

Integrating quotations into writing

Sample analytical paragraph based on a possible theme of Bruce Holland Rogers' very short story titled "Dinosaur"

In a very short memoir that starts out quite humorously, Rogers concludes with a theme that should put people at ease about growing old: a benefit of old age is that one is able to return to one's youthful ways. At the end of this piece, Holland emphasizes the comfort a person must feel at being able to return to his youthful daydreams once he finally reaches old age. An old man can go back to pretending that he is a dinosaur basking in the sunshine and enjoying its "familiar warmth on his dinosaur skin" (para. 3). The word "familiar" is the key in this sentence. As a carefree boy, he enjoyed the sunshine, and now that he has come full circle, to another point of innocence and free time, he can again lounge in the sun and enjoy that feeling from long ago. Maybe old age isn't so bad, after all.

Notice what the writer doesn't do: The author says, "...feeling its familiar warmth on his dinosaur skin."

The writer doesn't insert the quotation like that because it would not have made sense within the sentence. The writer uses only the part of the sentence that grammatically fits his or her own sentence, and the writer uses only the most important part of the sentence.

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