

BEST QUOTES ON QUOTATIONS

Colors fade, temples crumble, empires fall but wise words endure.

—Edward Thorndike

I quote others only the better to express myself.

—de Montaigne

Quotations yield the greatest insight from the fewest words.

—Dan L. Miller

A quotation in a speech, article or book is like a rifle in the hands of an infantryman. It speaks with authority.

—Brendan Francis

It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations.

—Winston Churchill

Familiar and noteworthy quotations reveal—as do ancient artifacts, temples, and dwellings, frescoes and cave paintings—the nature of the age and the people who created them.

—Morison Beck

A proverb is the child of experience.

—English Proverb

The trouble with quotes on the Internet is that you can never know if they are genuine.

—Abraham Lincoln

A short saying oft contains much wisdom.

—Sophocles

A proverb is a short sentence based on long experience.

—de Cervantes

The wisdom of the wise, and the experience of ages, may be preserved by quotations.

—Isaac D'Israeli

Proverbs are the daughters of daily experience.

—Dutch Proverb

What is an Epigram? A dwarfish whole,
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

—Samuel T. Coleridge

Solomon made a book of proverbs, but a book of proverbs never made a Solomon.

—English Proverb

Though old the thought and oft exprest,
'Tis his at last who says it best.

—Russell Lowell

It is little service to the reader to print windy, dozen-page letters of no high quality when a few quoted phrases and a sentence of summary would have conveyed the nature of most of them.

—John Skow

When someone has the wit to coin a useful phrase, it ought to be acclaimed and broadcast or it will perish.

—Jack Smith

I think we must...quote whenever we feel that the allusion is interesting or helpful or amusing.

—Clifton Fadiman

A good aphorism is too hard for the tooth of time, and is not worn away by all the centuries, although it serves as food for every epoch.

--Friedrich Nietzsche

One advantage there certainly is in quotation, that if the authors cited be good, there is at least so much worth reading in the book of him who quotes them.

—Samuel Johnson

The wise men of old have sent most of their morality down the stream of time in the light skiff of apothegm or epigram.

—E. P. Whipple

We are as much informed of a writer's genius by what he selects as by what he originates....A passage from one of the poets, well recited, borrows new interest from the rendering. As the journals say, 'The italics are ours.'

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

A great man quotes bravely, and will not draw on his invention when his memory serves him with a word as good.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Every quotation contributes something to the stability or enlargement of the language.

—Samuel Johnson

To be amused by what you read—that is the great spring of happy quotations.

—E. Montague

Have you ever observed that we pay much more attention to a wise passage when it is quoted than when we read it in the original author?

—Philip G. Hamerton

Most public speakers talk so badly that a sudden quotation from a poet appears in their babble like a lady in a slum.

—Austin O'Malley

Quotations tell us of the inward thoughts and aspirations of men and women, of their struggle with life and death, with ambition, misfortune, evil, grief, of their experience with love, joy, of their sense of humor. They reveal to us that people from ancient times, from the first written utterances, can speak to us today in ways that inspire, inform, comfort, entertain.

—Emily Morison Beck

To find some thought of which we approve but which we have not managed to express clearly—to come upon this thought brilliantly expressed, with all the humor, bitterness or tenderness that its full expression requires—is a deep and complex satisfaction. It comforts us with the assurance, for one thing, that we are not alone, that others—the famous and respected—have agreed with us. And it lets us know that the idea we wanted to express with our poor stammering tongue has already been sent abroad on winged words.

—Bergen Evans

One must be a wise reader to quote wisely and well.

—Bronson Alcott

By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

A writer expresses himself in words that have been used before because they give his meaning better than he can give it himself, or because they are beautiful or witty, or because he expects them to touch a chord of association in his reader.

—George Fowler

A writer with a knack of remembering the best things that have been said about everything of which he treats lays us all under an obligation that we can only repay be gratitude.

—Havelock Ellis

Wisdom is meaningless until your own experience has given it meaning...and there is wisdom in the selection of wisdom.

—Bergen Evans

The power of quotation is as dreadful a weapon as any which the human intellect can forge.

—Jay Chapman

Poor indeed is the man whose mind is not enriched by some phrase of lasting truth and beauty which serves to restore his soul in the exigencies of life. Each of us needs in his heart's treasury the record of a lovely line to renew fellowship with the great and noble of this earth—and, indeed, almost as great as the ability to write a line of strength is the ability to use that line to higher levels of emotion and achievement.

—Francis Lytle

The next best thing to being witty one's self, is to be able to quote another's wit.

—Christian Bovee

Everything has been thought of before, but the problem is to think of it again.

—Johann Von Goethe

I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation.

—Bernard Shaw

Quotes...portray those human qualities and beliefs that transcend time.

—Lois Horowitz

Proverbs. Few words, right sense, fine image.

—Moses ibn Ezra

Patch grief with proverbs.

—William Shakespeare

There is nothing so absurd but some philosopher has said it.

--Cicero

Quotation is the highest compliment you can pay to an author.

—Samuel Johnson

He who never quotes is never quoted.

—Haddon Spurgeon

Despise not the discourse of the wise, but acquaint thyself with their proverbs; for of them thou shalt learn instruction.

