

### How to Write a Sandwich Paragraph

Whenever you use a quotation from your research, that quotation needs to be surrounded by sentences of your own writing. In other words, imagine a paragraph as a sandwich. You wouldn't make a sandwich if you didn't have bread. So think of the first and last sentences of a paragraph as being slices of bread. Inside the sandwich you put some turkey, some lettuce, and some mayo that you found in your refrigerator, but you really want some tomato. Luckily, it's summertime and your neighbor has a garden, so she gives you a tomato. That tomato is like the quotation in your paragraph; you "borrowed" it. The tomato is surrounded by ingredients that you had in your fridge in the same way that a quotation should be surrounded by sentences of your own which introduce and explain it.

Please note that ideally, the first and last paragraphs of your research-supported argumentative essay should not have any quotations in them. This "sandwich" metaphor is for the paragraphs in the middle of your essay.

Here is a sample sandwich paragraph that I lifted from the middle of a student's essay:

The strength of a person in poverty cannot be measured. It can only be observed and applauded. In America, the number of single parents is very high, and women make up a large percentage. People in poverty are looked down upon in society when in fact they should be looked up to for their strength and survival skills. In "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America," Barbara Ehrenreich says, "The thinking behind welfare reform was that even the humblest jobs are morally uplifting and psychologically buoying. In reality they are likely to be fraught with insult and stress" (491). Poor people need a lot of strength just to make it through the day because they work in jobs where bosses take advantage of them.

You can see that the quotation is properly introduced. Notice that the student has written four sentences of his own before the quotation and one sentence after it. That's what makes it a "sandwich" paragraph.

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We look forward to working with you!