

ENWR 106

Making Quotations Work for You

Instructions: This exercise takes about an hour. I ask students to get in groups of three or four and work together to come up with sentences to make each connection. As the groups finish writing sentences for the first two, I have them put their sentences on the board. Then I ask each student to pick the two strongest sentences (one for example #1 and one for #2). Once the students have picked two sentences, they have to discuss their choices with the other members of their group and vote on a group favorite. We then discuss each group's selection focusing on the sentences' strengths and weaknesses.

In order to make quotations work for you, you need to explain how they support your claims. This exercise is intended to help you practice doing just that. These are examples from some of your papers. For this exercise, you should write one or two sentences explaining how the quote supports or proves the main point. Do this for each example.

1. True Love

Main point: The poet tries to make the reader believe that true love is worthless.

Quote:

True love. Is it necessary?
Tact and common sense tell us to pass over it in silence
like a scandal in Life's highest circles. ("True Love," Wislawa Szymborska)

Write your sentences here:

2. Death

Main point: The poet does not think that death should be respected.

Quote:

One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die. ("Death Be Not Proud," John Donne)

Write your sentences here:

3. Stereotypes

Main point: The poet argues that there is no way to escape the stereotypes that others place upon you.

Quote:

I know I'm short and black and skinny
And my nose stopped growin of it wuz 'posed to
I know my hair's short, legs and face ashy
And my clothes have holes that run right through to you ("Song No. 3," Sonia Sanchez)

Write your sentences here:

4. Main point: The poet argues that America has failed to emulate the principles it was based on.

Quote:

I am the worker sold to the machine.

I am the Negro, servant to you all.

I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—

Hungry yet today despite the dream. ("Let America Be America Again," Langston Hughes)

Write your sentences here: