

Brackets: Changing the Text

Brackets are used in writing to adjust quoted text. This may be because the actual appears ungrammatical when taken out of context.

Example 1

Full context: “In the meeting the school board passed a calendar for the next school year,” Mr. Jones reported.

With brackets: Mr. Jones reported “[T]he school board passed a calendar for the next school year.”

In this example the capitalization of the letter *T* in “the” is necessary to make the sentence grammatically correct.

Brackets are also used to notify the reader if words from a quotation have been italicized, underlined or made boldfaced when they were not that way in the original text.

Example 2:

Full context: The teacher said “You are not to write on the back.”

With brackets: The teacher said “You are not [emphasis added] to write on the back.”

Rewrite each sentence as directed adding brackets where appropriate.

1. “I love the smell of popcorn,” said Nick.

Start the sentence with: Nick says he “

2. The lawyer claimed it was the intent of the act that made it a crime.

Underline “intent”

3. The magazine article stated, “Conducted by the University of Greenboat, the study showed that exercise helped students stay healthy.”

Delete “Conducted by the University of Greenboat,”

4. The situation was critical unless the temperature began to fall.

Underline “unless the temperature began to fall.”

5. The report said, “We have shown that the Battles of Lexington and Concord were important to the American patriot cause.”

Delete :We have shown that”

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Start the sentence with: Nick says he “

Nick says he “love[s] the smell of popcorn.”

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The lawyer claimed it was the intent [emphasis added] of the act that made it a crime.

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The situation was critical unless the temperature began to fall [emphasis added].

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