
Lesson 12: Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Introduction

Paraphrasing and summarizing are essential academic skills that students need in order to use sources effectively and avoid plagiarism. These skills are commonly required in assignments, research papers, and examinations. However, many students struggle to apply them correctly because both skills demand careful reading, strong comprehension, and the ability to express ideas accurately in one's own words. When used appropriately, paraphrasing and summarizing help improve both reading and writing skills while enhancing academic credibility.

1. Paraphrasing

1.1 Definition of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the process of restating information from a source text using one's own words while maintaining the original meaning. According to Bowker (2007, p. 13), paraphrasing involves restating information with different words and phrases, focusing on rewriting rather than shortening the original text. Unlike summarizing, paraphrasing keeps approximately the same length as the source. A successful paraphrase conveys the same ideas as the original text without copying its wording or structure.

1.2 Purpose of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing helps students:

- Demonstrate understanding of a text
- Avoid plagiarism
- Integrate source material smoothly into their writing
- Develop vocabulary and writing skills

1.3 Steps for Writing an Effective Paraphrase :

To produce a well-written paraphrase, learners should follow these steps:

- Preview and read** : read the passage carefully several times to ensure full understanding.
- Identify key words and ideas** : Underline or highlight important words and concepts. Look up unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Rewrite in your own words** : Rewrite each sentence using different words and sentence structures while keeping the same meaning.
- Review and revise** : Read the paraphrase aloud and check the following:
 - Is it approximately the same length as the original?
 - Have any words or phrases been copied directly?
 - Does it preserve the original meaning?

1.4 Example of Paraphrasing

Original Text

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon in April (probably April 23), 1564. His father was a citizen of some prominence who became an alderman and bailiff but later suffered financial

difficulties. Shakespeare likely attended the Stratford grammar school, where he may have learned Latin, but he did not study at Oxford or Cambridge. There are no documented facts about his youth.

Paraphrase

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon. His father, who held respected positions as alderman and bailiff, was once financially stable but later faced economic problems. Shakespeare probably attended the local grammar school and acquired some knowledge of Latin. However, there is no reliable evidence about his early life, and it is known that he did not attend Oxford or Cambridge.

2. Summarizing

2.1 Definition of Summarizing

Summarizing is the skill of reducing a text to its main ideas and presenting them briefly in one's own words. A summary excludes unnecessary details, examples, and minor points while retaining the essential message of the text. It simplifies complex ideas, grammar, and vocabulary for clarity.

2.2 Purpose of Summarizing

Summarizing enables students to:

- Identify main ideas and key information
- Improve reading comprehension
- Condense large amounts of information
- Support arguments efficiently

2.3 Steps for Writing an Effective Summary

a. Preview and read : Read the text carefully more than once to understand its overall meaning.

b. Identify main ideas : Determine the central idea and the most important supporting points. Create a brief outline using your own words.

c. Write the summary : Write one or two sentences (or a short paragraph) that present only the main ideas.

d. Review and revise : Read the summary aloud to correct errors and ensure clarity.

2.4 Example of Summarizing

Original Text

The Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, appears as colorful bands of light in the night sky. Ancient people feared these lights and believed they were caused by fire or dragons. Although scientists have studied them for centuries, their exact cause is still uncertain.

Summary

The Aurora Borealis, also known as the Northern Lights, is a colorful phenomenon in the night sky that was once feared by ancient people, and its exact cause remains unclear to scientists.

3. Difference Between Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Paraphrasing	Summarizing
Rewrites the entire text	Reduces the text
Keeps similar length	Much shorter
Includes all ideas	Includes only main ideas
Uses own words	Uses own words

Practice

- Paraphrase the texts in your own words.
- Summarize the texts in **no more than two sentences**.

1. Online Learning

Online learning has become increasingly popular in recent years. It allows students to access courses from anywhere and at any time, which makes education more flexible. However, online learning also requires strong self-discipline and motivation, as students must manage their own time effectively. Despite its advantages, it may not be suitable for all learners.

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2. Cultural Differences

Cultural differences influence the way people communicate and interact with others. Gestures, eye contact, and personal space can have different meanings across cultures. Misunderstandings may occur when individuals are unaware of these differences. Therefore, cultural awareness is essential for effective communication in a globalized world.

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3. Social Media and Communication

Social media has transformed the way people communicate by enabling instant interaction across long distances. While it helps individuals stay connected, excessive use of social media may reduce face-to-face communication and affect social relationships. Researchers suggest that a balanced use of digital platforms is necessary to maintain healthy communication habits.

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