Quoting and paraphrasing

One of the primary features of academic writing is using books, journal articles, websites, and other outside sources ("the literature") to support your ideas. This requires you to read widely in order to seek out the different sides of a debate within a particular field of inquiry.

Your writing should demonstrate how and where you have drawn on the literature in support of your point. You must also ensure that your writing *connects* with the literature. The best assignments move fluidly between the outside evidence and your own interpretations, explanations, and evaluations of it. The sources are integrated within the assignment.

There are three main methods for incorporating the ideas and research of other authors into your document:

- **Quoting:** copying the source information word for word
- **Paraphrasing**: putting the source information into other words and phrases
- **Summarising:** creating a shortened version of the source information

Whenever you use an outside source – whether you have quoted it directly, paraphrased it, or summarised it – you must always do two things:

- connect it with the writing around it
- credit the original author

Crediting the original author is done by referencing: see <u>introduction to referencing</u> for more. It is important for a <u>number of reasons</u>.
Connecting it with your own writing is the focus of this section.

Quoting

A quotation is an exact copy of the words that someone else has written or said. These words are placed within quotation marks (also known as speech marks: " ") to indicate that it is a direct quotation and not a summary or paraphrase.

A quotation can be a full sentence from another source, part of a sentence, or several sentences:

When gathering demographic data it is important to remember that "only relevant types of demographic information should be requested" (Lazar, 2006, p. 52).

Quotations must always be cited, depending on the referencing system that you are using: see quotations in APA and quotations in MLA for examples. In most referencing styles, quotation citations must always include the page number where the quotation was located.

When should quotations be used?

Quotations should be used rarely, and selectively. While quotations indicate to the marker that you have read the literature and have identified points of interest, quotations can distract from your own writing.

You are far better off to demonstrate to the marker, in the word length available, *your understanding* of the author's words, rather than relying on the words of others. A quotation does not automatically demonstrate that you fully understand what you are quoting. It only shows that you can find a relevant quotation, and that you can copy and paste.

In contrast, summarising and paraphrasing show that you understand the source (because it is impossible to paraphrase without understanding) and enable you to retain a consistent style of writing throughout your assignment. This is important, for example, in ensuring that an essay flows.

Nevertheless, sometimes quotations will be the best option:

- Does the quotation express an important idea in a way that you could not write more simply in your own words?

- Does the quotation express an important idea in an authoritative way, that you could not write more dramatically or powerfully?

- Is the exact wording necessary for a particular purpose, e.g. definitions, literary analysis, or legislation and legal documents?

As a rule of thumb, four quotations are a fair number for an average 2000 word assignment. This allows enough space for your understanding to shine through beyond the words of others.

Integrating quotations with your writing

Any quotation needs to be integrated into your text. It should never stand alone.

You need to show that the quotation relates to the assignment topic. This will often involve deciding whether the quotation supports the points you want to make in some way, supports with some qualification, or disagrees with whatever points you are making in your assignment.

Irrespective of the direction, you need to introduce and comment on the quotation by linking it back immediately to the assignment or paragraph topic. The following examples demonstrate how quotations that support a particular point of view can be integrated into an assignment.

Example 1

The essay question is "discuss whether social psychology is a science or an art."

The quotation to be used:

"Social psychologists study **behavior** because it is behavior that can be observed" (Vaughan & Hogg, 1995, p. 2).

In the essay, the quotation is integrated as follows:

One of the central characteristics of science is its method of demonstrating knowledge through clearly observable events. According to Vaughan and Hogg (1995), "social psychologists study **behavior** because it is behavior that can be observed" (p. 2). This gives strength to the claim that psychology is a science rather than an art because the scientific method constructs knowledge from observable data.

The first sentence (the topic sentence) introduces the topic of observable events, which provides a lead into the quotation.

The final sentence links the quotation back to the essay topic by including it within the essay context of psychology being a science rather than an art.

Example 2

The essay question is "businesses should embrace the information age. Discuss."

The quotation to be used:

"Such … change cannot help but have a fundamental, permanent effect upon the world's industries and the people who work in them " (Davidow & Malone, 1992, p. 2).

