

MLA In-Text Citations: Example/strategies

Original passage from page 248 of Ashley Montagu's book, *The American Way of Life*:

To be human is to weep. The human species is the only one in the whole world of animate nature that sheds tears. The trained inability of any human being to weep is a lessening of his capacity to be human – a defect that usually goes deeper than the mere inability to cry. And this, among other things, is what American parents – with the best intentions in the world – have achieved for the American male. It is very sad. If we feel like it, let us all have a good cry – and clear our minds of those cobwebs of confusion, which have for so long prevented us from understanding the ineluctable necessity of crying.

Now look at the various ways you can use the opinion expressed in the passage.

1. **Paraphrase, author, and page number:** Montagu claims that American men have a diminished capacity to be human because they have been trained by their culture not to cry (248).
2. **Initially refer to source and use exact quote:** In his book *The American Way of Life*, Ashley Montagu writes, "The trained inability of any human being to weep is a lessening of his capacity to be human – a defect which usually goes deeper than the mere inability to cry" (248).
3. **Direct reference with exact quote:** According to Montagu, "To be human is to weep" (248).
4. **Starting with the quote instead of starting by listing the author:** "If we feel like it," writes Montagu, "let us have a good cry – and clear our minds of those cobwebs of confusion which have for so long prevented us from understanding the intellectual necessity of crying" (248).
5. **Lead-in by introducing the author's qualifications:** One distinguished anthropologist calls the American male's reluctance to cry "a lessening of his capacity to be human" (Montagu 248).
6. **Paraphrase with a few exact phrases:** Montagu finds it "very sad" that American men have a "trained inability" to shed tears (248).
7. **Including a quote embedded in your own thoughts:** When my grandfather died, all the members of my family – men and women alike – wept openly. We have never been ashamed to cry. As Montagu writes, "to be human is to weep" (248). I am sure we are more human, and in better mental and physical health, because we are able to express our feelings without artificial restraints.
8. **Paraphrase, giving credit to the author without parenthetical citations:** Montagu argues that it is both unnatural and harmful for American males not to cry.
9. **Can only be used if you've already quoted or paraphrased from the source within the same paragraph:** To be human is to weep. The human species is the only one in the whole world of animate nature that sheds tears. The trained inability of any human being to weep is a lessening of his capacity to be human – a defect that usually goes deeper than the mere inability to cry.... it is very sad. (248)