

EXAMPLE 1:

Here is an example of a “quotation sandwich” that uses a sentence from the James essay.

TOP SLICE OF BREAD:

Another of James’ interesting positions is his argument that a non-military conscription can improve our society by improving the character of the young people who serve in it.

INSIDE THE SANDWICH:

He claims that “we should get toughness without callousness, authority with as little criminal cruelty as possible, and painful work done cheerily because the duty is temporary, and threatens not, as now, to degrade the whole remainder of one’s life” (21).

SECOND SLICE OF BREAD:

I agree with James that requiring everyone to serve in a non-military army could cause these positive characteristics to become much more commonplace in our country, which in turn would cause our society and even our politics to be much improved.

Comment [L1]: This “top slice” gives the context of the quotation and implies a connection to the student writer’s thinking. It helps your reader to be oriented to the quotation, and to expect that the writer will explain what’s interesting about it.

Comment [L2]: This is called a signal phrase. Such phrases do a lot of work in an essay, and are very easy to write.

Comment [L3]: The quotation itself should be exactly as it was written. In this case you can copy and paste the quotations from the essay.

Comment [L4]: This simple way to give the page number of a quotation is also **the accepted method**. SIMPLY PUT THE PAGE NUMBER IN PARENTHESES. Your reader will know what it means, and you don’t have to explain.

Comment [L5]: Here this sentence connects the writer’s thinking (“I agree”) with the idea in the quotation. We would expect that the next sentence, and in fact the entire paragraph, would explain why the student writer agrees, both with logic and with contemporary examples, such as the earthquake in Haiti.

EXAMPLE 2:

The next example isn’t exactly giving a quotation sandwich. It’s from a student paper about the Haiti earthquake photos, and the description of the photo works like a quotation:

FIRST SLICE OF BREAD:

There were two photos in the photo essay that really captured by attention.

The first was the photo of the child taken in Port-au-Prince January 13, 2010.

INSIDE THE SANDWICH:

This child of about 5 years of age was severely scratched on her hands, arms, and legs, and it appeared as though she lost an eye.

SECOND SLICE OF BREAD:

This photo devastated me, to see a child of such a young age injured like that, why? Why her? She’s just a kid.

Comment [L6]: The student writer explains what his source is.

Comment [L7]: The student writer orients us to the particular photo—which accomplishes something like saying the author and title of a verbal source. (If you do know the name of the photographer, this is the place to mention it.)

Comment [L8]: This detailed description works like a quotation.

Comment [L9]: This move connects the photo (or quotation) to the student writer’s thinking and feeling in a very direct way, just like Graff says should happen.

Comment [L10]: Here the student writer is explaining and elaborating on that personal connection. The writer is moving from a specific example (the injured kid) into a bigger, more abstract topic (children should not suffer from a natural catastrophe). If the student writer continued this discussion, it would be easy to make the argument that a swift intervention from a military-type force is morally right.