—Ecclesiasticus

Constant popping off of proverbs will make thee a byword thyself.

—Thomas Fuller

The obscurest sayings of the truly great are often those which contain the germ of the profoundest and most useful truths.

—Joseph Mazzini

A thing is never too often repeated which is never sufficiently learned.

--Seneca

The multiplicity of facts and writings is become so great that everything must soon be reduced to extracts.

—Voltaire

We should make the same use of a book that the bee does of a flower; she steals sweets from it, but does not injure it.

--Charles Caleb Colton

I like quotations. There is something about the short form that appeals to me. Maybe it has to do with our diminished attention spans.

—James Charlton

Quotations are the literary form of the '80's.

—Glen Evans

Quotations are a distillation of wit and thought imposed by the brevity of form.

—Glen Evans

I like to tell stories, and I have found that most people not only enjoy them but learn more easily through the medium of anecdotes and broad illustrations than in any other way.

As to what the unimpressed minority may think, I don't care.

—Abraham Lincoln

Few of the many wise apothegms which have been uttered have prevented a single foolish action.

—Thomas Babington
Macaulay

Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced—even a proverb is no proverb to you till life has illustrated it.

—John Keats

The nearest approach to immortality for any truth is by its becoming a platitude.

—Paul Eldridge

Platitudes are, after all, only the neat packing of good sense so that it can be carried about: they are useless, like a portmanteau, until you put your own key to them; then by them you live and work.

—Stephen Mackenna

Proverbs are not merely decorations on life. They have life itself in them. They are the bedrock substance of living, built up, by many people and many years. They are the beginnings of all literature, the first metaphors and similes, the first comedies and tragedies. They are the first poetry we have.

—Robert Peter Tristram
Coffin

Proverbs are always platitudes until you have personally experienced the truth of them.

—Aldous Huxley

A proverb is one man's wit and all men's wisdom.

—John Russell

Almost every wise saying has an opposite one, no less wise, to balance it.

—George Santayana

An aphorism is true where it has fixed the impression of a genuine experience.

—F. H. Bradley

Some people write books in ten volumes and others epigrams in two lines—and the two works may be of exactly equal value.

—Frederick Goodyear

We endeavor to stuff the universe into the gullet of an aphorism.

—Paul Eldridge

Exclusive of abstract sciences, the largest and worthiest portion of our knowledge consists in aphorisms, and the greatest of men is but an aphorism.

—Samuel Taylor
Coleridge

The aphorism affords at least one test by which you can judge a writer. The Greeks loved to embed gnomic wisdom of this kind in their literature, and there are few great writers who have not contributed to the small stack of the great aphorisms in their language.

—Robert Lynd

It is a difficult enterprise, a delicate undertaking, to write ‘thoughts.’ What a well-informed mind, what a fertile imagination, what a just and profound feeling of things, what a happy style, is requisite to attain even mediocrity therein.

—Joseph Roux

It is my ambition to say in ten sentences what other men say in whole books—what other men do not say in whole books.

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Great consolation may grow out of the smallest saying.

—German Proverb

I don’t see how an epigram, being a bolt from the blue, with no introduction or cue, ever gets itself writ.

—William James

Somewhere in the world there is an epigram for every dilemma.

—Willem Van Loon

A ten-word epigram to be accurate needs a ten-page footnote, yet what it lacks in accuracy it makes up in nimbleness.

—Andrew Holmes

Paradoxes are useful to attract attention to ideas.

—Mandell Creighton

Nothing is so useless as a general maxim.

--Thomas Babington
Macaulay

Epigrams are worth little for guidance to the perplexed, and less for comfort to the wounded.

—Henry Van Dyke

All maxims have their antagonist maxims; proverbs should be sold in pairs, a single one being but a half truth.

—William Matthews

Maxims are the condensed good sense of nations.

—James Mackintosh

Proverbs: The wisdom of many, and the wit of one.

—John Russell

Let no one weep for me, or celebrate my funeral with mourning; for I still live, as I pass to and fro through the mouths of men.

—Ennius

Three things must epigrams, like bees, have all,
A sting, and honey, and a body small.

—Samuel Taylor
Coleridge

He misses what is meant by epigram
Who thinks it only frivolous flim-flam.

--Martial

No epigram contains the whole truth.

—W. Thompson

Quoting: The act of repeating erroneously the words of another.

—Ambrose Bierce

Classical quotation is the parole of literary men all over the world.

—Samuel Johnson

The study of proverbs may be more instructive and comprehensive than the most elaborate scheme of philosophy.

—Motherwell

It is a good thing...to read books of quotations...The quotations, when engraved upon the memory, give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more.

—Winston Churchill

The writer does the most, who gives his reader the most knowledge, and takes from him the least time.

—Charles Caleb
Colton

Proverbs contradict each other. That is the wisdom of a nation.

—Stanislaw Jerzy Lec

I hate quotations. Just tell me what you know.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

QUOTATION....A writer expresses himself in words that have been used before because they give his meaning better than he can give it himself, or because they are beautiful or witty, or because he expects them to touch a chord of association in his reader, or because he wishes to show that he is learned and well read. Quotations due to the last motive are invariably ill-advised; the discerning reader detects it and is contemptuous; the undiscerning is perhaps impressed, but even then is at the same time repelled, pretentious quotations being the surest road to tedium.

