



## Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting

### Definitions

Paraphrase = to capture the precise meaning of a text in your own words

Summarize = to put the main idea(s) of a text in your own words

Quote = to copy the exact words from another text

### Goals of each

To understand what you are reading so that you can respond to, build on, and challenge it

To accurately represent the ideas of other sources

### Characteristics of effective paraphrases, summaries, and quotes

#### Paraphrase

Approximately same length as the original

Retains details from the original

Translates the meaning of the original into your own words

Cites source of the original

#### Summary

Shorter than the original

Captures the main idea of the original; does not include details

Condenses the meaning of the original into your own words

Cites source of the original

#### Quote

Same as the original

Reproduces all ideas from the original

Uses the exact words from the original

Cites source of the original

### When to paraphrase, summarize, and quote

#### Paraphrase

When you want to capture information in detail

When you want to record an idea completely but the language of the original does not need to be preserved

#### Summary

When you want to capture the main idea

When you do not need to attend to the details of the original but want to record the primary point(s)

#### Quote

When you want to use the precise words of another source

When the language of the original source is particularly eloquent or striking or uses specialized vocabulary

## **How to paraphrase, summarize, and quote**

### Paraphrase

- Rephrase the original passage, replacing all key words with synonyms.
- Change sentence structure as necessary.
- Check that you keep all important details.
- Paraphrase your paraphrase. Do this a total of 3 times (i.e., paraphrase x 3).

### Summarize

- Determine which of the ideas from the text you are reading are most significant. For an entire article this might be the author's thesis and 2-3 points of support. For a paragraph this might be the main point and 1-2 pieces of evidence that support it.
- Condense these ideas into your own words.
- Explain how these ideas fit together. (Do not just list points; connect them.)

### Quote

- Select the passage you wish to use. Smaller sections are preferable.
- Copy the source's words exactly.
- Use brackets to make necessary tense changes or to add explanatory additions.
- Use [*sic*] to indicate that a mistake in a quote is from the original source and not you.
- Indent two tabs quotes longer than four lines. Be careful not to rely on too many long quotes.