In the essay, the quotation is integrated as follows:

The information age is a significant technological force, and "such … change cannot help but have a fundamental, permanent effect upon the world's industries and the people who work

in them" (Davidow & Malone, 1992, p. 2). This suggests that if businesses fail to recognise the impact of this technological change, they may be left behind. Consequently, this gives credence to the view that businesses should embrace the information age.

The first sentence (the topic sentence) provides a general statement about the issue, which functions to help clarify the change referred to in the upcoming quotation.

The final two sentences link the quotation back to the essay topic. The first sentence connects the quotation to the focus of businesses being left behind if they do not change. The second sentence takes this idea further and explicitly links it back to the essay topic with respect to the need for businesses to embrace the information age.

In both examples the quotation is made part of a sentence that you have written yourself. This is an effective way of ensuring that it fits your own writing. The most common method of doing this is to use phrases like "according to" or "states that":

According to Vaughan and Hogg (1995), "social psychologists …" (p. 2).

Vaughan and Hogg (1995) state that "social psychologists …" (p. 2).

Because it can be repetitive to always use "states that", the following words can be an effective substitute:

Verbs to introduce authors

agrees

asserts

believes

claims

comments

concedes that

challenges

concludes

compares

defines

describes

examines

explains

explores

focuses on

goes further

holds that

insists

identifies

is clear that

maintains

notes

observes

points out

points to

prefers

refers to

responds

reports

says

shows

states

suggests

summarises

touches on

writes that

In some circumstances, you may use a quotation to highlight areas of contention or debate. When you bring in opposing points of view and then contest or refute them, this can make your writing more convincing and stronger to the reader. This is because not only have you provided supportive evidence, but you have also brought in contrary views and then argued against them by bringing in better and stronger evidence. Ultimately, this shows you have read widely, and, more importantly, you have been able to integrate diverging points of view into your assignment.

You may not agree with the quotation, but you can still use it to open up debate:

Example 3

In contrast to demonstrating the advances in employment relations, "Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in New Zealand is at a crossroads" (Sayers & Tremaine, 1994, p.11).

Snook's (1996) contention, that "bulk funding, management models of school governance and the promotion of so-called 'choice' will do more to destroy decent education than any defective curricula" (p. 55), is open to debate.

Formatting and changing quotations

With only a few exceptions, quotations should be written word for word, exactly as they are written in the original source. This includes punctuation, wording, spelling, and American or British spelling.

The exceptions to this rule depend on the referencing style used, but commonly include the following:

Punctuation. If the in-text citation in brackets follows the quotation, the full stop should come after the closing bracket instead of at the end of the quotation:

When gathering demographic data it is important to remember that "only relevant types of demographic information should be requested" (Lazar, 2006, p. 52).

First letter. When a quotation is part of a larger sentence (see the examples in Integrating Quotations above) the first letter of the quotation can be changed from upper-case to lower-case or vice versa. APA allows for this kind of change, but MLA retains the original capitalisation.

Quotation marks. If the quotation contains quotation marks (" ") inside it, they can be changed to single quotation marks (' ') to avoid confusion.

Mistakes. If there is a spelling or grammar error in the original, do not correct it but insert "[*sic*]" after the mistake.

Removed words. If you have removed words to make the quotation fit better in the document, indicate the remove with an ellipsis (…). Note: you do not need to include an ellipsis at the beginning or end of a quotation unless not doing so would confuse the meaning of the quotation.

The information age is a significant technological force, and "such … change cannot help but have a fundamental, permanent effect upon the world's industries and the people who work in them" (Davidow & Malone, 1992, p. 2).

Added words. If you have added words to make the quotation fit better in the document, put them in square brackets [ ].

Formatting. If you have changed the formatting (e.g. putting a section in italics) note the change in square brackets:

The information age is a significant technological force, and "such … change cannot help but have a *fundamental, permanent* [italics added] effect upon the world's industries and the people who work in them" (Davidow & Malone, 1992, p. 2).