—George Fowler

Brevity is the soul of wit.

—William Shakespeare

Proverbs may not improperly be called the philosophy of the common people.

—James Howell

Pithy sentences are like sharp nails which force truth upon our memory.

—Diderot

Proverbs are the literature of reason, or the statements of absolute truth, without qualification. Like the sacred books of each nation, they are the sanctuary of its intuitions.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sense, brevity, and point are the elements of a good proverb.

—Tryon Edwards

Proverbs were anterior to books, and formed the wisdom of the vulgar, and in the earliest ages were the unwritten laws of morality.

—Benjamin Disraeli

Proverbs are the condensed wisdom of long experience, in brief, epigrammatic form, easily remembered and always ready for use. They are the alphabet of morals; and are commonly prudential watchwords and warnings, and so lean toward a selfish view of life.

—T. T. Munger

The wisdom of nations lies in their proverbs, which are brief and pithy. Collect and learn them; they are notable measures of directions for human life; you have much in little; they save time in speaking; and upon occasion may be the fullest and safest answers.

—William Penn

Proverbs may be said to be the abridgments of wisdom.

—Joseph Joubert

The proverb condenses the meaning and power of a thousand words into one short and simple sentence, and it is the more effective because it carries so much force in so compact a form.

--D. March

Proverbs are the cream of a nation's thought.

--Unknown

An apt quotation is as good as an original remark.

--Unknown

The proverb answers where the sermon fails, as a well-charged pistol will do more execution than a whole barrel of gunpowder idly exploded in the air.

—Simms

Abstracts, abridgments, summaries, etc., have the same use as burning glasses, to collect the diffused rays of wit and learning in authors, and make them point with warmth and quickness upon the reader's imagination.

—Jonathan Swift

He that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age.

—Samuel Johnson

Whatever we may say against collections, which present authors in a disjointed form, they nevertheless bring about many excellent results. We are not always so composed, so full of wisdom, that we are able to take in at once the whole scope of a work according to its merits. Do we not mark in a book passages which seem to have a direct reference to ourselves? Young people especially, who have failed in acquiring a complete cultivation of mind, are roused in a praiseworthy way by brilliant passages.

--Johann Wolfgang
von Goethe

By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we quote. We quote not only books and proverbs, but arts, sciences, religions, customs, and laws; nay, we quote temples and houses, tables and chairs by imitation.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Always have a book at hand, in the parlor, on the table, for the family; a book of condensed thought and striking anecdote, of sound maxims and truthful apothegms. It will impress on your own mind a thousand valuable suggestions, and teach your children a thousand lessons of truth and duty. Such a book is a casket of jewels for your household.

—Tryon Edwards

There is no less wit nor invention in applying rightly a thought one finds in a book than in being the first author of that thought.

—Pierre Bayle

Apothegms to thinking minds are the seeds from which spring vast fields of new thought, that may be further cultivated, beautified, and enlarged.

—James Ramsay

Aphorisms are portable wisdom, the quintessential extracts of thought and feeling.

--R. W. Alger

He is a benefactor of mankind who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences, that may be easily impressed on the memory, and so recur habitually to the mind.

—Samuel Johnson

Nor do apothegms only serve for ornament and delight, but also for action and civil use, as being the edge tools of speech, which cut and penetrate the knots of business and affairs.

—Francis Bacon

Under the veil of these curious sentences are hid those germs of morals which the masters of philosophy have afterwards developed into so many volumes.

—Plutarch

The aphorism is a personal observation inflated into a universal truth, a private posing as a general.

—Stefan Kanfer

Famous remarks are very seldom quoted correctly.

—Simeon Strunsky

The proverbs of a nation furnish the index to its spirit, and the results of its civilization.

—J. G. Holland

The genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs.

—Francis Bacon

There is a certain list of vices committed in all ages, and declaimed against by all authors, which will last as long as human nature; or digested into commonplaces may serve for any theme, and never be out of date until Doomsday.

—Thomas Browne

Proverbs are the wisdom of the streets.

—G. Benham

Quotations are a columnist's bullpen. Stealing someone else's words frequently spares the embarrassment of eating your own.

—Peter Anderson

A brilliant epigram is a solemn platitude gone to a masquerade ball.

—Lionel Strachey

Though old the thought and oft exprest,
'tis his at last who says it best.

—Russell Lowell

Quotations are like shells on the beach. No matter how many have been collected, there are always more wonderful examples left to find.

—Lincoln and Murray
Suid

A fine quotation is a diamond on the finger of a man of wit and a pebble in the hand of a fool.

—Joseph Roux

Everything has been said before, but since nobody listens, we have to keep going back and begin again.

--André Gide

I got so tired of hearing those proverbs when I was a child. Now I use them all the time. Sometimes they are the best way to say what needs to be said. I teach them to my students. I have a collection of proverbs for class discussion and writing assignments.

—Marva Collins

The majority of those who put together collections of verse or epigrams resemble those who eat cherries or oysters; they begin by choosing the best and end by eating everything.

--Nicolas Chamfort

Nothing gives an author so much pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by other learned authors.

