



A Writer's
Workshop

Writer's Workbook

Presented by
Patsy
Zettler

Quotes
and Anecdotes:

How to Get Them
Use Them
and
Not Abuse Them

Hosted by
St. Louis
Writer's
Guild

Quotes Quiz

- 1.) "You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist."
 - Muhammad Ali
 - Martin Luther King Jr.
 - Indira Ghandi

- 2.) "Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason why so few engage in it."
 - Henry Ford
 - Scarecrow from Wizard of OZ
 - Marilyn Monroe

- 3.) "You can encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated."
 - President Harry S. Truman
 - Maya Angelou
 - General George Patton

- 4.) «Genius is 1 percent inspiration, 99 percent perspiration.»
 - Thomas Edison
 - Actor in underarm deodorant commercial
 - Albert Einstein

- 5.) "The wastebasket is a _____ best friend." -- Isaac Bashevis Singer
 - janitor's
 - basketball player's
 - writer's

- 6.) "This thing we call 'failure' is not the falling down but the staying down."
 - Mary Pickford
 - Rocky Balboa
 - Nancy Kerrigan, Olympic ice skater

- 7.) "To forgive is human, to err divine." –Alexander Pope
 - This quote is correct.
 - This quote is incorrect.

- 8.) What is the most memorable movie quote of all time according to the American Film Institute (AFI)?
 - "Here's looking at you kid." –Casablanca, 1942.
 - "Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn." –Gone with the Wind, 1939.

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- "My God Thelma! What kind of world do you think we live in?" Thelma and Louise, 1991.

9.) What is the next line to this quote?

"How many ears must one man have before he can hear people cry? Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows that too many people have died?"

- "How many television stations must we have before we are entertained?"
- "Wastin' away again in Margaritaville."
- "The answer my friend is blowing in the wind."

10.) Although it is said to be incorrect, who gets attributed this quote: "Let them eat cake"?

- King Tut
- Marie Antoinette
- Betty Crocker

11.) "Like sands through the hour glass, so are the _____ of our _____." – 1965, TV show.

- bubbles, drinks
- rocks, heads
- days, lives

12.) "Only you can prevent forest fires." What is **NOT** true about this quote?

- Said by Smokey Bear
- Said by Bambi's dad
- Was updated to "Only you can prevent wildfires."

13.) After the conclusion of the evening news, who said "And that's the way it is"?

- Walter Cronkite
- Dan Rather
- Chevy Chase

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14.) When the art student saw a painting by Picasso, he said, "That's not art. Anyone could do that."

A wise teacher replied, "But they didn't."

Who was the wise teacher?

- Gertrude Stein
- Picasso himself
- Patsy's art teacher

Part I: Awareness of all the quote and anecdote possibilities that can inspire your writing.

What famous quote has inspired you?

Why are quotes important to our culture and society?

Who gets quoted?

Why do they get quoted?

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What kinds of writings can have quotes in them?

Is there any kind of writing where quotes would **not** be allowed?

Why as writers should we be concerned with putting quotes in our writing?

What is a quote?

There are also sayings, maxims, adages, mottos and proverbs. But these are different from quotes. How?

What is an anecdote?

Part II: How to get quotes and anecdotes for your writing through research and interviewing

How do you get quotes and anecdotes for your writing?

How to Conduct an Interview

Before the Interview

1. Start with a stack of "Thank You" cards
2. Contact your interviewee
 - a. Explain why you are calling and what you are writing about
 - b. Ask permission for the interview
 - c. Estimate how much time you'll need, or ask how much he/she can give.
 - d. Ask interviewee's preference for in-person, email, or phone
3. Prepare for the interview
 - a. Research your topic
 - b. Research your interviewee – so that you are not asking common questions

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- c. Prepare your questions in advance (putting most important questions first)
4. Know what you want to get from the interview to help you come up with questions
5. Sometimes you may want to send questions ahead of time
6. If conducting in-person, bring recorder as well as notepad and plenty of pens

