

# QUOTATION PUNCTUATION



# “WHY USE QUOTES?” HE ASKED.

- ▶ Why? Because quotations add color and interest to news stories by allowing readers to “hear” many voices rather than just the voice of the writer.
- ▶ Three types of quotes:
  - ▶ Direct—present a source’s exact words
  - ▶ Indirect—aka paraphrasing
  - ▶ Partial—key phrases from a source’s statement and quote them directly

# WHEN TO USE DIRECT QUOTES:

- ▶ Reporters use direct quotations when their sources say something important or controversial and/or state their ideas in an interesting, unusual or colorful manner
- ▶ To tie a controversial opinion to the source...to reveal the speaker's character...when you cannot improve on the speaker's exact words
- ▶ Use to illustrate a point, not tell an entire story. Quotes should not be the entire story
- ▶ Reporters often summarize a major point, then use a direct quotation to explain the idea or provide more specific details about it.
- ▶ The quote should provide new information

# USING INDIRECT QUOTES

- ▶ Use when sources fail to state their ideas effectively
- ▶ Indirect quotes also allow reporters to rephrase a source's remarks and state them more clearly and concisely



# USING PARTIAL QUOTES

- ▶ Use to more clearly attribute to a source phrases that are particularly controversial, important or interesting
- ▶ Example: Phil Donahue accused the television critic of “typing with razor blades.”
- ▶ Avoid using “orphan” quotes – this is when quotation marks are placed around an isolated word or two that are used in an ordinary way.  
Example: He complained that no one “understands” his problem.

# CHANGING/FIXING QUOTES?

- ▶ Fixing or correcting grammatical errors in quotes is a widely accepted practice in journalism
- ▶ But not everyone, including the Associated Press, approves.
- ▶ “Never alter quotations even to correct minor grammatical errors or word usage,” the AP Stylebook states. “Casual minor tongue slips may be removed by using ellipses but even that should be done with extreme caution.”

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- ▶ Incorrect: “I shall return”, Gen. MacArthur said.
- ▶ Incorrect: “I shall,” Gen. MacArthur said, “return.”
- ▶ Incorrect: “I shall return,” said Gen. MacArthur.
- ▶ Correct: “I shall return,” Gen. MacArthur said.
  
- ▶ “It’s good to vary the location of your quotation attribution,” the professor said. “You don’t want to always put it at the beginning, the middle, or the end of sentences.”
- ▶ “Put your quotation attribution at the end sometimes and sometimes in the middle when there’s a natural pause in the quote,” the professor said.
- ▶ The professor said, “Make sure you place your commas, periods, and quotation marks in the proper place.”
- ▶ The professor said: “If your attribution is before the quote, as in this example, and the quote is more than one sentence, place a colon, not a comma, after the attribution word. This is the correct punctuation.”