—Benjamin Franklin

A quotation is something said or written that has a memorable quality—memorable, perhaps, because it is an astute observation, a clever use of words, or simply because it makes one laugh.

—Anne Stibbs

The next best thing to being witty one's self, is to be able to quote another's wit.

—Nestell Bovee

Certain brief sentences are peerless in their ability to give one the feeling that nothing remains to be said.

—Jean Rostand

The profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until an equal mind and heart finds and publishes it.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Pithy sentences are like sharp nails which force truth upon our memory.

—Denis Diderot

A man of maxims only, is like a Cyclops with one eye, and that in the back of his head.

—Samuel Taylor
Coleridge

Maxims are like lawyers who must need to see but one side of the case.

—Gelett Burgess

They are like the clue in the labyrinth, or the compass in the night.

—Joseph Joubert

There is no proverb which is not true.

--Miguel de Cervantes

When a thing has been said and said well, have no scruple. Take it and copy it.

—Anatole France

I always have a quotation for everything—it saves original thinking.

—Dorothy L. Sayers

The devil can quote scripture for his purpose.

—William Shakespeare

A witty saying proves nothing.

--Voltaire

Pointed axioms and acute replies fly loose about the world, and are assigned successively to those whom it may be the fashion to celebrate.

—Samuel Johnson

It is better to be quotable than to be honest.

—Tom Stoppard

The surest way of making a monkey out of a man is to quote him.

—Robert Benchley

Some for renown, on scraps of learning dote, and think they grow immortal as they quote.

—Edward Young

Listen carefully to what country people call mother wit. In those homely sayings are couched the collective wisdom of generations.

—Maya Angelou

A man, any man, will go considerably out of his way to pick up a silver dollar, but here are golden words, which the wisest men of antiquity have uttered, and whose worth the wise of every succeeding age have assured us of.

—Henry David Thoreau

What is all wisdom save a collection of platitudes?... (But) the man who orders his life according to their teachings cannot go far wrong.

—Norman Douglas

I am not fond of aphorisms...they are one-size-fits-all; each has its opposite, and whatever line of conduct you follow, there is always one to back you up.

—Alfred de Musset

The antiquity and general acceptance of an opinion is no assurance of its truth.

—Pierre Bayle

If, with the literate, I am
Impelled to try an epigram,
I never seek to take the credit;
We all assume that Oscar said it.

—Dorothy Parker

He liked those literary cooks
Who skim the cream of others' books;
And ruin half an author's Grace's
By plucking bon-mots from their places.

—Hannah More

His works contain nothing worth quoting; and a book that furnishes no quotations is, *me judice*, no book—it's a plaything.

—Thomas Love Peacock

He wrapped himself in quotations—as a beggar would enfold himself in the purple of emperors.

—Richard Kipling

What a good thing Adam had. When he said a good thing he knew nobody had said it before.

—Mark Twain

A wise man who knows his proverbs can reconcile difficulties.

—Nigerian Proverb

There is no reason why a book of quotations should be dull; it has its uses in idleness as well as in study.

—H. L. Mencken

In modern life nothing produces such an effect as a good platitude. It makes the whole world kin.

—Oscar Wilde

The slow, simple observations of the peasant are more wise than the most sparkling epigrams of the latest wit.

—Beverley Nichols

Proverbs are in the world of thought what gold coin is in the world of business—great value in small compass, and equally current among all people. Sometimes the proverb may be false, the coin counterfeit, but in both cases the false proves the value of the true.

--D. March

'Honesty is the best policy,' 'A dollar saved is a dollar earned,' 'Look before you leap,' 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,' 'The laborer is worthy of his hire,' may be scoffed at by some intellectuals as trite copybook rules, but nonetheless they sum up the elementary experience of the race in creating and consuming wealth....People may change their minds as often as their coats, and new sets of rules of conduct may be written every week, but the fact remains that human nature has not changed and does not change, that inherent human beliefs stay the same; the fundamental rules of human conduct continue to hold.

—Lammot du Pont

Maxims are to the intellect what laws are to actions: They do not enlighten, but guide and direct, and though themselves blind, are protecting.

—Joseph Joubert

An aphorism is like a bee, fully burdened with gold, but with a sting attached.

—Carmen Sylva

The Devil can quote Shakespeare for his own purposes.

—George Bernard Shaw

It is with epigrams as with other inventions: the best ones annoy us because we didn't think of them ourselves.

—Georg C. Lichtenberg

Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first misquoter of it.

--Unknown

A proverb is a short sentence distilled from long experience.

--Miguel de Cervantes

What are the proper proportions of a maxim? A minimum of sound to a maximum of sense.

—Mark Twain

All the good maxims have already been written; the only thing that remains now is to put them into practice.

—Blaise Pascal

Pretty things that are well said—it's nice to have them in your head.

—Robert Frost

One learns little more about a man from the feats of his literary memory than from the feats of his alimentary canal.

—Moore Colby

If you look up a dictionary of quotations, you will find few reasons for a sensible man to desire to become wealthy.

—Robert Lynd

Traversing a slow page, to come upon a lode of the pure shining metal is to exult inwardly for greedy hours.

—Kathleen Norris

Anecdotes,
The poor man's history.

--Rita Dove

An aphorism is the last link in a long chain of thought.

