

Definition of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is a close restatement of another person's argument using your own sentences. When you paraphrase, you must still acknowledge your sources. One way to paraphrase is to write your text without looking at the original, and then compare the two. Note that a paraphrase differs from a summary in that it could actually be longer than the original.

Here are 3 Ways to Acknowledge Sources

Citation: Colors play an important role in our impressions. As Colson Whitehead observes, “Aspirants to luxury often opt for red and gold hues long soaked into their mentalities as the spectra of royalty” (1999, 145). *

Paraphrase: Colors play an important role in our impressions. For example, Colson Whitehead points out that red and gold are associated with royalty and luxury. *

Reference: Many writers, including Colson Whitehead, have noted that colors play an important role in our impressions. *

* Whitehead, Colson. The Institutionalist. New York: Anchor Books, 1999.

Handbooks and Style Manuals

Because no one can remember all the specific rules of citation, it is a good idea to purchase one of the many handbooks or style manuals available. Check with your instructor or the Writing Center for suggestions. Access citation help guides online at the Library website.

Common Knowledge

Most fields are grounded in a body of common knowledge shared by scholars in the field. Examples are historical dates and established scientific principles. You do not need to cite facts or ideas that are common knowledge in the field you are studying, as long as you express them in your own sentences. When you can not be sure what is common knowledge and what is not, play it safe and cite your sources.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

You are more likely to risk plagiarizing when you

- Do not understand the material well enough to be able to use it.
- Rely too heavily on the ideas of others or presume their ideas are preferable to your own.
- Do not know the correct methods of citation and attribution.

Plagiarism is a Serious Offense!

Penalties range from loss of time by having to redo an assignment to failing a course.

Written by the Academic Dishonesty Committee, ACC.
Approved by the Faculty Senate 4.08.02



UNDERSTANDING AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is “like lip-synching to someone else's voice and accepting the applause and rewards for yourself.” ¹

Purdue University

WWU Resources on Plagiarism

- “Academic Dishonesty Policy and Procedure”, Western Washington University Bulletin, Appendix D.
- WWU “Plagiarism” Web Site
<http://www.library.wvu.edu/ref/plagiarism.html>

¹ Purdue University 1995-2000. OWL: Online Writing Available [Online]: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/plag.html>. [1 March 2001]

Understanding Why Plagiarism Matters

For more information on why plagiarism is treated so seriously at Western, consult the "Plagiarism" Web Site: <http://www.library.wvu.edu/info/plagiarism.html>

People in universities- -students and teachers, especially- -can only do their work in the atmosphere in which ideas are freely exchanged and the evaluation of intellectual effort is not clouded by suspicions about where it came from. Just as students have some claim to the right to be told the truth in the classroom by teachers who know what they are talking about, teachers have a right to assume that work submitted under a student's name is indeed the product of the student's honest effort.

All original insight in a scholarly community occurs in the context of the creative work of other people. As Sir Isaac Newton observed when he wrote to Robert Hooke, "If I have seen further [sic]...it is standing on the shoulders of Giants."²

A paper with a comprehensive bibliography shows that the writer is conversant with the intellectual context in which he or she is operating.

² Newton, Sir Isaac. "Letter to Robert Hooke, 5 February 1675/76."

In *Familiar Quotations*, 16th ed. Ed. John Bartlett. Boston: Little, Brown, 1992, 281.

Definition of Plagiarism

"Plagiarism is presenting as one's own, in whole or in part, the argument, language, creations, conclusions, or scientific data of another without explicit acknowledgement."

Western Washington University Bulletin, 2002-2003, (Bellingham, WA; WWU 2002), 348.

Examples of Plagiarism

- Using another person's written or spoken words without complete and proper citation;
- Using information from a World Wide Web Site, CD-ROM, or other electronic source without complete and proper citation;
- Using statistics, graphs, charts, and facts without acknowledging the source;
- Paraphrasing by imitating someone else's argument using other words without acknowledging the source;
- Using work produced in connection with one course to fulfill a requirement in another course without permission.

How and When to Use Quotation

Proper citation and quotation is an acknowledgement that a student has learned from others. Specific conventions for citing and documenting sources vary among the academic disciplines (APA, MLA, CBE, Chicago, etc.). If your instructor has not specified what style of documentation to use, it is your responsibility to find out.

Tips for Using Quotations

- Use direct quotation when the original version makes the point more clearly, succinctly, or aesthetically than you could.
- Whenever possible, integrate or splice relevant quotations into your own sentences by
 - 1) using a phrase such as "according to Brad Jones", or "as Garcia observes" to introduce the quote;
 - 2) attaching the quoted material to some of your own language.
- When you incorporate quotations into your own sentences, be sure the quotation uses the grammar of the original sentence.
- If you use ellipsis points (...) to omit words or shorten quotations, make sure you do not distort the intention or meaning of the original.