

## ***Tips for Paraphrasing***

Paraphrasing is a practical method used when wanting to rephrase the content of a source. This technique is useful in preventing plagiarism and excessive quotations. These guidelines might be helpful in simplifying this process:

### **Digest the author's intention**

Thoroughly read the original source until the main idea or content is clearly identified. Once the message is understood, the text should be put away to avoid an exact replica. Begin paraphrasing by putting the general idea into your own words. It helps to use note cards that can be designated for this specific purpose.

*It's important to know that a paraphrase does not have to be the same length as the initial source. In some cases it can be shorter or longer than the source. However, the general idea of the source must still be presented.*

### **Use the thesaurus moderately**

Keep it simple! Often the use of a thesaurus may result in jargon and the focus might be lost. Therefore, the best way to paraphrase is by making sure you keep the general idea in your own words, not the Thesaurus' words, or the original author's words. Remember you are rephrasing the source's original focus not changing a couple of words or sentences.

### **Get to the point**

Restrict yourself from including personal input into the paraphrase. It should be based on the author's intention not on your opinions and viewpoints. The source should only be used to assist your argument.

### **Judge for yourself**

Make the paraphrase yours. It should not look like the original. If there exists too much of a resemblance between the original and the paraphrase, then it should be revised. Remember the goal is to restate the message of the source in your own words using your own sentence structure.

*It might help to count or highlight the number of words that are similar with the ones of the original passage. Then, compare them to how often they are used in the original source. If there are too many similar words, then you should rewrite it.*

*If you find that you use exact words from the original text, then it is important to put them in quotation marks and provide the proper citation to accredit the author. In other words, it's okay to utilize some words from the original source, but make sure that your own words are predominant in your paraphrase.*

## Always include Citations

The author of the original text should always be acknowledged. Accurate citation should be provided either at the beginning or at the end of your paraphrase. After the paraphrase, you should include author's name and page number inside parenthesis.

e.g. (Last name, year of publication).

\*\* The period is placed after the parenthesis\*\*

## Below are examples of a legitimate paraphrase and an illegitimate paraphrase

### Original passage

The chronically ill are by no means confined to hospitals or other institutions. If you think for a moment about your friends and acquaintances, you will recognize that many of the chronically ill live in the general community and lead perfectly normal, happy lives within their limitations (Anderson, 281).

### Paraphrase

By no means are the chronically ill confined to hospitals or other institutions. If you consider your friends and acquaintances, you will acknowledge that several of the chronically ill live in the general public and lead a normal, ecstatic lifestyle within their limitations (Anderson, 281).

The problem with this paraphrase is that it is too similar with the original source. It follows similar sentence structures and diction with the exception of an occasional replacement word. Replacing only a few words does **NOT** rephrase the content in your own words. Therefore, this paraphrase might be considered plagiarized.

### Revised Paraphrase

Despite some restrictions, the chronically ill live an ordinary life. Often they can reside away from a hospital environment (Anderson, 281).

Here, the paraphrase gets to the point and is void of lengthy diction and drivel. The original message is still conveyed with different sentence structures and word choice.

**Food for thought:** Your instructor does not wish to grade work that is already published. Instead they want to know how well **you** use **your** sources to support **your** arguments. Use them to your advantage!