—Marie von
Eschenbach

A facility for quotation covers the absence of original thought.

—Dorothy L. Sayers

Proverbs are the wisdom of peoples.

—Italian Proverb

I can remember a reporter asking me for a quote, and I didn't know what a quote was. I thought it was some kind of soft drink.

—Joe DiMaggio

I was a little nervous backstage. But I had this book, Gandhi. I just read his quotes, closed my eyes and focused my thoughts. Presently, this book is my prized possession.

—Nafisa Joseph

The great writers of aphorisms read as if they had all known each other well.

—Elias Canetti

The man who has the courage of his platitudes is always a successful man.

—Wyck Brooks

Proverbs often contradict one another, as any reader soon discovers. The sagacity that advises us to look before we leap promptly warns us that if we hesitate we are lost; that absence makes the heart grow fonder, but out of sight, out of mind.

—Leo Rosten

Sooner or later we all quote our mothers.

—Bern Williams

There is a certain majesty in simplicity which is far above all the quaintness of wit.

—Alexander Pope

Maybe our favorite quotations say more about us than about the stories and people we're quoting.

—John Green

...people quote proverbs without realizing they're really in awe of the authority of their truth and the power of their expression...

—John Geddes

Many good sayings are to be found in holy books, but merely reading them will not make one religious.

—Ramakrishna

Few of the many wise apothegms which have been uttered have prevented a single foolish action.

—Thomas B. Macaulay

Write it down, boy. If you come across a passage in your reading that you'd like to remember, write it down in your little book; then you can read it again, memorize it, and have it whenever you wish.

—Keith Donohue

A quote is a lesson which is learnt.

—Deyth Banger

Every man is a borrower and a mimic, life is theatrical and literature a quotation.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

There are four kinds of readers. The first is like an hourglass; and their reading being as sand, it runs out, and leaves not a vestige behind.

A second is like the sponge, which imbibes everything, and returns it in nearly the same state, only a little dirtier.

A third is like a jelly bag, allowing all that is pure to pass away, and retaining only the refuse and dregs.

And the fourth is like the slaves in the diamond mines of Golanda, who, casting aside all that is worthless, retain only pure gems.

--Samuel Taylor
Coleridge

To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life.

--W. Somerset Maugham

Whene'er you lecture, be concise; the soul
Takes in short maxims, and retains them whole;
But pour in water when the vessel's filled,
It simply dribbles over and is spilled.

—Horace

People will accept your ideas much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.

--David H. Comins

Most politicians have four speeches: what they have written down, what they actually say, what they wish they had said, and what they are quoted as saying the next day.

—C. McKenzie

To be occasionally quoted is the only fame I care for.

—Alexander Smith

In the absence of a formally agreed, worldwide dictionary definition of ‘Quotography’ (in 2016), here are my two cents worth: ‘Quotography is the art of pairing unique quotations with complementary images in order to express thought-provoking ideas, challenging concepts, profound sentiments’.

—Alex Morritt

People carry on whole conversations in proverbs. But they are not LIVING the proverbs.

—Idries Shah

Quotes are just words, meaning is created by mind.

—Ragesh Nair

For every quote, there is one that challenges it.

—R. Alistair

The next thing to saying a good thing yourself, is to quote one.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

If you put an inspirational quote under your selfie, no one can see your narcissism.

—*theChive*

Middle age loves its platitudes, chiefly the ones about hard-won wisdom and the many things that once seemed important but no longer do as you face down impending mortality and irrelevance. And don’t forget the ones about small things that are far more important than you’d realized. Among the many indignities of aging is the irresistible temptation to reach for some menu of bromides and convey to the world those invaluable lessons about living.

—Laura Kipnis

The taste for quotations (and for the juxtaposition of incongruous quotations) is a Surrealist taste.

—Susan Sontag

I am reminded of the professor who, in his declining hours, was asked by his devoted pupils for his final counsel. He replied, ‘Verify your quotations.’

--Winston Churchill

Sometimes opposing adages fight to a draw: ‘Better safe than sorry’ versus ‘Nothing ventured, nothing gained.’ But when it comes to ‘Opposites attract’ versus ‘Birds of a feather flock together,’ the data are in: we end up with partners like ourselves.

—Matthew Hutson

(Emerson's) aphorisms tend to be chicken soup for the academic soul or gobledygook of a man who prefers the sounds of words to their meanings.

--Micah Mattix

PLATITUDE, n. The fundamental element and special glory of popular literature. A thought that snores in words that smoke. The wisdom of a million fools in the diction of a dullard. A fossil sentiment in artificial rock. A moral without the fable. All that is mortal of a departed truth. A demi-tasse of milk-and-mortality. The Pope's-nose of a featherless peacock. A jelly-fish withering on the shore of the sea of thought. The cackle surviving the egg. A desiccated epigram.

--Ambrose Bierce

We can learn much from wise words, little from wisecracks, and less from wise guys.

—William A. Ward

They say instant communication is not communication at all but merely a frantic, trivial, nerve-wracking bombardment of clichés, threats, fads, fashions, gibberish and advertising. However, who has not hung on a scripture, a quote, a statement, only to stumble upon the key phrase that brought all things to a turning point? The greatest sermons and speeches were pieced together by illuminating thoughts that powered men to surpass their own commonness. It is the sparkling magic of letters forming words, and those words colliding with passion, that makes statements into wisdom.

