

## What is paraphrasing? Why is it important? How do I paraphrase?

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What better way is there to learn about paraphrasing than to *see how paraphrases are created* from sources about paraphrasing! I know it might be a little confusing at first, but you will get to learn what paraphrasing is from sources that explain it as well as see how someone might paraphrase sources that are talking about *paraphrasing*.

In this sheet, we are going to look at how two prominent university writing centers explain paraphrasing. Then, we examine the steps one might take to paraphrase each of these sources.

There are three key questions covered about paraphrasing:

1. What is paraphrasing?
2. Why is it important?
3. How does one paraphrase?

To explain and demonstrate paraphrasing, we used examples from two writing centers: Purdue University (OWL) and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. I've used a three step chart for each key question:

**Step 1:** Offers a direct quote about that key question from each source

**Step 2:** Self notes about what each direct quote means and strategies for how one might paraphrase them

**Step 3:** Gives you an opportunity to practice creating a paraphrase, then offers a sample. There are many techniques to consider that can help you create an original sentence(s) to convey your source's ideas.

<b>Key idea # 1:</b> Paraphrasing: What is it?	<b>Source 1</b> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2019). Writing paraphrases. Retrieved from <a href="https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/">https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/</a>	<b>Source 2</b> Purdue OWL (2019). Paraphrase: Write it in your own words. Retrieved from <a href="https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation">https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation</a>
<b>Step 1:</b> Read carefully the original source	“ Paraphrasing is clearly restating in your own words the ideas or thoughts of another person. A paraphrase differs from a summary in scope. A summary usually conveys all of the main ideas of a text, while a paraphrase can convey just the main point or a small bit of the text, like a single paragraph or sentence. ”	“ <b>A paraphrase is...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your own rendition of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in a new form.</li> <li>• One legitimate way (when accompanied by accurate documentation) to borrow from a source.</li> </ul> ”
<b>Step 2:</b> Notes to self: How can I paraphrase the passage above?	<b>Understand:</b> Don't copy word for word. Understand the overall idea and meaning; explain that idea with my own words and my own sentence structure. A paraphrase limited to small chunks of information  <b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> simplify details, condense to make it shorter, and avoid author's exact words and sentence structure to make it unique.	<b>Understand:</b> Paraphrasing shows I can join a conversation that's in progress. Key: understand what the author is saying and why. Be ethical and give credit to the source.  <b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> think about each bullet; what are they getting at, individually and together? Maybe try to synthesize (bring that information together) bullets into a sentence in a new way.
<b>Step 3</b> Practice Paraphrase: You Try		
<b>Step 4</b> Sample paraphrase	The ability to take a sentence or paragraph from a source and clearly explain it in an original way while retaining the author's meaning (University of North Carolina, 2019).	Paraphrasing is the ability to find the meaning of an author's idea and express that knowledge in my own words using academic citation methods. The citations let readers know where the idea and meaning came from originally (Purdue OWL, 2019).

<p><b>Key idea #2:</b> Why is it important?</p>	<p><b>Source 1</b> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2019). Writing paraphrases. Retrieved from <a href="https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/">https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/</a></p>	<p><b>Source 2</b> Purdue OWL (2019). Paraphrase: Write it in your own words. Retrieved from <a href="https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation">https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation</a></p>
<p><b>Step 1:</b> Read Carefully the Direct quote</p>	<p>“ Paraphrasing source material can show that you’ve understood the information (because you are conveying it accurately), and this enhances your own credibility as a writer. Paraphrasing also helps you integrate source information without using too many direct quotations. ”</p>	<p>“ Paraphrasing is a valuable skill because...  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is better than quoting information from an undistinguished passage.</li> <li>• It helps you control the temptation to quote too much.</li> <li>• The mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you to grasp the full meaning of the original.</li> </ul> ”</p>
<p><b>Step 2:</b> Notes to self: How can I paraphrase the quote above?</p>	<p><b>Understand:</b> Paraphrasing requires strong critical thinking skills to find meaning. If I don’t “understand” it, I won’t be able to retain the author’s meaning when I paraphrase it-- impacts trust in writing. Paraphrasing helps me weave sources together using more of my own words.</p> <p><b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> this one is hard. It says what it means very clearly. I’ll have to look at the big picture and find a new way to organize the ideas in an original way.</p>	<p><b>Understand:</b> The author is stressing the value of paraphrasing and learning to do it well. It takes practice and technique to keep from borrowing too much of the author’s exact words.</p> <p><b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> Consider the author’s intent for the passage, what do they want me to get so I can retain the information, but frame it a little differently. Also, synthesize the quotes into a new form, like a sentence; capture the bigger picture.</p>
<p><b>Step 3</b> Practice Paraphrase: You Try</p>		
<p><b>Step 4</b> Sample paraphrase</p>	<p>Readers expect writers to use source ideas clearly and accurately, but they want to hear more of it in the author’s own words (University of North Carolina, 2019).</p>	<p>Paraphrasing demonstrates a writer’s critical thinking by how much they quote or not; how well they maintain the author’s ideas, and their ability to retain more of their own voice through paraphrasing techniques (Purdue OWL, 2019).</p>

