Integrating Quotations (MLA)

A quotation should be effectively integrated into your paragraph by setting it up and interpreting it for your reader. There are 3 ways to incorporate a quotation into a sentence.

1. Use an introductory phrase separated from the quotation with a comma.

> As Rodriguez argues, "The American conversation about race has always been a black-and-white conversation" (406).

> "The American conversation about race has always been a black-and-white conversation," claims Rodriguez (406).

2. Introduce the quotation with a sentence that sets it up by using a colon (:).

> Rodriguez uses his own observation of neighborhoods in California to demonstrate that cultural assimilation happens naturally when people live in close proximity: "Culture is fluid…You breathe it. You eat it. You can't help hearing it" (409).

3. Splice the quotation into the flow of your own sentence.

> Rodriguez thinks the U.S. should adopt the Mexican model of "a mestizaje society," which means…(407).

> When the girl calls herself a "Blaxican," Rodriguez argues that "[b]y reinventing language, she is reinventing America" (410).

Punctuation and Quotations

- No matter if your "quotation appears at the beginning, middle, or end of the sentence," the citation goes at the end (409). If the author is not indicated, include the author's name in the citation (Rodriguez 410).

- If the ! or ? are part of your sentence, put them outside the quotation ("like this"?) Put them inside the quotation if they are part of the quotation ("like this!").

- Use ellipses (…) if you are cutting material from the middle of the quotation (see #2 above).

- Use brackets to show changes you made to a quotation for it to fit grammatically into the sentence (see #3 above).