--Shannon L. Alder

An aphorism can never be the whole truth; it is either a half-truth or a truth-and-a-half.

—Karl Kraus

My ambition is to say in ten sentences what everyone else says in a book.

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Maxims and aphorisms—let us remember that wisdom is the true salt of literature, and the books that are most nourishing are richly stored with it, and that is the main object to seek in reading books.

--John Morley

I might repeat to myself slowly and soothingly, a list of quotations beautiful from minds profound—if I can remember any of the damn things.

—Dorothy Parker

First, I look to get inspired. For me, I like to read short quotes from famous and respected people, whether current or from hundreds of years ago. These short words of wisdom cause my brain to recharge, and I'm motivated to create.

—Len Saunders

Oscar Wilde: I wish I had said that.

James McNeill Whistler: You will, Oscar, you will.

—Oscar Wilde and James
McNeill Whistler

Which form of proverb do you prefer?

Better late than never, or

Better never than late ?

—Lewis Carroll

The Scripture vouches Solomon for the wisest of men; and his proverbs prove him so. The seven wise men of Greece, so famous for their wisdom all the world over, acquired all that fame each of them by a single sentence, consisting of two or three words.

—Dr. Robert South

I believe that today more than ever a book should be sought after even if it has only one great page in it. We must search for fragments, splinters, toenails, anything that has ore in it, anything that is capable of resuscitating the body and the soul.

—Henry Miller

Conventional dogmas, even if endowed with the authority of an Aristotle—ancient or modern—must be tested vigorously. If they are found wanting, we need not bother with them. But if they are found to be substantially correct, we may not overlook them.

—Norman Lamm

I think the reason why I don't read so much, is because as I have observed, whole books all boil down to a drop of essence. You can read a book full of ten thousand words and at the end, sum it up in one sentence; I am more for the one sentence. I am more for the essence. It's like how you need a truckload of roses to extract one drop of rose oil; I don't want to bother with the truckload of roses because I would rather walk away with the drop of rose oil. So in my mind, I have written two hundred books. Why? Because I have with me two hundred vials with one drop of essence in each!

—C. JoyBell C.

My words are read in every corner of the world, yet what do I gain by it? My purse knows nought of my fame.

—Martial (100 A.D.)

Sometimes when you read, it's like certain sentences strike home and knock you flat. It's as if they say everything you have tried to say, or tried to do, or everything you are.

—Gunnhild Øyehaug

I look upon fine phrases like a lover.

—John Keats

When a man fell into his anecdotage it was a sign for him to retire from the world.

—Benjamin Disraeli

Quote—words that affirm
all men and women are your
brothers and sisters.

—Aberjhani

Quotations, which can be located in hundreds of available collections, have many practical uses. Librarians can use quotations effectively to enliven library lessons or speeches and lend authority to concepts, procedures and facts that they present. The teaching librarian can also use scholarly quotations to effectively stimulate thought in those who are participating in group library lessons. Librarians can use particular quotes or pools of quotations for theme topics or as the basis for poster or collage projects, or they may also display apt quotations on signs or bulletin boards or feature a 'thought of the day.'

—Dan L. Miller

Centuries ago Voltaire stated that 'the multiplicity of facts and writings is becoming so great that everything must soon be reduced to extracts.' Considering that we are now in an age of information glut, we have apparently arrived. Regardless of whether Voltaire was prophetic, there are a number of advantages to using quotations as a staple in the English classroom.

Quotations are short. Considering the fast-paced, media culture in which our students are immersed, a quotation ranging from five to six words to three or four sentences is readily acceptable to the adolescent in a hurry. As a change of pace from short stories, poems, and novels, it's refreshing to delve into the genre of the quotation to stimulate thought and focus on the development of communication skills.

—Dan L. Miller

By using quotations teachers can **lend authority to their words**. Students will more readily accept particular views knowing that great thinkers and authorities from the past have also held those views. It is a plus when a particular quotation or proverb is familiar to students because those well-known sayings have already earned universal acceptance. If, for instance, one is teaching about concise writing, the following quotations make the point and add authority to the lesson.

Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words, or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them. (John Ruskin)

The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do. (Thomas Jefferson)

In composing, as a general rule, run your pen through every other word you have written: you have no idea what vigor it will give your style. (SydneySmith)

—Dan L. Miller

Teachers can use quotations to **summarize an idea or define a concept** that might otherwise take several paragraphs to cover. By using quotations one can very well make a complete, concise statement about any aspect of literature, learning, or life. By exploring in class the following two quotations, teachers may generate some insight into the concept of the development of language. Do the quotations, indeed, describe in a few words the origin and development of language?

Language is not an abstract construction of the learned, or of dictionary-makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes or long generations of humanity, and has its bases broad and low, close to the ground. (Walt Whitman)

Language develops by the felicitous misapplication of words.(J. B. Greenough)

—Dan L. Miller

Teachers may be able to express themselves better and **make their points** more precisely through the use of quotations. For instance, F. Scott Fitzgerald would help a teacher stressing effective uses of verb forms.