During Interview

1. Make good eye contact
2. Be a good listener
3. Give interviewee time to answer questions, time to reflect--this is when you'll get the best quotes
4. Ask open ended questions – not yes or no questions
5. Be flexible, be prepared for the "bomb," which is something unexpected
6. Thank the interviewee for his/her time when you leave

After the Interview

1. Send that "Thank You" card
2. Write up answers to your questions/quotes as soon as possible while they're fresh
3. Write your article and use your quotes sparingly
4. Sharing your final draft with your interviewee (called PPR or pre-publication review) is up to you. Most journalists don't do it. But in some cases it is advisable and can prevent a libel lawsuit
5. Create a card file or file in a data base with this contact's info for future reference
6. Save your notes in file for future reference as well

While writing, you may discover you need a better quote. Contact your interviewee again and explain why.

You may need to conduct multiple interviews with the same person. This is not uncommon, depending on the reason for the interview.

Part III: How to use quotes and anecdotes in your writing

What are the three best places for quotes?

List some **Do's** for quotes.

List some **Don'ts** for quotes.

What place is good for an anecdote?

How to Punctuate Quotes

Direct quotes

Use double quotation marks (") to enclose a direct quote from a printed source or the actual spoken words of a person.

"Quotes and anecdotes are the salt and pepper to your writing," said Patsy Zettler.

Dialog

Like direct quotes in non-fiction, use quotation marks to separate character dialog in fiction. (Excerpt from "Of Moms and Plans" by Patsy Zettler)

Safe in our hotel room, we slipped into bed and I flipped off the light.
"Mommy," said Sarah, "my tummy won't shut up and go to sleep."
"Mine won't, too." added Lisa.
"Didn't you eat at Peggy's?" I asked.

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They started to cry. So I gnawed on the hunger problem until Bingo! I flipped on the light, dialed the front desk and asked the clerk, “May I write another check for cash?”

Indirect quotes

Generally, indirect quotes use the word *that*. Do not use a comma in an indirect quote.

Patsy Zettler said in her workshop that writers are the stewards of quotes.

Long quotes (Also called block quotes)

When there are four or more typed lines in a quote, separate it from the other written work by indentation (about 4 spaces on both the left and right). Do not use quotation marks around it. Introduce the speaker of the quote with a colon.

While holding up a picture of one of Picasso’s paintings, Patsy said:

My art teacher impressed upon us that it’s not whether anyone could or couldn’t do this, it’s that they didn’t. Picasso did. His quote—“But they didn’t”—continues to ring in my ears long after it was said. It lives with me and helps me fight my inner critic, as well as outside critics.

Quotes within a long quote

Since a long quote does not use quotation marks, a quote within a long quote will be separated by double quotation marks.

Patsy continued:

But finishing something and putting it out there is the game. It’s what separates doers from non-doers. It’s what separates the people who say “Someday I’m gonna” from the people who say “One day I did.”

Quotes within quotes

Use the single quotation marks (‘ ’) to show a quote within a quote.

“I think the quote ‘How many people 81 years old get married and still feel like we have a great future’ was poorly written and punctuated.”

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Other punctuation marks with quotation marks

Periods and commas go inside quotation marks.

“Quotes give writing that human connection,” said Patsy. “They connect people with people.”

Colons and semicolons go outside quotation marks (except when they are part of the quote).

A good example of writing that has too few quotes is found in the self-published book titled “Florissant Missouri”; instead, it’s filled with a lot of dates and names.

These are the top movies listed in “AFI’s 100 Years 100 Movie Quotes”: *Gone with the Wind, The Godfather, and On the Waterfront.*

Question marks that belong to the quote go inside the quotation marks.

“Why are quotes important to our culture?” asked Patsy.

Question marks that belong to a question about the quote go outside the quotation marks.

Did Patsy say “Quotes are important to our culture”?

