

When to Paraphrase, Summarize and Quote

A **summary** is a brief account of the main ideas in a source passage in your own words.

Summarize when you want to condense a long, detailed passage.

A **paraphrase** is a restatement of a passage of text in your own words. Its structure reflects the structure of the source passage. Paraphrases are sometimes the same length as the source passage although they can sometimes be shorter. Remember that only an occasional word (but not whole phrases) from the original source appears in the paraphrase, and that a paraphrase's sentence structure does not reflect that of the source.

Paraphrase when you want to retain the ideas in the original passage but put them in your own words because you want them to be clearer to your readers

A **quotation** uses the exact words of the original.

Quote when you need to:

- To maintain a passage which is particularly well written.
- To present to the reader a passage which will be discussed in some detail
- To set forth the exact wording (e.g., of a definition, law, etc.)

Why should you quote?

- To identify others' opinions, theories, and personal explanations
- To present assertions of fact that are open to dispute
- To present statistics
- To acknowledge help provided by friends, instructors, or others
- To let the reader know where the document can be found

What Not to Quote

Do not quote facts available in a wide variety of sources, or your own independent ideas or primary research.