References and further reading

The example quotations on this page are taken from the following books:

Davidow, W. H., & Malone, M. S. (1992). *The virtual corporation: Structuring and revitalizing the corporation for the 21st century*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Lazar, J. (2006). *Web usability: A user-centered design approach*. Boston, MA: Pearson Addison Wesley.

Sayers, J. & Tremaine, M. (1994). *The vision and the reality: Equal employment opportunities in the New Zealand workplace*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.

Vaughan, G., & Hogg, M. (1995). *Introduction to social psychology*. Sydney, Australia: Prentice Hall.

Paraphrasing and summarising

Explaining the ideas of authors in your own words shows that you understand the concepts and opinions of those authors. It takes skill to alter the form of information without changing the meaning of that information, and it is a skill well worth developing.

There are two approaches to putting authors' ideas into your own words:

- **Summarising:** creating a shortened version of the source information
- **Paraphrasing:** putting the source information into other words and phrases

Summarising

Summarising involves selecting out some key features and then using those to create a shortened version of the author's prose.

Of course, in your assignment, you need to ensure that there is enough difference in form between the original version and your own summarised version. This may be achieved by simplifying the ideas, as well as using a different sentence structure or sentence order to present those ideas.

- Identify some keywords and link these with other words to create a different combination

- Be selective about the specific ideas you choose to include, while leaving out others that are less useful

- Reorder the ideas in your own framework. By doing so, you are creating a distinction between your version and the author's.

- You can sometimes include several authors making similar points in one sentence, summarising them all together

All this can be achieved without significantly altering the meaning of the information. Many of these techniques can also be applied to the strategy of paraphrasing.

Example of a summary

Consider this excerpt from a book:

"Children spend a very large proportion of their daily lives in school. They go there to learn, not only in a narrow academic sense, but in the widest possible interpretation of the word – about themselves, about being a person within a group of others, about the community in which they live, and about the world around them. Schools provide the setting in which such learning takes place" (Leyden, 1985, p. 38).

A summary of this passage might look like this:

As Leyden (1985) points out, schools are places for children to learn about life, themselves, other people, as well as academic information.

Schools are places for children to learn about life, themselves, other people, as well as academic information (Leyden, 1985).

These summaries rely on some of the same keywords as the original: "schools," "learn," "other(s)," "themselves," and "academic." This is because many concepts and ideas cannot be broken down to a more basic level without losing their original meaning. The

difference between the summary and the original is that the keywords are arranged differently, and used in combination with new words.

A summary does not use all the ideas from the total pool available in the original version. In these summaries, the meaning in the first sentence of the original (that children spend much of their daily lives in school) has not been used. Other details are omitted ("the community in which they live").

Instead of allocating a whole sentence to the point that "schools provide the setting in which such learning takes place", the idea is condensed and merged with the ideas in the second sentence ("schools are places for children to …").

Another difference from the original is the order in which the ideas are presented. For example, in Leyden's version, she mentions the academic focus of learning first, followed by a broader context of issues which children also learn about while they are at school. In contrast, the summary presents the broader context of issues first followed by the academic focus of learning.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means to restate information using different words. Unlike summarising, paraphrasing focuses less on shortening and condensing the information. Paraphrasing aims to rewrite the information by drawing on different words and phrases.

Important: before you begin to paraphrase, you must build up your own idea of the information or try to develop a picture in your mind, and then use this as a model to help frame or guide your paraphrase. It may help to hide the original source and then write out this understanding of the information.

- Restate whole sentences: don't just replace individual words with synonyms (words meaning the same thing)

- Restructure the sentence: for example, reverse the order in which items are listed

- Embed the author's name in the paraphrase: "Leyden (1985) states that …"

- Link ideas differently, with signpost and linking words such as "therefore," "although," and "accordingly"

- Expand on what the author is saying with your own knowledge and understanding

The techniques of paraphrasing are described in detail in paraphrasing techniques.

Example of a paraphrase

Consider this excerpt from a book:

"Children spend a very large proportion of their daily lives in school. They go there to learn, not only in a narrow academic sense, but in the widest possible interpretation of the word – about themselves, about being a person within a group of others, about the community in which they live, and about the world around them. Schools provide the setting in which such learning takes place" (Leyden, 1985, p. 38).