Quote Tags (Called dialog tags in fiction)

Tags are the words used to identify the speaker being quoted. Tags can come before or after a quote and are separated by a comma.

Marilyn Monroe said, “It’s not true I had nothing on. I had the radio on.”

Tags can also be used to break a quote in two.

“It’s not true I had nothing on,” said Marilyn Monroe. “I had the radio on.”

Be careful to not use adverbs in tags. These are words that end in ly like shyly and hesitantly. They modify the verbs *said, replied*, etc. These are sometimes called Tom Swifities. A true Tom Swifty, however, is actually a pun on the quote. (For more on Tom Swifities, see “Resources”)

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"Happy 4th of July!" said Tom independently.
"This is the last Tom Swifty," said Tom finally.

Removing information from quotes

Ellipses are three dots (...) used to show that information is missing or has been removed from a quote. They can also mean that a longer quote has been shortened.

Original: "I've interviewed several celebrities," said Patsy Zettler. "Including comedian Margaret Cho, actress Linda Blair, and author Allen Steele."

Shortened: "I've interviewed...Margaret Cho...Linda Blair...and Allen Steele," said Patsy Zettler.

Adding information to quotes

Brackets ([]) are used to add comments or explanations into direct quotes.

"I interviewed her [Margaret Cho] by telephone," Zettler said.

Adding emphasis to a quote

Write the words to be emphasized in italics and then add (emphasis mine) at the end of the quote or directly after the italicized words.

Joel Saltzman said in his book "If You Can Talk, You Can Write" that if you "...sit around and wait for inspiration that's just what you'll do—*sit around and wait for inspiration*" (emphasis mine).

Errors within quotes

To indicate an error that already existed in a quote use the word sic (Latin for "thus") in brackets, [*sic*].

"Some grammatical mistakes like "we was going [*sic*] or we be going [*sic*] should be cleaned up by the writer, especially if they were said by a CEO and the writer is doing a PR piece in the company's newsletter."

Using epigraphs at the beginning of a piece of writing

Do not use quotation marks around the epigraph. Be sure to put the name of the quote's author under the epigraph, flushed right.

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world.

Part IV: Laws and ethics regarding usage of quotes and anecdotes.

What is Fair Use?

(Below is information from Yale University's Web site. For more information about fair use see "Resources")

The right set forth in Section 107 of the United States Copyright Act, to use copyrighted materials for certain purposes, such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. Section 107 sets out four factors to be considered in determining whether or not a particular use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes; (2) the nature of the copyrighted work; (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

What is Libel?

(Below is information from the Media Law Resource Center. For more information about MLRC, see "Resources.")

Libel and slander are legal claims for false statements of fact about a person that are printed, broadcast, spoken or otherwise communicated to others. Libel generally refers to statements or visual depictions in written or other permanent form, while slander refers to verbal statements and gestures. The term defamation is often used to encompass both libel and slander.

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In order for the person about whom a statement is made to recover for libel, the false statement must be defamatory, meaning that it actually harms the reputation of the other person, as opposed to being merely insulting or offensive.

The statement(s) alleged to be defamatory must also have been published to at least one other person (other than the subject of the statement) and must be "of and concerning" the plaintiff. That is, those hearing or reading the statement must identify it specifically with the plaintiff.

The statement(s) alleged to be defamatory must also be a false statement of fact. That which is name-calling, hyperbole, or, however characterized, cannot be proven true or false, cannot be the subject of a libel or slander claim.

The defamatory statement must also have been made with fault. The extent of the fault depends primarily on the status of the plaintiff. Public figures, such as government officials, celebrities, well-known individuals, and people involved in specific public controversies, are required to prove actual malice, a legal term which means the defendant knew his statement was false or recklessly disregarded the truth or falsity of his statement. In most jurisdictions, private individuals must show only that the defendant was negligent: that he failed to act with due care in the situation.

A defamation claim -- at least one based upon statements about issues that are matters of public interest -- will likely fail if any of these elements are not met.

