

Bracken Business Communications Clinic

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the go-to method of using somebody else's words and ideas without direct quoting, but with the required in-text citations and reference at the end of the paper.

Using paraphrasing correctly shows that you have a good grasp of other people's ideas and are able to use **YOUR OWN WORDS** to express them.

To paraphrase, you should consider the original passage, note the key words, and then use synonyms and different grammatical phrases to change words so that the passage looks different, but you keep the same meaning.

Here is a step-by-step guide on how to paraphrase a quote or a passage.

Step 1. Read the passage and take notes on the key words and ideas.

Step 2. Remove the passage from your view.

Step 3. Rewrite the passage in your own words:

Use synonyms

Use different word forms

Use different sentence structure

Step 4. Lay the original passage and your paraphrase side by side. Is there a part of the original (longer than 2 words) that appears in your paraphrase? Would a Google search of your paraphrase bring up the original document?

Yes: repeat step 3

No: move to step 5

Step 5. While looking at both your paraphrase and the original, check that they have the same meaning. If not, make corrections.

Step 6. Add in-text citation to your paraphrase. Include full citation in References section.

Here's an illustration. Let's paraphrase a famous quote, "Imagination is more important than knowledge," attributed to Einstein. I can identify the key words (imagination, knowledge), and find synonyms or other word forms for them. I can also change the structure of the sentence and the order, but not the logic, of the ideas.

Here's a possible example of a paraphrase:

- According to Einstein, knowing something is not as vital as being able to imagine it.

Notice, I changed the grammar: now "knowledge" comes first in the sentence, and "imagine" comes last. Also, I changed the part of speech: knowledge (noun) becomes knowing (gerund); imagination (noun) becomes to imagine (verb).

Note also that I mentioned the name Einstein in the sentence, indicating that this idea is attributed to him, thus making an in-text citation.

Voila! You have a good paraphrase.