About adjectives: all fine prose is based on the verbs carrying the sentences. They make sentences move. Probably the finest technical poem

in English is Keats's 'Eve of Saint Agnes.' A line like: 'The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass' is so alive that you race through it, scarcely noticing it, yet it has colored the whole poem with its movement—the limping, trembling, and freezing is going on before your eyes. (F. Scott Fitzgerald.)

—Dan L. Miller

Whether a teacher is preparing a lesson, writing a speech, or writing an article, the inclusion of quotations can **enrich and enliven the content** and more effectively deliver the message. Quotations are particularly effective for getting the students' attention at the beginning of a lesson.

A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of all living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and time in which it is used. (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.)

Slang is a language that rolls up its sleeves, spits on its hands and goes to work. (Carl Sandburg)

—Dan L. Miller

Students often need **motivation** to appreciate a particular subject or topic, and quotations provide insights into the value of a particular topic. Consider, for instance, the following on the nature and value of writing:

Anyone can make history. Only a great man can write it. (Oscar Wilde)

The appeal of writing is primarily the investigation of mystery. (Joyce Carol Oates)

—Dan L. Miller

Through quotations teachers can stimulate students to **view an issue in a new light** or to think about a new topic. Note possibilities for discussion and analysis when considering the following views on the classics:

The classics are only primitive literature. They belong to the same class as primitive machinery and primitive music and primitive medicine. (Stephen Leacock)

A classic is a book that's stood the test of time, a book that men and women all over the world keep reaching for throughout the ages for its special enlightenment...Classics open up your mind. Classics help you

grow. Classics help you understand your life, your world, yourself.
(Steve Allen)

—Dan L. Miller

A question that strikes close to home for every young student of composition is ‘how much **revision** is necessary?’ Perhaps students will be able to form a clearer concept of the need for revision after discussing the following two quotations:

The advice I would offer to any writer is that even when you think you have revised your book to the point where you cannot look at it again, it is time to sit down and revise it some more. (Michael Korda)

Too much polishing and you spoil things. There’s a limit to the expressibility of ideas. You have a new thought, an interesting one. Then, as you try to perfect it, it ceases to be new and interesting, and loses the freshness with which it first occurred to you. You’re spoiling it. (Leo Tolstoy)

—Dan L. Miller

Through a series of quotations the author can **distill** virtually all aspects of a particular issue or concept. And by presenting quotations chronologically, one can show the changing views on a particular subject from age to age. It may be worthwhile to focus discussion on the following chronology of quotations demonstrating the shifting views of duty over the centuries:

413 B.C.—We should not argue when duty calls—we should act.
(Sophocles)

400 A.D.—In doing what we ought we deserve no praise, because it is our duty. (St. Augustine)

1823—The last pleasure in life is the sense of discharging our duty.
(William Hazlitt)

1927—What is the use of such terrible diligence as many tire themselves out with, if they always postpone their exchange of smiles with Beauty and Joy to cling to irksome duties and relations? (Helen Keller)

1953—Nobody is bound by any obligation unless it has first been freely accepted. (Ugo Betti)

1961—People are complaining almost everywhere that the sense of duty is disappearing. How could it be otherwise since no one cares anymore about his rights? (Albert Camus)

—Dan L. Miller

Whether taken from 200 B.C., Victorian England, or the Roaring '20s, quotations yield insight both into the **nature of the age** and also into the **nature of the people** who originated the quotes. Quotations embody habits of thought, customs, and moral values. By carefully selecting from the writing of one period, one can unfold, little by little, characteristics and values of that particular age. Similarly, by selecting passages from a particular author's writings, a teacher can illustrate the style, techniques, values, and the unique traits of that writer.

Alexander Pope's poetry was didactic, satiric, witty, and technically superb. He dealt with 18th-century generalizations about a rational universe, optimism, and deism. Pope's poetry concerned itself most often with what was correct, whether in literature or social conduct. By presenting to students and discussing with them these lines from Pope's writing, one could give a good overview of the poet and even whet the appetites of some students to read Pope in more depth.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance. ('An Essay on Criticism')

Two err is human, to forgive divine. ('An Essay on Criticism')

All nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good;
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.
(‘An Essay on Man’)

Satire's my weapon, but I'm too discreet
To run amok, and tilt at all I meet.
(‘Imitations of Horace’)

I never knew any man in my life who could not bear a another's misfortunes perfectly like a Christian.
(‘Thoughts on Various Subjects’)

It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow necked bottles; the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring out.
(‘Thoughts on Various Subjects’)

—Dan L. Miller

The entertainment value of literature, is, perhaps, its single most important justification. Teachers can provide students with a great deal of **pleasure** through the judicious selection of quotations that are humorous, that are a clever play on words, or that present a distinctly fresh view of life.

Poetry is a kind of gasp, and there it is, a spark on the page.
Fiction, on the other hand, is like swamp fire. (Joy Kogawa)

From the moment I picked your book up until I laid it down I was convulsed with laughter. Someday I intend reading it. (Groucho Marx)

—Dan L. Miller

Use a particular quotation or a pool of quotations as the basis for **assignments**, themes topics, small group discussions and reports, research papers, or as the basis for poster or collage projects.