While on many of these issues the burden of proof is on the plaintiff, the primary defenses to a defamation claim are that the statements are true, are not statements of fact, or are privileged. Some defamatory statements may be protected by privilege, meaning that in certain circumstances the interest in communicating a statement outweighs the interest in protecting reputation. For example, most, if not all, jurisdictions recognize a privilege for fair reports of what is said, done, or published out of government and judicial proceedings, and for reports of misconduct to the proper authorities or to those who share a common interest (such as within a family or an association). Privileges do vary somewhat from state to state in their scope and requirements. They generally apply to non-media defendants to the same degree as to media defendants.

A successful defamation plaintiff may be entitled to a jury award of money damages. In some instances, the plaintiff may also be awarded punitive damages for particularly reprehensible conduct. The parties to the claim are entitled to appeal and cases are carefully scrutinized on review to protect the defendant's First Amendment rights.

Defamation claims can be brought by living persons and entities that are considered "persons" under the law such as corporations, unincorporated businesses, associations

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and unions. Governmental entities cannot maintain actions for libel or slander, although a government official can bring suit for statements about the official individually.

Libel and slander are civil claims, but a handful of the states recognize an action for criminal defamation. Prosecutions are rare, especially against the media.

Under the American federal law system, defamation claims are largely governed by state law, subject to the limitations imposed by the free speech and press provisions of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as interpreted and applied by the Supreme Court and other courts. While the elements of defamation are largely identical throughout the country, because defamation is a matter of state law there can be important differences on substantive and procedural details of the claim in the separate jurisdictions. And as a result of the application of First Amendment requirements to the claims, the specific elements as well as the burdens of proof with respect to those elements may be different depending upon whether the plaintiff is a public or private figure, whether the defendant is media or non-media, and the character of the statement(s) at issue.

Resources

Fair Use: <http://www.library.yale.edu/~license/definiti.shtml>

Famous Quotes online:

Famous quotes by Brainyquotes at <http://www.brainyquotes.com>

Janet Cooke's fabricated story "Jimmy's World" that won and then lost her the Pulitzer Prize can be read at:

<http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/markport/lit/litjour/spg2002/cooke.htm>

Libel, slander, and other common Media Law questions from the Media Law Resource Center (MLRC):

<http://www.medialaw.org>

Movie Quotes: American Film Institute's (AFI) 100 Years 100 Most Memorable Movie Quotes

http://http.vitalstreamcdn.com/aficom_vitalstream_com/docs/tvevents/pdf/quotes100.pdf

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Tom Swifties:

<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/Div/Winchester/jhhs/math/probweek/p2004/swifties.html>

Web site for Professional Experts to quote or interview:

<https://profnet.prnewswire.com/>

Writing Lab from Purdue University. A great online writing resource.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Quotes from this Workshop*

"You are the curator of your writing. No one else. Just you."

"The first and most important goal was that before I even got up here to talk to you, I'd lose 10 lbs.

That didn't happen. You know why? Because writing makes me fat."

"Finishing something and putting it out there is the game. It's what separates doers from non-doers.

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It's what separates the people who say 'Someday I'm gonna' from the people who say 'One day I did.'"

"Seems to me quotes and anecdotes are like the salt and pepper to writing. Only something bland or boring would not have quotes or stories."

"Writers are the stewards of quotes."

"All writing is not mamby pamby, PR, PC, whitewashed and rosey. Good writing is gritty, realistic, contrary, bold, brave, & brazen."

"So the lesson is: Tell the truth. Take good notes. And be honest with your quotes."

"When the art student saw a painting by Picasso, he said: 'That's not art. Anyone could do that.' A wise teacher replied, 'But they didn't.'"

"May you always treat yourself like Picasso. If your inner critic tells you that what you've created isn't good enough, that anyone could have done that--You'll smile and reply on your own behalf: 'But they didn't.'"

*Patsy Zettler, 2007