

# Writing Well

## Paraphrasing

Student Learning Advisory Service

# What is 'paraphrasing'?

expressing somebody else's ideas in your own language or words

- accurately and thoroughly

one legitimate way of 'borrowing' from a source

(other ways are quoting/ summarising)

# When to paraphrase:

- when ideas are more important than author's style
- when the original language is difficult to understand  
(e.g. full of jargon, complex or elaborate )

# Why paraphrase:

- Because it is better than quoting  
(no break in style)
- Because it demonstrates your understanding of the issue/ topic
- Because it helps you to understand the meaning of the original

# How to paraphrase:

1. Reread the original until you understand it fully
2. Set original aside and take abbreviated notes of what you have understood to be the message – bullet points
3. Do not look at the original when rewriting the idea in your own words. (imaging repeating the idea to a friend)

# How to paraphrase: (cont.)

4. Compare with original before using it in your writing
5. Use quotation marks for unique terms or short phrase that you have retained within your paraphrase
6. Record the source (for your citation)

# Example

taken from OWL – Online Writing Lab, Purdue University, Australia 2006

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.

-----

Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).

**okay**

# Example

taken from OWL – Online Writing Lab, Purdue University, Australia 2006

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.

-----

Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.

**plagiarism**



# Example

taken from OWL – Online Writing Lab, Purdue University, Australia 2006

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.

-----

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).

**good**

# Working from the original

- change the **word order** of the sentence or passage  
(by starting at a different place).  
>>> changes in grammar and syntax
- change the **words**  
(synonyms) but be careful!
- Do not change the meaning!

The demise of the lecture method has long been predicted, yet it still remains the most widely used teaching method in higher education.

## **Change of structure (with minor adjustments)**

Even though the lecture method still remains the most widely used teaching method in higher education, its demise has long been predicted.

Even though the lecture method still remains the most widely used teaching method in higher education, its demise has long been predicted.

### **Change words**

Even though lectures are still the most common method of teaching in HE, their end has been forecasted for quite some time.

# Compare :

- The demise of the lecture method has long been predicted, yet it still remains the most widely used teaching method in higher education. (original)
- Even though lectures are still the most common method of teaching in HE, their end has been forecasted for quite some time. (paraphrase)

# Paraphrasing Tips

- Use a good dictionary to find synonyms and to check their usage and context.
- Do not change specialised vocabulary or expressions
- Do not change the tone.
- Do not add information
- Do not leave anything out.
- Check your paraphrase with the original. Be sure you have not unintentionally used the same words or phrases.
- Try to sound like “you” but not too casual?

# How much can we change?

“Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated”.

Bush ,G.W. (2001) *Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People*, United States Capitol Washington D.C. September 20.

War on terror >> ~~combat of horror~~

**Bush stated that America’s ‘war on terror’ started with Al Qaeda but would continue until all groups of terrorists across the world had been “found, stopped and defeated” (Bush 2001).**

# Active & Passive

**“Over 130 different nationalities are represented within the student body at the University of Kent”.**

(passive)

The student body at the University of Kent represents over 130 different nationalities.

(active)

Students from more than 130 nations study at the University of Kent.

(active)



# Over to you

- Changing the word order or structure
  - start in middle
  - start from the end
  - change active into passive
  - negative to positive
  - change long sentences into two short sentences
  - combine short sentences
- Changing of words
  - word class (noun, verb, adjective ...)
  - synonyms and antonyms

# Changing word class

- There's a managers' meeting every week in room 1.

The managers meet every week in room 1.

- Somebody is knocking on the door.

There is a knock at the door.

# Using synonyms

- The responsibility for standards and quality in the UK rests with individual, autonomous universities.

In the UK, accountability for ‘standards and quality’ lies with each self governing HE institution.

# Changing the word order

- Climate change will soon be hitting hard; lifestyles will have to change for civilisation to survive into the next century.

For civilisation to survive into the next century, lifestyles will have to change as climate change will soon be hitting hard.

# Active versus passive

- Iceland has agreed to pay compensation for some of the money lost by UK savers through the collapse of internet bank *icesave*.

Some of the money lost by UK savers through the collapse of internet bank *icesave* will be paid by Iceland.

- Earlier this year, one of Europe's largest warehouses was opened in Swansea by Amazon.

Amazon opened one of Europe's largest warehouses in Swansea earlier this year.

# Negative versus positive

- While most 17 to 21-year-olds claim to have walked or cycled rather than travel by car for environmental reasons, few are prepared to give up even one trip by air over the next decade.
  - a) ... not many are prepared to give up ...
  - b) Only few 17 to 21-year-olds admit to preferring car travel to cycling or walking ...

# Long to short

- About a decade and a half ago certain scholars began to call attention to the importance of "soft power" in world affairs, which they defined as the capacity to win friends abroad and persuade other nations to agree to policies that you want.

About 15 years ago some scholars began to call attention to the importance of "soft power" in world affairs. They defined it as the capacity to win friends abroad and persuade other nations to agree to policies that you want.



# Short to long

- New figures are out today. The cost of renting a home fell during the third quarter of the year. The market was flooded with properties for which there are no buyers.

New figures out today revealed that the cost of renting a home fell during the third quarter of the year as the market was flooded with properties for which there are no buyers.

- Obama, speaking before the meeting with Hillary Clinton, said:

"We're going to have a good conversation about how we can work together to fix up the country." (The Guardian, 17 Nov 2008)

Obama stated that he and Hillary Clinton were going to discuss how they could collaborate in order to “to fix this country”.

(Obama quotes in The Guardian, 17 Nov 2008)

Social exclusion is something that *can* happen to anyone. But some people are significantly more at risk than others.

Cabinet Office (March 2001) 'Preventing Social Exclusion' Report by the Social Exclusion Unit, (p 11)

The report on the *Preventing Social Exclusion* highlighted that some individuals are more likely to suffer from 'social exclusion' than other, even though it may affect anybody.

- Monetary and financial indicators in Korea in 1998 depicted a mixed picture, with interest rates increasing sharply in the first months after the currency crisis but monetary aggregates displaying a less clear pattern.

Borensztein, E (2002) 'Financial crisis and credit crunch in Korea: evidence from firm-level data' *Journal of monetary economics* ,49,4,853

???

Ubuntu can be defined as humaneness--a pervasive spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness--that individuals and groups display for one another. Ubuntu is the foundation for the basic values that manifest themselves in the ways African people think and behave toward each other and everyone else they encounter. One of the most important attributes of ubuntu is the high degree of harmony and continuity throughout the system.

(Mangaliso, M. P. 'Building competitive advantage ...

Mangaliso (2001: ? ) described ubuntu as “humaneness --a pervasive spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness”. The strive for harmony and continuity is central to ubuntu therefore evident in the interaction and communication among Africans.

As a general rule, English sentences move from what the reader knows, to what the reader does not know. This ensures that readers learn new things by connecting new information to what they already know.

To enable the reader to build on existing knowledge, sentences in the English language tend to start with something known before introducing something unknown.