

Vocabulary Building

Plagiarism – To use someone else’s words or ideas without giving credit to the author.

Citation – An academic way to tell the reader where other’s words or ideas came from. There are many different styles of citation, so be sure to ask your instructor which citation style to use. However, you must cite direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries.

Source – The place (book, article, website, television show, etc.) where you got the information or words that you are using in your writing. This is what should be cited to give credit to the author.

Direct Quote – Using someone else’s words exactly as they did– word for word– without changing anything, and then citing the source.

Paraphrasing – To reword and restructure someone else’s ideas or words.

Summary – A shortened, rephrased version of someone else’s words that still gives credit to the author.

Are there more unfamiliar words?

Look up words you don’t know on the Merriam-Webster Learner’s Dictionary at www.learnersdictionary.com.

Want More Practice?

There are staff in the Learning Center who would love to help you with your writing!

The College Skills Zone

The College Skills Zone is a great place to engage in conversations that help you understand concepts, especially some basic grammar concepts, and then practice those skills. The College Skills Zone is a place where you can just drop in anytime during open hours.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center assistants are trained to help you with any aspect of the writing process, from understanding an assignment, to brainstorming, to revising your essays. You can drop in during open hours or make a 30-minute appointment for a specific time.

English Language Learner Specialist

A specialist for English Language Learners, Sarah Mosser, is available in the Learning Center during certain hours for drop-in or appointments. Because her schedule varies, it is best to make appointments.

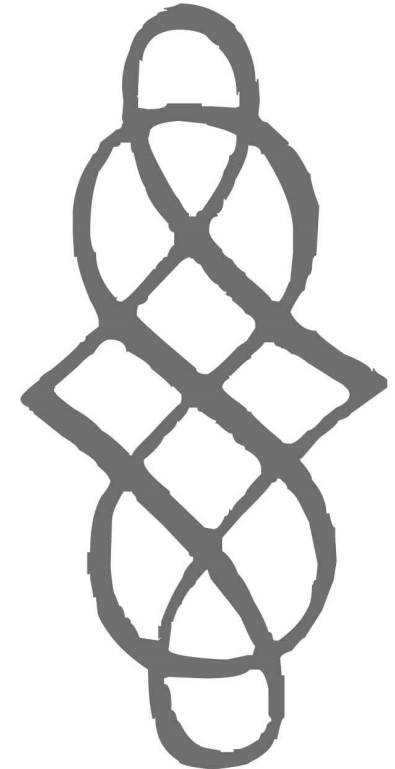
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Linn-Benton
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WRITING CENTER

Research

Plagiarism &
Paraphrasing



Go-To Guides

Go-To Guides are designed to help in all areas of the writing process.

A Brief Explanation

Plagiarism is taking someone else’s words or ideas and putting them into your paper without giving them credit. By putting someone else’s words in your paper and putting your name on the paper, you are essentially saying that those words are yours, when in fact, they are not. In some cultures this is okay, or even preferred, but American colleges and universities treat this very seriously.

But sometimes you need to use the author’s ideas, right? Often, an article or story says exactly what you are looking for, or you are summarizing a piece for class and need to restate what the author said. Can you lift their words from the text? Yes! You just need to make sure that you follow certain guidelines.

There are two major ways to use words or ideas from a source: direct quotations and paraphrasing. This Go-to Guide focuses on paraphrasing, which is rewriting the author’s words and then giving the author credit for the idea, both in your paper and in a separate list of sources.

Paraphrasing is rewriting the author’s words and then giving the author credit for the idea in your paper and on a list of sources. A paraphrase is not merely finding synonyms for some key words in the passage. It is not about changing one or two words, but about completely restating and restructuring in your own way.

Four Steps to Paraphrasing:

1. Read the passage several times through, so you know and understand what the author is saying.
2. Turn the paper over, and without looking at the author’s words, write your own version. You do not want to use the same sentence format or style. If the author uses two sentences, maybe you could use one, for example. Make the whole structure, not just the words, your own.
3. Compare your version to the original. Did you use different words than the author? Does your sentence follow a different pattern than the author’s sentence? If not, try rearranging the sentence. Is there anything that can be moved, rephrased, or restructured?
4. Cite the idea. Yes! You still have to give the author credit for their idea. Learn the citation style that is appropriate for your instructor and class. There are many different ways to cite information that your instructor or a writing assistant can explain to you.

Examples

1. Original Passage:

“To integrate these paraphrases into your document, begin by making sure your paraphrase is an accurate and fair representation of the source. Reread the source to double-check the accuracy and fairness of your paraphrase, then revise the paraphrase so it fits the context and tone of your document. Use attributions to ensure a smooth transition from your ideas to the ideas found in the source.”

Source for examples: Palmquist, Mike. *The Bedford Researcher*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012. 255. Print.

Acceptable Paraphrase:

According to Mike Palmquist, before you put a paraphrase in your paper, you should start by reading the source and making sure that you understand the original text, so that your paraphrase is both correct and fair. After you check your paraphrase against the source and ensure that you are representing what the author intended to say, you can make tweaks so that your paraphrase fits well into the tone and style of your paper, making sure to attribute the ideas to the author of the source with a smooth transition (Palmquist 255).

Unacceptable Paraphrase:

To assimilate the paraphrase into your paper start by ensuring your paraphrase is both an accurate and fair portrayal of the source. Read the source to ensure the accuracy and fairness of the paraphrase, then make changes to the paraphrase so that it fits both the context and the style of your paper. Use transitions to ensure a smooth transition from the context of your paper to the ideas found in the original source (Palmquist 255).

2. Original Passage:

“A paraphrase is a restatement, in your own words, of a passage from a source. Unlike summaries, which are shorter than the text being summarized, paraphrases are about as long as the text on which they are based.”

Acceptable Paraphrase:

While summaries are usually shorter than the passage they are summarizing, paraphrases, a restatement of an original source in one’s own words, tend to be about the same length as the passage they are based on (Palmquist 255).

Unacceptable Paraphrase:

A paraphrase is a revision of the text in your own words. Summaries, however, are shorter than the text they are summarizing, and paraphrases are about the same length as the text they are using (Palmquist 255).

Try it Out!

True or False?

1. T F Plagiarism is taking someone else’s words or ideas and putting them into your paper without giving them credit.
2. T F It’s only plagiarism if you use the author’s exact words.
3. T F There are multiple ways to use the author’s words or ideas in your paper, if you follow certain guidelines.
4. T F Plagiarism isn’t really a big deal in the United States.

Answers: 1.T 2.F 3.T 4.F

Paraphrase the following passages:

1. “One way to prevent plagiarism is to take notes in your own words instead of writing down exactly what the source says. If you use too many direct quotes in your notes, you might get confused between the author’s words and your own when you go to write your paper. Be sure to take notes in your own words and write the page numbers down, so you can go back later and make sure you are not plagiarizing” (Mosser 148).

2. “Plagiarism, in some cultures, is considered an act of humility. Rephrasing the author’s words could make it seem as if the student thinks they are smarter than the author. In other cultures, however, including American higher education, plagiarism is considered a crime—it’s basically looked at the same way as stealing, and is taken very seriously” (Mosser 3).