A paraphrase of this passage might look like this:

As Leyden (1985) points out, schools are places where children spend a significant amount of time. Beyond merely going to school to learn academic information, Leyden argues that learning occurs within a far wider context as children also learn about who they are, by being in groups, their local community, as well as the wider world which surrounds them. Hence, schools offer the settings to facilitate children's learning about a great many things.

Schools are places where children spend a significant amount of time (Leyden, 1985). Beyond merely going to school to learn academic information, learning occurs within a far wider context as children also learn about who they are, by being in groups, their local community, as well as the wider world which surrounds them (Leyden). Hence, schools offer the settings to facilitate children's learning about a great many things.

The paraphrased version is more detailed than the one-sentence summary in the previous section. Here, each of the three sentences of the quotation are rewritten. The paraphrased version relies on a few more of the keywords from the original: "schools," "children," "academic," "learn," "spend," "groups," "community," "world," "setting(s)," and "learning."

In the paraphrased version the order of ideas is retained. For instance, unlike the summarised version, the paraphrased one mentions the academic focus of learning first, followed by a broader context of issues which children also learn about while they are at school. Moreover, the paraphrased version also represents more closely the specific

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points addressed by Leyden. In contrast, the summarised version presents a very general representation of the ideas, while leaving out specific aspects.

The paraphrase and the summary do have at least one thing in common, however. The paraphrased example integrates many other words and phrases not used by Leyden to get across Leyden's message. For example, while Leyden refers to learning "not only in a narrow academic sense, but in the widest possible interpretation of the word – about themselves… ", the paraphrased version refers to the same idea in another way: "beyond merely going to school to learn academic information, learning occurs within a far wider context as children also learn about who they are … ".

As stated above, it is not enough to simply replace a few words. Doing so results in a bad paraphrase that may be plagiaristic:

Example of a bad paraphrase

Consider this excerpt from a book:

"**Capital** represents human creations that are used in the production of goods and services. We often distinguish between human capital and physical capital. *Human capital* consists of the knowledge and skills people develop (through education and formal or on-the-job training) that enhance their ability to produce, such as the taxi driver's knowledge of the city's streets or the surgeon's knowledge of the human body. *Physical capital* consists of buildings, machinery, tools, and other manufactured items that are used to produce goods and services. Physical capital includes the driver's cab, the surgeon's scalpel, the ten-ton press used to print *Newsweek*, and the building where your economics class meets" (McEachern, 1991, p. 3).

This is an unacceptable paraphrase of the original:

Capital signifies human products that are utilised in the creation of goods and services (McEachern, 1991). Human capital comprises knowledge and skills that people develop (through education and on-the-job training) to enhance their capacity to produce. In contrast, physical capital comprises buildings, machinery, tools, and other manufactured items that are utilised to produce goods and services (McEachern).

Although the author is acknowledge with bracketed in-text citations, the phrasing is not sufficiently different from the original. Only a few words are substituted:

- represents = signifies
- creations = products
- production = creation
- ability = capacity
- used = utilised
- consist of = comprises

Although most of the examples have been excluded, the sentence structure is exactly the same as the original. Including linking phrases, like "In contrast," on their own do not adequately restate the author's idea. The whole passage needs to be restated in different words to meet the requirements of paraphrasing.

This is a better paraphrase:

> Capital is an economic concept referring to the things humans make, which are then used "in the production of goods and services" (McEachern, 1991, p. 3). This broad concept can be divided into human as well as physical capital, as McEachern illustrates. Indeed, human capital focuses on the products pertaining to individuals' skills and expertise, which function to improve individuals' production capacity. This type of capital can be gained through some form of education and/or training. In contrast, physical capital involves the kinds of tools and equipment, including buildings, that are central to providing goods and services.

There are several notable differences between the good and bad paraphrasing here:

- Capital is presented as "an economic concept." Hence – even at the basic word level – the good paraphrase draws on the paraphraser's own understanding to help guide the process of rewriting the author's idea.

