

Summarizing and paraphrasing

Summarising and paraphrasing are important tools for reshaping information to suit the many varied university writing tasks. They allow you to develop and demonstrate your understanding and interpretation of a text and to avoid plagiarism. They require analytical and writing skills which are crucial to success at university.

What is summarising?

Summarising is using your own words to shorten a piece of text so that it includes only the essential information. Summaries have fewer words than the original, yet they still provide a clear indication of the main points made by the author.

How to summarise?

- Start by reading the text and highlight the main points as you read.
- Focus on the topic sentence as these provide the main ideas of the paragraphs
- Reread the text and make notes of the main points leaving out examples, evidence...etc.
- Restate the main idea at beginning and include all major points.

Techniques used in summarising

- Nominalisation, i.e. changing a verb into a noun.
- Changing adverbs to adjectives.
- Breaking up long sentences into shorter sentences.
- Joining short sentences together with linking words.

What is paraphrasing?

Paraphrasing is a way of presenting a text, keeping the same meaning but using different words and phrasing. Paraphrasing is used with short sections of text such as phrases and

sentences. A paraphrase may result in a longer rather than shorter version of the original text. It is also considered as a useful skill for explaining information in tables, charts and diagrams in form of paragraphs.

How to paraphrase?

- read the carefully. It is essential that you understand it fully.
- Identify the main points and key words.
- Cover the original text and rewrite it in your own words. Check that you have included the main points and essential information.
- write the paraphrase in your own style.

Techniques used in paraphrasing

- Meaning: ensure that you keep the original meaning and maintain the same relationship between main ideas and supporting points.
- Words: use synonyms
- Change the order in which ideas are presented as long as they still make sense in a different order.

Summarising	Paraphrasing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-doesn't match the source word for word-involves putting main ideas in your own words, but including only the main points-presents a broad overview, so is usually much shorter than the original text.-must be attributed to the original source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-doesn't match the source word for word.-involves putting a passage from a source into your own words.-changes the words or phrasing of a passage, but retains and fully communicates the original meaning.-must be attributed to the original source.