



## Academic Writing – Note taking

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Assess Your College Writing Skills

Directions: Read the following statements and rate how true they are for you at the present time. Use the following scale:

- 5 Definitely true
- 4 Mostly true
- 3 Somewhat true
- 2 Seldom true
- 1 Never true

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am generally confident of my writing skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a system for reminding myself of due dates for writing projects.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I start writing projects early so that I am not stressed by finishing them at the last minute.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have the proper materials and a space to write comfortably.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know how to use the library and the Internet to gather information for a term paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can write a thesis statement for a term paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know how to organize a term paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know how to write the introduction, body, and conclusion of a paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can cite references in the appropriate style for my subject.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I own reference books that have rules for APA, MLA, or Chicago style.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know what plagiarism is and know how to avoid it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can deal with “writer’s block” and get started on my writing project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know how to edit and revise a paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know where I can get help with my writing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total

60–70      You have excellent writing skills, but can always learn new ideas.

50–59      You have good writing skills, but there is room for improvement.

Below 50      You need to improve writing skills. The skills presented in this chapter will help. Consider taking a writing class early in your college studies.

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1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ni34Am19XFA> – instructional video
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2W85Dwx218&list=PLE1JZxwWpHsA07Rj3nvG1xogOKfA0NfsC> - task

## Academic Writing – Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is writing the ideas of another person in your own words. It is useful when you are using the work of others to support your own view. When paraphrasing, you need to change the words and the structure but keep the meaning the same. Remember that even when you paraphrase, not only quote, someone's work, you must acknowledge it.

Look at this example:

### Source:

It has long been known that Cairo is the most populous city on earth, but no-one knew exactly how populous it was until last month.

### Paraphrase:

Although Cairo has been the world's most heavily populated city for many years, the precise population was not known until four weeks ago.

The following stages may be useful:

1. **Read and understand the text.**
2. **Make a list of the main ideas.**
  - a. Find the important ideas/words/phrases. In some way mark them – write them down, underline or highlight them.
  - b. Find alternative words/synonyms for these words/phrases - do not change specialised vocabulary or common words.
3. **Change the structure of the text.**
  - a. Identify the meaning relationships between the words/ideas - e.g. cause/effect, generalisation, contrast.
  - b. Express these relationships in a different way.
  - c. Change the grammar of the text: nouns to verbs, adjectives to adverbs, etc., break up long sentences, combine short sentences.
4. **Rewrite the main ideas in complete sentences.** Combine your notes into a piece of continuous writing.
5. **Check your work.**
  - a. Make sure the meaning and length are the same.
  - b. Make sure the style is your own.
  - c. Remember to acknowledge other people's work.

Notice the differences in these examples:

- a. Memory is the capacity for storing and retrieving information.  
Memory is the facility for keeping and recovering data.
- b. Research and publications are accumulating in each of the four fields of anthropology at an exponential rate.  
Studies and books are gathering in all of the four areas of anthropology at a very fast speed.

- c. Besides being a theory about the basis and origin of knowledge and the contents of our minds in general, empiricism is also sometimes a methodology.  
Not only is empiricism a theory about the basis and origin of knowledge and the contents of our minds in general, it is sometimes also a methodology.

Look at how you may change the grammar of a text:

**Change nouns to verbs**

This

rewriting of history was not so much a matter of a new start.

This rewriting of history was not so much a matter of starting again.

**Change verbs to nouns**

The

Normans invaded in 1066.

The Norman invasion took place in 1066.

**Change adverbs to adjectives**

Politically,

it was a bad decision.

From a political point of view, it was a bad decision.

**Change active verbs to passive**

We can

relate a study of this kind to texts in other media too

A study of this kind can be related to texts in other media too.

**Break up sentences**

Given the

extent to which deforestation increased markedly in the four southern states during 1987 and 1988, it is heartening news that during the early part of the 1989 dry season the burning seemed to have been curtailed somewhat, due to a combination of policy changes, better controls on burning, and most important of all an exceptionally wet "dry" season.

Deforestation increased markedly in the four southern states during 1987 and 1988. On account of this, it is heartening news that during the early part of the 1989 dry season the burning seemed to have been curtailed somewhat. The reason for this is a combination of policy changes, better controls on burning, and most important of all an exceptionally wet "dry" season.

**Combine sentences**

Tropical

forests are defined here as evergreen or partly evergreen forests. They grow in areas receiving not less than 100 mm of precipitation in any month for two out of three years. The mean annual temperature is 24-plus degrees Celsius. The area is essentially frost-free.

Tropical forests

are defined here as evergreen or partly evergreen forests, in areas receiving not less than 100 mm of precipitation in any month for two out of three years, with mean annual temperature of 24-plus degrees Celsius, and essentially frost-free.

**Exercise 1: Paraphrase with Synonyms**

<http://www.eslwriting.org/wp-content/paraphrase-synonyms-c.pdf>

**Task 1 – Paraphrasing** – Rewrite the following texts in your own words.

**A)** Since differences in the anatomy and physiology of human males and females are so obvious it is easy to be misled into believing that sex-linked roles and statuses are primarily biological rather than cultural phenomena.

**B)** Man has added extraneous substances to his food since prehistoric times. Salt and spices are the oldest food additives we know of, used by prehistoric man to preserve his meat and fish, and to make the taste more interesting. Today, the substances, natural and synthetic, added to food run into thousands. Most of the foods we buy contain one or more additives.

**C)** A culture is the totally socially acquired life-way or life-style of a group of people. It consists of the patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling and acting that are characteristic of the members of a particular society or segment of society.

Adapted from EUFAP Academic Writing viewed at <http://www.uefap.com/writing/report/repram.htm> on 8.8.2010.

## Academic Writing – Summarizing

1. <https://www.wisc-online.com/learn/general-education/technical-reporting/trg2603/summary-writing>  
Input + task

## Academic speaking – argumentation

### Linking words For

- 1.
- 2,
- 3,
- 4
- 5.

### Linking words Against

Watch and listen, then debate in two groups

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/video/2013/sep/23/niqab-video-debate>

