

Quoting, Paraphrasing & Summarizing

What's the Difference?

THESE THREE WAYS of incorporating other writers' work into your own writing differ according to the closeness of your writing to the source writing.

-  **QUOTATIONS** must be identical to the original, using a narrow segment of the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author.
-  **PARAPHRASING** involves putting a passage from source material into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a somewhat broader segment of the source and condensing it slightly.
-  **SUMMARIZING** involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

Purposes

QUOTATIONS, PARAPHRASES, *and* SUMMARIES serve many purposes in writing. You might use them to...

- ✦ Provide support for claims or add credibility to your writing
- ✦ Refer to work that leads up to the work you are now doing
- ✦ Give examples of several points of view on a subject
- ✦ Call attention to a position that you wish to agree or disagree with
- ✦ Highlight a particularly striking phrase, sentence, or passage by quoting the original
- ✦ Distance yourself from the original by quoting it in order to cue readers that the words are not your own
- ✦ Expand the breadth or depth of your writing

Why Paraphrase?

PARAPHRASING IS a valuable skill because...

- ✦ It is better than quoting information from an undistinguished passage.
- ✦ It helps you control the temptation to quote too much; a paper is not a series of quotes strung together.
- ✦ The mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you grasp the full meaning of the original.

Six Steps to Effective Paraphrasing

-  **Reread** the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
-  **Set aside** the original, and write your paraphrase in your notes.
-  **Jot down** a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. Along the side or at the top of your notes, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
-  **Check** your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
-  **Use** quotation marks to identify any unique terms you have borrowed exactly from the source.
-  **Record** the source (including the page number) in your notes so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.