

Paraphrasing and summarising are normally used together in essay writing, but while summarising aims to reduce information to a suitable length, paraphrasing attempts to restate the relevant information. For example, the following sentence:

There has been much debate about the reasons for the Industrial Revolution happening in eighteenth-century Britain, rather than in France or Germany.

could be paraphrased:

Why the Industrial Revolution occurred in the UK in the eighteenth century, instead of on the continent, has been the subject of considerable discussion.

Note that an effective paraphrase usually:

- has a different structure to the original
- has mainly different vocabulary
- retains the same meaning
- keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use (e.g. 'Industrial Revolution' or 'eighteenth century').

Task 3

Read the text below and then evaluate the three paraphrases (1=best), giving reasons.

THE CAUSES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Allen (2009) argues that the best explanation for the British location of the industrial revolution is found by studying demand factors. By the early eighteenth century high wages and cheap energy were both features of the British economy. Consequently, the mechanisation of industry through such inventions as the steam engine and mechanical spinning was profitable because employers were able to economise on labour by spending on coal. At that time, no other country had this particular combination of expensive labour and abundant fuel.

- (a) A focus on demand may help to explain the UK origin of the Industrial Revolution. At that time, workers' pay was high, but energy from coal was inexpensive. This encouraged the development of mechanical inventions based on steam power, which enabled bosses to save money by mechanising production (Allen, 2009).
- (b) The reason why Britain was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution can be understood by analysing demand in the early 1700s, according to Allen (2009). He maintains that, uniquely, Britain had the critical combination of cheap energy from coal and high labour costs. This encouraged the adoption of steam power to mechanise production, thus saving on wages and increasing profitability.
- (c) Allen (2009) claims that the clearest explanation for the UK location of the Industrial Revolution is seen by examining demand factors. By the eighteenth century, cheap energy and high wages were both aspects of the British economy. As a result, the mechanisation of industry through inventions such as the steam engine and mechanical spinning was profitable because employers were able to save money on labour by spending on coal. At that time, Britain was the only country with significant deposits of coal.

TASK 1 The text below has some style problems

Many students use poor academic style in their writing, like using I, we and you. A simple way to improve this is to study good examples of academic style and to follow them. Their writing score will go up as a result. And it will be useful at university. Style is always a problem for non-English students, who make lots of mistakes when they start to write academic English, by using, for example, phrasal verbs instead of more formal verbs. This is something that such students need to learn to overcome if they wish to reach a higher grade. What other ways are there for students to improve their style? One way is to ask the teacher for advice. A considerable number of students don't listen to their teachers, and therefore do not improve. This is a terrible situation. It is important for students to remember that they are now adults, not kids. If they do not follow teachers' advice, their writing style will not improve.

TASK 2 Remove all repetition and redundancy, rewriting where necessary.

FAST FOOD

Currently these days, fast food is growing in popularity. Fast food is a kind of food that people can buy or cook quickly. This essay examines the advantages of fast food and the drawbacks of fast food. First above all, fast food is usually tasty. Most of the people who work in offices are very busy, so that they do not have time to go to their homes for lunch. But the people who work in offices can eat tasty and delicious food in McDonalds' restaurants, which are franchised in hundreds of countries. In addition, the second benefit of fast food is its cheapness. As it is produced in large quantities, this high volume means that the companies can keep costs down. As a result fast food is usually less expensive than a meal in a conventional restaurant.