- Instead of distinguishing between two types of capital, as the original version does, the good paraphrase talks about this in terms of dividing the "broad concept" of capital into two. Similarly, as in the point above, the author's words have been reframed using the paraphraser's understanding.

- Linking words at the beginning of sentences have been used to help with the flow of writing, such as "indeed," and "in contrast."

- Rather than defining human and physical capital in terms of "consists of…", "human capital focuses on…" and "physical capital involves" have been applied. Similarly, instead of talking about human capital as enhancing people's ability, the paraphrase talks about "function[ing] to improve …" Likewise, "central to the production of…" has replaced "used to produce".

- Individual words have also been replaced by other words, such as "things humans make" for "human creations," and "individuals" instead of "people." Again, at the level of individual words, the information has been repackaged within a different framework of understanding.

- Acknowledgement of the author's ideas are made with two references provided in the paraphrase, one in brackets and another embedded in the body of a sentence.

In some circumstances you have to retain some of the features of the original phrase.

Some words and phrases are recognised terms used within a field; they are not specific to an individual author. Such terminology and technical concepts should not be changed. If the terminology is generally known in the field you do not need to put it in quotation marks, but if you are not sure it is often safest to put quotation marks anyway.

Example of terminology in a paraphrase

In the Bad Paraphrase example above, the original author's phrasing for "in the production of goods and services" is retained. However, the author's words are acknowledged with quotation marks.

A few other phrases are retained from the original: "physical capital" and "human capital." These phrases are recognised terms in economics, so they should not be changed.

The phrase "goods and services" is kept because it is a recognised term, commonly applied in many other contexts beyond an academic setting. Consequently, it was not necessary to use quotation marks around it.

References and further reading

The example quotations on this page are taken from the following books:

Leyden, S. (1985). *Helping the child of exceptional ability*. London, England: Croom Helm.

McEachern, W. A. (1991). *Economics: A contemporary introduction* (2nd ed.). Cincinnati, OH: South-Western.

Paraphrasing techniques

This page describes specific techniques you can use to put information from outside sources into your own words.

Embed the author's name

Begin restating the information by putting the author's name in the sentence:

According to McDonald (2008), …

This doesn't have to be at the beginning of the sentence:

As identified by Smith (1990), social dynamics involve …

Social dynamics, as identified by Smith (1990), involve …

Social dynamics involve …, as identified by Smith (1990).

"According to" are probably the most commonly used words here, but there are hundreds more that can also be used:

Smith (1990) states that …

Smith (1990) asserts that …

Smith (1990) suggests that …

Smith (1990) corroborates this interpretation …

Smith (1990) contrasts this with a similar situation …

Smith (1990) highlights …

The key to developing the skill of restating other people's ideas in your own words is to develop your own repertoire of words that can be used in academic writing. Below is a list of some words that can be used to introduce an author's ideas, grouped by approximate meaning:

States

   articulates

   comments

   mentions

   maintains

notes

points out

says

suggests

indicates

refers

acknowledges

asserts

claims

reports

concludes

summarises

Demonstrates

shows

conveys

portrays

supports

substantiates

corroborates

verifies

confirms

Predicts

hypothesises

theorises

conceptualises

understands

Investigates

researches

experiments

conducts

administers

observes analyses

examines

evaluates

scrutinises

criticises

Identifies

characterises

recognises

defines

embodies

differentiates

distinguishes

highlights

specifies

Argues

challenges

compares

contradicts

contrasts

debates

defends

refutes

holds

justifies

Relates

connects

links

associates

correlates

This is not enough on its own. You must also restate and reorder the sentences that follow.

Restate and reorder

Use these sentence starters to repackage the sentence:

This concept is about …

This issue focuses on / involves / integrates / highlights / illustrates …

This means …

It is comprised of …

A central feature underlying this concept is …

This functions to / serves to / works to …

Change the order of the sentence.

Example

> Consider this quotation:

>> "You begin searching an electronic database by typing in a 'query,' which is typically several words that are related to your topic of interest" (Kennedy & Smith, 2001, p. 294).

