is to keep subjects, verbs, objects, and complements close together” (154).*

*Extra attention should be given to a sentence’s prosody, which is “a sound contour or a certain music of utterance” (Fahnestock 204).*

*Historian Earl Lane argues that “almost all Americans assumed the war would end quickly” (223).*

*Excessive quotation can suggest to readers that “you have not relied enough on your own thinking” (Lunsford 278).*

### Capitalizing the Beginning of Quotations

Only capitalize the first word of a quotation if the quotation follows a signal phrase or a colon AND is itself a complete sentence:

*Glaser writes, “The usual order of sentence elements is subject-verb-complement” (178).*

*Glaser puts it best: “The usual order of sentence elements is subject-verb-complement” (178).*

Do NOT capitalize the first word of a quotation if the quotation does not immediately follow a signal phrase or colon:

*Glaser writes that “the usual order of sentence elements is subject-verb-complement” (178).*

*He warns against redundancy, which is “the illogical repetition of the same idea” (Glaser 47).*

Do NOT capitalize the first word of a quotation, even if it follows a signal phrase or a colon, if the quotation itself is not a complete sentence:



*Lunsford argues that good writers all have one thing in common: “specific goals” (24).  
According to Lunsford, “logical organizational patterns” are the mark of a good writer (20).*