

QUOTING AND PARAPHRASING

In academic and research writing, you may want to use other sources for various purposes, including providing support for a particular claim, referencing previous work that leads up to your current work, highlighting different viewpoints on an issue, or other purposes. Quoting and paraphrasing are two ways to integrate source material into your writing. In either case, it is important to introduce and attribute the source and make clear why you are presenting *this particular material* from *this particular source* at *this particular point* in your paper.

Quoting

Quoting is when you use the exact wording of another source verbatim. This approach is less common in academic and research writing. Quoting is best when you want readers to see the exact language and word choice used by the author. Accordingly, quotes are frequently used when defining key terms in your writing in order to demonstrate that your use of the terms is grounded in previous work on the topic. As a general rule of thumb, identify the minimum amount of a passage that must be preserved verbatim and paraphrase the rest.

Paraphrasing

The primary way to incorporate sources into your writing is through *paraphrasing*, which is when you capture the main ideas of another author and rewrite them in your own words. Paraphrasing is best when you want to convey the *ideas* expressed in a text rather than the *specific language* used to express it. Consider the following tips and strategies as you paraphrase:

- Read the original text several times until you fully grasp the main ideas and could convey them to someone else without referencing the original text.
- Try to rewrite the main idea in your own words without looking at the text itself.
- Pretend you are talking to a friend unfamiliar with the text about what you read.
- Take brief notes about the passage. Set the notes aside for a while, and then write your paraphrase based on your notes rather than the original text.
- Try starting your paraphrase from a different part of the original—ideally the part that connects most closely with your current topic and purpose.
- Maintain the main idea while changing the overall structure—break up longer sentences, combine shorter ones, and condense the language to be concise.
- Focus on paraphrasing only the parts of the original text that most closely connect to your current topic and purpose.
- Words that are conventional or specialized don't need to be paraphrased, as doing so can feel convoluted and confusing to the reader.