> An effective paraphrase would keep the main points (searching, electronic database, query, definition of query), but rearrange the order:

>> Kennedy and Smith (2001, p. 294) define a query as a set of terms that relate to your subject. The first step in a search is to enter that query into an electronic database.

Signposts are words and phrases that link concepts together: "therefore," "however," "in contrast," and many others. Adding these words can enhance the flow of your paraphrase and make it different from the original source. For a list of signpost words and phrases, see essay flow.

If a word is not subject-specific terminology or a keyword, you can replace it with a word of similar or identical meaning. A thesaurus is a useful tool here, but you should always ensure that the new word means what you think it does.

Evaluate and synthesise

If you can, include your own opinion about the source while paraphrasing. This shows that you understand the idea, can evaluate its usefulness, and can apply it in the assignment:

The analysis made by Gibson (2002) about … is useful because it takes into account external factors.

Rather than paraphrasing one author at a time, consider combining several similar sources into a single sentence. This is known as synthesis:

Based on the ideas of Johnson (1997), McDonald (2000), and Wright (2002), it can be argued that …

Based on the findings of Johnson (1997), McDonald (2000), and Wright (2002), it can be demonstrated that …

Paraphrasing step by step

This step by step process can be used to put the ideas of other authors into your own words.

Example passage

> "Marriage was a greater influence on the course of many of the women's lives than choice of job or career, or even family background. Yet few women talked about choosing to get married (although choice may be a misnomer) in the same way they talked about career choices. Relationships are generally believed to belong to the realm of emotion, and 'we fell in love' or 'then I got married' suffices. The decision to marry is not usually something to be analysed or explained, nor is the choice of a particular man. Indeed, both getting married and marrying a particular man often appeared to be inevitabilities rather than choices. Women did talk about how they met their future husbands, however" (Park, 1991, p. 113).

1. Write down or paste a photocopy of the passage. Underline the author's main points.

> "<u>Marriage was a greater influence</u> on the course of many of the women's lives than choice of job or career, or even family background. <u>Yet few women talked about choosing to get married</u> (although choice may be a misnomer) in the same way they talked about career choices. Relationships are generally believed to belong to the realm of emotion, and 'we fell in love' or 'then I got married' suffices. <u>The decision to marry is not usually something to be analysed or explained, nor is the choice of a particular man.</u> Indeed, both <u>getting married and marrying a particular man often appeared to be inevitabilities rather than choices.</u> Women did talk about how they met their future husbands, however" (Park, 1991, p. 113).

2. List some key ideas, concepts, and phrases from the passage.

- marriage, getting married
- marriage was a great influence
- decision to marry
- not usually something to be analysed or explained
- getting married and marrying a particular man often appeared to be inevitabilities rather than choices

3. Where possible, note down alternative phrases or synonyms for each of these.

- selecting a life partner
- significant impact, influential factor
- choice, marriage options, choice of partner
- typically not talked about, not a topic of discussion
- the process of marriage and choice of partner were more a matter of course, something inevitable, compared to individual choice

4. Rewrite, using those alternative words and phrases.

Marriage was an influential factor in the women's lives. This was more so than other factors. Yet, at the same time, marriage options, including choice of partner, were typically not a topic of discussion for most women. Few women actually discussed the subject. Indeed, the process of marriage and choice of partner were more a matter of course, something inevitable, compared to individual choice.

5. Can you simplify further?

Although marriage impacted the women's lives significantly, it was not a decision that was analysed. Indeed, it was more a matter of course than individual choice.

6. Insert the name of the author.

Park's (1991) interviews with women showed that although marriage impacted women's lives significantly, it was not typically a decision that was analysed. Few women discussed the topic of marriage, including choice of partner. Rather, marriage was seen as more a matter of course than individual choice.

References and further reading

The example quotations on this page are taken from the following book:

Kennedy, M. L., & Smith, H. M. (2001). *Reading and writing in the academic community*(2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Park, J. (Ed.). (1991). *Ladies a plate*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.