

Evidence Quality Checklist

Does your quotation earn its place?

Finding a quotation is only the first step. Use these five checks to decide whether it supports your exact claim and gives you something worth analyzing.

● RELATED

Connected to the subject.

● SUPPORTING

Genuinely backs the exact claim.

● STRONG

Backs the claim and gives you more to analyze.

WHAT YOU ARE TESTING

Write your claim and the quotation you have chosen, then work down the checks.

📌 MY CLAIM

“ MY QUOTATION

1 Understand it ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

Do I understand what these words actually mean?

Yes — I could put the quotation into my own words.

Not yet — reread in context and check any unfamiliar words.

2 Support, not just mention ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

Does this support my exact claim, or only mention the same subject?

Yes — I can explain exactly how it backs the claim.

Not yet — test it against the claim: what does this quotation actually prove?

3 The words that do the work ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

Have I kept only the words that carry the point?

Test — if I removed these words, would the evidence still support my claim in the same way?

Yes — I have isolated the words I actually need.

Not yet — trim to the words carrying the meaning.

4 Gives you something to say ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

Does this quotation give me something worth noticing and explaining?

Yes — there is something meaningful to analyze.

Not yet — look harder before you swap it.

5 Does it earn its place? ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

Does this quotation earn its place in my paragraph?

Yes — I understand it, it supports the claim, and it gives me something to say.

Not yet — return to the weakest check first.

See It in Action

Three students choose evidence for the same claim.

Each choice does a different job: related, supporting, or strong. Supporting evidence is valid; strong evidence simply gives the writer more to analyze.

THE PASSAGE

The kitchen was the same as always. The tap dripped into a cup someone had left in the sink, and the fridge hummed the way it always hummed. But tonight the hum seemed to wait between each breath, and the dripping counted the seconds too carefully, as if the room were keeping track of her. She told herself nothing had changed. The light above the table flickered once, and did not flicker again.

THE CLAIM

The writer makes an ordinary room feel threatening.

↓ Which evidence best supports this exact claim?

A **RELATED** connected to the subject

“ The kitchen was the same as always.

It is connected to the ordinary room, but it does not show what makes the room threatening.

B **SUPPORTING** genuinely backs the exact claim

“ The light above the table flickered once, and did not flicker again.

It supports the claim: the unexplained flicker makes the ordinary room uneasy. There is something to analyze, but its connection is more straightforward than C's.

C **STRONG** supports the claim and gives richer analytical possibilities

“ the dripping counted the seconds too carefully, as if the room were keeping track of her

It supports the claim and gives more to explore. The tap is described as counting and the room as keeping track of her, turning an ordinary sound into the feeling of being watched.

🕒 **GIVES YOU SOMETHING TO SAY**

The Words That Do the Work

Strong evidence gets sharper when you isolate the words your analysis actually needs.

LONG SELECTION

“the dripping counted the seconds too carefully, as if the room were keeping track of her”

TRIM TO THE WORKING WORDS

SHARPER EVIDENCE

“ as if the room were keeping track of her

Why: The idea that the room was keeping track of her carries the clearest sense of threat. You might also keep “counted the seconds too carefully” if your analysis needs it. The goal is not the shortest quotation; it is the words your analysis needs.

NOW TEST YOUR OWN EVIDENCE *one claim, one quotation of your own*

📌 MY CLAIM

“ MY QUOTATION

THE WORDS DOING THE MOST WORK

DOES IT EARN ITS PLACE? ☐ YES ☐ NOT YET

WHY?