<p><b>Key idea #3:</b> Strategies for paraphrasing</p>	<p><b>Source 1</b> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2019). Writing paraphrases. Retrieved from <a href="https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/">https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/</a></p>	<p><b>Source 3</b> Purdue OWL (2019). Paraphrase: Write it in your own words. Retrieved from <a href="https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation">https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation</a></p>
<p><b>Step 1:</b> Read Carefully the Direct quote</p>	<p>“</p> <p><i>Read and Understand</i> First, read the source material carefully so that you understand it. Identify its main claims and pieces of evidence.</p> <p><i>Strategies for Paraphrasing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imagine that you are explaining the material to a friend who doesn't understand it well.</li> <li>● Break down complex ideas into smaller pieces.</li> <li>● Identify relationships between the pieces...</li> <li>● Put the information in a new order.</li> <li>● Change the expression from active to passive voice, or passive to active.</li> <li>● Use different vocabulary. Consult a thesaurus if necessary, then consult a dictionary to make sure the new words are synonymous.</li> <li>● Transform words into different parts of speech.</li> </ul> <p>”</p>	<p>“</p> <p>6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.</li> <li>2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.</li> <li>3. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.</li> <li>4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.</li> <li>5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.</li> <li>6. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.</li> </ol> <p>”</p>
<p><b>Step 2:</b> Notes to self: How can I paraphrase the quote above?</p>	<p><b>Understand:</b> Paraphrasing well and accurately involves a series of critical thinking activities to better “understand” what the author is saying and then how one can say it one's own words.</p>	<p><b>Understand:</b> Author is suggesting a writer spend time with the information to fully understand it, then move away from the original text to see how one might be able to explain it in one's own words, even suggesting brief notes to ensure one doesn't get too fixated on the original phrasing.</p>

	<b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> Do I direct quote the bullets, or can I find themes to use to present the information? Maybe I could synthesize the information. Decide whether to use the details or the themes to paraphrase it. Find new ways to explain the concepts. Maybe use quotes around keywords if I can't find a new way to say a particular idea.	<b>Strategy for paraphrasing:</b> Look at the concepts. What do the bullets have in common? What is the message from the author? Are the details important or is it the concept? Maybe I can generalize some of the concepts into "process" rather than "steps?"
<b>Step 3</b> Practice Paraphrase: You Try		
<b>Step 4</b> Sample paraphrase	Paraphrasing is critical thinking process: it involves working to find the meaning of the passage, then, utilize synthesis, condensing, "relationship connections," and syntax to find a new way to convey the author's idea (University of North Carolina, 2019).	Paraphrasing can be accomplished through a process approach. This process emphasizes time; time spent on finding the meaning of a passage and five additional practice techniques to say it one's own words (Purdue OWL, 2019).

#### References

The Writing Center, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (2019). Writing paraphrases. Retrieved from

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/esl/resources/writing-paraphrases/>

Purdue University, Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) (2019). Paraphrase: Write it in your own words. Retrieved from

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