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. (Ernest Hemingway)

Writing has power, but its power has no vector. Writers can stir the mind, but they can’t direct it. Times change things, God changes things, the dictators change things, but writers can’t change anything.
(Isaac Bashevis Singer)

—Dan L Miller

A **paraphrase** of a quotation illustrates stylistic differences between the two versions and can be an exercise in interpretation. Dictionary skills are also called into play when paraphrasing such quotations as:

In a play, certainly, the subject is of more importance than in any other work of art. Infelicity, triviality, vagueness of subject, may be outweighed in a poem, a novel, or a picture, by charm of manner, by ingenuity of execution; but in a drama the subject is of the essence of the work— it is the work. If it is feeble, the work can have no force; if it is shapeless, the work must be amorphous. (Henry James)

If it were a rainy day, a drunken vigil, a fit of the spleen, a course of physic, a sleepy Sunday, an ill run at dice, a long tailor's bill, ay beggar's purse, a factious head, a hot sun, costive diet, want of books, and a just contempt for learning—but for these...the number of authors and of writing would dwindle away to a degree most woeful to behold.
(Jonathan Swift)

—Dan L. Miller

The **study of vocabulary** can be enhanced by presenting selected words in quotations and explaining connotations and denotations. Consider, for example the multiple uses of the word *golden* in the following:

The golden age, which a blind tradition has hitherto placed in the past, is before us. (C. H. Saint-Simon)

Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation sink heart and voice oppressed. (John Mason Neale)

Silence is golden. (Swiss Proverb)

—Dan L. Miller

As a classroom exercise one can ask students to **match quotations** to themes, characters, events, terms or textbook passages. As part of the exercise, they should explain their reasons for matching the quotations as they did. Discussing those answers could prove profitable in understanding the concepts being explored. Consider the possibilities for discussion centered on the following quotations matched to Edgar Allen Poe's poem 'Annabel Lee.'

Death always comes too early or too late. (English Proverb)

One cannot live with the dead; either we die with them or we make them live again. Or else we forget them. (Louis Martin-Chauffier)

Perhaps the best tribute you can pay someone who dies is to share his belief in life by putting your life ahead of his death. (Max Lerner)

You never realize death until you realize love. (Katherine Butler Hathaway)

—Dan L. Miller

Teachers can ask students to identify in quotations ideas and values and **compare and contrast** them with ideas already discussed in class. By examining quotations from unidentified authors, they can hypothesize about the authors' lives, values, and characters. Students make inferences from the style, choice of words, the allusions to people and events to discover the location, time and conditions that produced the message as well as the roles, intent, and character of the author.

—Dan L. Miller

Quotations can function in any number of effective ways in the English classroom, and because of their brevity, the effect of the message, and their general usefulness, teachers should consider quotations as a staple of the unit lesson plan.

—Dan L. Miller

There may be phrases which shall be palaces to dwell in, treasure-houses to explore; a single word may be a window from which one may perceive all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them. Oftentimes a word shall speak what accumulated volumes have labored in vain to utter: there may be years of crowded passion in a word, and half a life in a sentence.

—Thomas Wentworth
Higginson

Quotations are particularly appropriate for introducing new teaching units. Students need to understand the value of what is to be studied, and teachers may present and discuss appropriate quotations at the beginning of a unit. Consider, for instance, the appropriateness of introducing a unit on language by using the following as a focus for discussion.

If you scoff at language study...how, save in terms of language, will you scoff?
(Mario Pei)

The limits of my language stand for the limits of my world. (Ludwig Wittgenstein)

A picture is worth ten thousand words,' goes the time worn Chinese maxim. But one writer tartly said, 'It takes words to say that.' (Leo Rosten)

—Dan L. Miller

Teachers can display on signs, posters, or digital media quotations they consider most thought-provoking or inspirational. The quotations will serve as a constant reminder of messages the teacher wants to get across. One can feature a 'thought for the day' on the board, for example:

Literature his news that stays news. (Ezra Pound)

Literature is man's written record of what it is like to be alive. (Unknown)

All great speakers were bad speakers at first. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Language is the dress of thought. (Samuel Johnson)

—Dan L. Miller

A quote is just a tattoo on the tongue.

—William F. DeVault

A country can be judged by the quality of its proverbs.

—German Proverb

Quotations in my work are like wayside robbers who leap out armed and relieve the stroller of his conviction.

—Walter Benjamin

Although we all appreciate the library as an important part of our intellectual lives, everyone perceives experiences, objects, and institutions in their own, unique way. By reviewing brief quotations describing unique perceptions of great thinkers regarding the institution of the library, our appreciation of libraries may be further enhanced.

In addition to our own increased appreciation of libraries, quotations, which can be located in hundreds of available collections, also have many practical uses. Librarians can use quotations effectively to enliven library lessons or speeches and lend authority to concepts, procedures, and facts that they present. The teaching librarian can also use scholarly quotations to effectively stimulate thought in those who are participating in group library lessons. Librarians can use particular quotes or pools of quotations for theme topics or as the basis for poster or collage projects, or they may also display quotations on signs or bulletin boards or feature a 'thought for the day.'

—Dan L. Miller

We all need encouragement—I love Notable, Quotable, DO-able Quotes!

—Nanci McGraw