

## Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting: A Refresher

### What are the differences among quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing?

A **quote** is the exact wording of the source material (either written or spoken). Quotes match the original source word for word.

A **paraphrase** is a detailed restatement in your own words of a written or sometimes spoken source material. Apart from the changes in organization, wording, and sentence structure, the paraphrase should be nearly identical in meaning to the original passage. It should also be near the same length as the original passage and present the details of the original.

A **summary** is a condensed version of a passage. Similar to paraphrasing, summarizing involves using your own words and writing style to express another author's ideas. Unlike the paraphrase, which presents important details, the summary presents only the most important ideas of the passage.

By integrating source material into your paper, you can **add credibility, complexity, and support to your argument**.

Whether quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing, you should follow some general rules about integrating your source material.

1. Source material cannot make your points for you. Source material can back up your points or provide material for you to argue against; therefore, you will typically have to introduce source material and comment on how it helps prove your point. Essentially, source material has no significance without your commentary to provide context and meaning.
2. Choose important or significant information that effectively relates to or supports your points. (Depending on the type of paper you are writing, you may need to present information that does not agree or support the points in your paper. This most often occurs when you are writing against a policy, plan, or procedure. Oftentimes, you will have to present the dissenting view in order to show flaws, weaknesses, or other errors within the opposing position.)
3. Always be faithful to the meaning of the source material that you include in your paper.
4. Cite appropriately and integrate the quote, paraphrase, or summary into the text effectively. Consult the APA documentation manual (or the OWL at Purdue website) for information on how to cite.

### When should I use quotes?

Using quotations is the easiest way to include source material, but quotations should be used carefully and sparingly. While paraphrasing and summarizing provide the opportunity to show your understanding of the source material, quoting may only show your ability to type it.

1. Unforgettable language: You believe that the words of the author are memorable or remarkable because of their effectiveness or historical flavor. Additionally, the author may have used a unique phrase or sentence, and you want to comment on words or phrases themselves.
2. Emphasis: You want to emphasize the information provided in the quote and make it stand out from the rest of the information.

Remember, you do want to avoid having a paper that is a string of quotes with occasional input from you.

Whether you summarize, paraphrase, or quote, **if the idea is not your original, unique idea, you must cite it using APA format.** You do not have to cite your own experiences, observations, or opinion; generally accepted facts; or common knowledge.

### What is common knowledge?

- you can find it in general reference books
- you can find it in at least 5 other credible sources
- it is something that most people already know.

### Examples of common knowledge:

- Known time and date relating information (e.g. "There are 24 hours in a day.")
- Well-known historical fact ("George Washington was the first US President .")
- Geographic pieces of information easily verified by a non-specialized map ("Portland is in Oregon.")
- Plain sight observations that can be made from public property ("A tall spire sits on top of the Empire State Building.")
- Obvious national associations ("Italian is the primary language of Italy.")
- Mathematical or logical truisms ("1+1=2")
- Universally-accepted everyday orders that are taught in early elementary school ("January comes before February in the Gregorian calendar").

**Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting: An Overview**

	<b>QUOTATION</b>	<b>PARAPHRASE</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>
<b>What is it?</b>	An exact word-for-word inclusion of research into your paper	A rephrased version of an author's words that states the point in your words	A rephrased version of an author's overall point or idea
<b>When do I use it?</b>	When something from a source is so beautifully written or so specific that it cannot be reproduced	When you need to incorporate specific material or ideas from a source in order to show your understanding of the source and how it relates to your point	When you want to include a broader idea from source
<b>How often do I use it?</b>	Only 10% of your paper should be quotes	Used frequently in academic writing, at least once typically in each body paragraph	As needed, usually at least once or twice in a paper
<b>How do I use it?</b>	Use the author's exact words in quotation marks	Change the wording and sentence structure of the original text into your own while still accurately representing the original author's point	Change the wording and structure, making a much more brief recapitulation of the idea or concept
<b>Citation required?</b>	YES (including page #)	YES (including page #)	YES (no page # needed since summarized information is not isolated to a particular page typically)