



Paraphrase

Paraphrase is a restatement in your own words of a passage from a source. A fair and accurate paraphrase includes the main idea, supporting details, and citation.

Purpose

The three main techniques for incorporating sources into your writing are summary, quotation and paraphrase. Employed most frequently, paraphrase can be used to

- introduce a point of view you will analyze and critique
- compare and contrast several points of view on a topic
- provide background and discussion on a topic
- provide evidence and support for your own claims

Characteristics

An effective paraphrase has the following characteristics:

- recasts the original passage in your words and sentence structures
- includes main idea and supporting details from original passage
- is usually as long as long as original passage
- preserves technical terms from original passage
- often introduced with a signal phrase
- includes in-text citation and bibliographic entry

Avoid Patchwriting

Patchwriting is substandard paraphrase. The student writer does not create original sentence structures and word choices; instead, the writer selects synonyms for just a few words or rearranges the order of the author's words, phrases, or sentences. Patchwriting can lead to allegations of plagiarism.

Guidelines for Paraphrasing

To avoid patchwriting and to write a successful paraphrase, try these steps:

1. Read source until you understand it.
2. If necessary, take brief notes on key ideas.
3. Close source and write paraphrase.
4. Check paraphrase for originality and accuracy.
5. Repeat process if needed.
6. Add signal phrase and citation.

Paraphrase Essentials

When evaluating your paraphrase, always be sure to check for these four essentials:

- **your words:** recast the passage using fresh word choices
- **your sentence structures:** use your own fresh sentence structures
- **attribution:** provide citation that gives credit to the source
- **accurate:** ensure your paraphrase accurately conveys the author's ideas

Works Consulted

Howard, Rebecca Moore. *Writing Matters*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A. *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2015. Print