Guidelines for Using TEXTUAL EVIDENCE in a Literary Argument

**Quote from the text**

- when the author’s word choice is important.
- when you are making a very specific point about the text.

**Use paraphrase or summary**

- when you are referring to a general fact about the novel.
- when you simply need to refer to the plotline.

**Quote extensively** (a block quotation—more than three lines) ONLY

- when the quotation is crucial, perhaps central, to your argument and will lose its effect if paraphrased.
- when you have a great deal to analyze in the quotation.
- when you are writing a relatively long paper (perhaps over six pages).

**Introducing Quoted Material into Your Prose**

Always remember to

- transition smoothly and grammatically from your prose to the quotation;
- connect the quotation to your prose using a colon or comma, not a semicolon or period;
- punctuate correctly: place periods and commas inside quotation marks, semicolons, colons, question marks, exclamation points, and page numbers outside:

Even after she finally finds her true love, she defines herself by the actions of a man: “Once upon a time, Ah never ‘spected nothin’ . . . But you come ‘long and made somethin’ outa me” (167).