

## Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting (and Not Patchwriting)

Analytical writing requires the ability to use sources effectively, weaving other writers' thoughts together with our own in ethical and efficient ways. Three main methods of incorporating source material in an essay are summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting. Writers use these methods in different situations and for different purposes, but it must always be clear whose words and ideas are whose.

**Exercise:** Choose a source you are consulting for your essay, and follow the directions below.

1. When writers need to quickly sum up a source's point (to use it as an example or to comment on what the source says), they read or listen to the source, understand its meaning, and then communicate that meaning in a more concise way than it appears in the source. Summaries can borrow exact wording from the source, if appropriate, using quotation marks (""). Try **summarizing** a point from your source. Read the source material as many times as you need to and then sum it up in your own words.
  
2. When writers want to restate a source's points to examine them more closely, they try to capture the ideas of the source in their own words, but in roughly the same length as the original. As with summarizing, use quotation marks when inserting exact words from the original. Try **paraphrasing** a passage from your source. Again, read the source material as many times as you need to, and refer back to the source only for clarification.

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3. When the exact words of a source matter—that is, when you want to analyze or distinguish the words somehow—write them exactly the way you read or hear them in the source, using quotation marks. Signal phrases and attribution tags (e.g., "Sipher asserts that . . .") help readers distinguish between your words and those of your source. And if you need to add a word or phrase for clarity's sake, put it in brackets ([ ]). Quoting a writer usually requires introducing them and then interpreting their words or connecting them in some way to your main point. This is often called quote sandwiching. Try **quoting** an important line or phrase from your source, sandwiching the quotation between your introduction of the source and the interpretation or connection you make to your main point.

### Patchwriting (Move Beyond It)

*The Citation Project* (Jamieson & Howard, 2011) defines patchwriting as “restating a phrase, clause, or one or more sentences while staying close to the language or syntax of the source.” Patchwriting is often done by copying the source text and then rearranging or changing some of the source's words. The structure and sequence of the ideas belong to the source, but the line between the work of the source and the words of the writer who is summarizing it is blurred. Writers sometimes learn to patchwrite before learning how to effectively summarize sources. To be sure that you are using your source's material in effective, ethical ways, **read the source, understand the source, close the source, and write your own material.**

#### Reference

Jamieson, S. & Howard, R.M. (2011). What is plagiarism? In *The citation project*. Retrieved from <http://site.citationproject.net/>