

Paraphrasing

(The following material was taken from Texas A&M Writing Center)

Paraphrasing is different from quoting. Paraphrasing involves taking the words and ideas of another and putting them into your own words. It is not merely changing a few words with synonyms or rearranging phrases. You reword what the original author said but without changing the meaning. AND YOU MUST CITE; otherwise, it is plagiarism.

Reasons to Paraphrase:

There are times when you will not want to directly quote your source; such as:

- When the ideas of the author are more important than his style or authority.
- The ideas are more memorable than the author's language.
- The original language is too technical to understand.
- The quotation is too long.
- You feel that the original language needs clarification.
- The source of the quotation is unknown.

Writing a Paraphrase:

Read the quotation so that you are sure that you understand it. Then put the original aside and begin your paraphrase in your own words. Remember the reason you are paraphrasing (stated just above) so that you will be sure to accomplish your goal. If you must retain a technical or distinct word from the original, place it in quotation marks within your paraphrase. Finally, make sure that you have not changed the meaning of the original.

Incorporating the Paraphrase:

Since you will be citing your paraphrase, you may begin with, "John Smith asserts that..." or "According to John Smith..." See our handout, "Quoting Others" which can be modified to use for paraphrasing others.

Sample Paraphrase:

Quotation: “And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”

Paraphrase: In the closing of his inaugural address, President Kennedy implored Americans to put aside their personal interests in order to work for the common good.

Checklist:

- Does the paraphrase consist of your own words?
- Did you do more than just substitute synonyms or change sentence structure?
- Did you make it clear that you were using the thoughts of someone else?
- Is your paraphrase true to the original meaning of what you are referencing?
- Did you correctly cite the paraphrase?

This material was taken from:

<http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/>