

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means putting into your own words what you have read or heard from research sources. Although you are re-presenting the writer's ideas using your own words, you need to reference the source/s from which you gathered the material.

Using information from written material

- Read the text to gain an overall understanding of the article or section
- Write down pertinent points without looking at the original
- Make sure your interpretation is accurate by re-reading the text
- Write in sentence format and indicate your source using parenthetical citations or endnotes/footnotes, depending on the style guide you are using

Example of paraphrasing

(This example uses APA style; for other styles, change the in-text citation format.)

Research paper topic: How to write an academic paper

Compare the following versions. Note how similar the structure of the poorly paraphrased version is to the original. It is important to note that the paraphrase in this example could be considered to be plagiarism since it uses the same structure as the original quote.

Original Quotation	Poor Paraphrase
"Because building on the work of others is one of the defining characteristics of academic writing, academic writers have developed standard systems that clearly identify where specific ideas came from, and that direct other interested persons to these same sources" (Taylor, 2003, p. 186).	Because working with the text of others is one of the key characteristics of academic writing, academic writers have created standard systems that identify where key ideas come from, and that point other interested people to these same sources (Taylor, 2003).

Now compare two better versions. The first writer below uses their own language effectively but retains the sentence structure of the original. This could also be considered plagiarism. The second writer below uses their own language *and* employs their own sentence structure to express Taylor's ideas.

Better Paraphrase	Best Paraphrase
Incorporating others' ideas into academic writing is part of what makes it different from other writing; for this reason, specific ways of citing sources have been established to help readers to know where ideas have come from and how to locate original texts (Taylor, 2003).	Academic writing follows established rules and conventions for citing source material so that authors can acknowledge their intellectual debts to their peers and readers can further their research in the same field (Taylor, 2003, p. 186). Taylor considers this reliance on other scholars to be a hallmark of academic writing.

References

Taylor, L. (2003). Academic writing. In L. J. S. Walker & D. J. Schönwetter (Eds.), *Success secrets of university students* (pp. 173-199). Prentice Hall.