

Paraphrasing, Using Sources Effectively, and Avoiding Plagiarism

What is Plagiarism?

- Verbatim quotation without quotes or acknowledgment
- Cutting and pasting from the internet
- Paying someone else to do your work
- Collaborating with other students without permission
- Submitting the same work for more than one assignment or class—even if it's your own!
- Paraphrasing without citation
- Incomplete or inaccurate citation

Remember: When in doubt, always cite!

Plagiarism can also be unintentional, but the consequences are just as serious. To avoid accidentally committing plagiarism:

- Always take good notes that make it easier for you to keep track of the sources for different ideas and arguments.
- Ask yourself, is the idea original to you, common knowledge, or did you read it in a book or hear it in a lecture.
- And, of course: when in doubt, always cite!

Using other scholars' work is, however, a crucial part of participating in the academic community, and your work can benefit from it. Using quotation, paraphrase, and summary can:

- Provide evidence to support your claims
- Give authority to you as author and to your arguments
- Familiarize readers with other work on the subject
- Explain why your work is significant or groundbreaking
- Exemplify other claims to which you are responding
- Quotation adds eloquence or particularly clear expression of ideas
- Use quotation in particular to show readers that key concepts or important words, phrases, or passages are not your own.
- Summary and paraphrase condense, clarify, and/or simplify long or confusing ideas

What are the differences between the quotation, paraphrase, and summary?

Quotation = Placing original author's *exact* words between quotation marks

Paraphrasing = Retelling in your own words a specific point, quote, or main idea

Summarization = Retelling in your own words the overarching argument or plot

Remember - all three need a citation!

Paraphrase, in particular, can be useful for supporting your arguments and positioning yourself within academic discourse. We use paraphrase:

- To abbreviate the articulation of a point or make its tone or style match that of your essay

- To change the emphasis of the ideas presented
- Simply or clarify complex arguments
- Control temptation to quote too much

How do we paraphrase?

- Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
- Set the original aside and write your paraphrase without looking back at the original—this will help you make sure that you are using your own words.
- 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 term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
- Record the source (including the page) using your discipline's citation style.