

## Quotation, Paraphrase, and Summary

### Definitions

- Quotation reproduces a statement word-for-word as it appears in its original source
- Paraphrase explains a statement by using your own words and sentence structure
- Summary explains a statement using your words, but typically condenses a larger statement into a shorter explanation

### How to decide which approach to use

Direct quotations can be useful when the exact wording of a statement is important, or when the original statement is particularly well-written or structurally persuasive. Also, the direct quotation may be important when you want to make sure you are being precise in representing the author's position.

Paraphrasing is usually expected in research and argumentative essays. These type of papers benefit from paraphrasing because it shows that you understand the source and are therefore a reliable voice on that source. Paraphrasing can make the evidence more straightforward.

Another reason to paraphrase is to adjust your tone for your audience. If the assignment asks you to write a presentation for your classmates, you do not want to quote scientific jargon. Your source is only persuasive and supportive if your readers understand it. The paraphrase of the quotation below is shorter and more direct.

Summaries can also be used in reviews, research papers, and argumentative essays. They have a similar purpose as paraphrasing, but they condense a large work (i.e. an entire chapter, article, or book) into a shorter text such as a paragraph or a short essay. Summaries allow you to focus your description on the parts that are relevant to your discussion. Summaries often include common knowledge and therefore do not need to be cited.

**Both direct quotes AND paraphrases need to be cited.**

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