

Guidelines and Rules for Paraphrasing:

Definition of paraphrase: an up-close re-phrasing of a source idea in your own words that still maintains the sense and content of the original; not necessarily briefer than the original; often, a sentence or two of a particular page or section of the source is the basis for a paraphrase.

Do's and Don't's of Paraphrasing (in part, from pp. 181-83):

- ✚ **Avoid borrowing language from the original source/sentence;** a good rule of thumb is not to copy more than two words in succession from the original into your translation.
- ✚ **Avoid using the same structure as the original source/sentence.** For instance, if the original was written in an “If X, then Y” configuration, re-frame that configuration to show cause/effect in a different way.
- ✚ **Be sure that you do not stray from the original source/sentence’s idea or point.** Ensuring that you fully understand the original is key to avoiding your own inference or editorializing.
- ✚ **Do not summarize and use “broad-stroked” language.** Paraphrase, unlike summary, is about adhering to details. Generally, then, a paraphrase can be just as long as the original or only somewhat shorter.
- ✚ **At the end of each paraphrased sentence, parenthetically cite the source.**
 - Paraphrases often omit signal phrases of any sort in their presentation and instead stick to simply relaying content. Therefore, the parenthetical citation generally includes both the author’s last name and the location in the text where the paraphrase came from (page number for most sources; paragraph number for html sources). **If you paraphrase from the same source and about the same area in the source in 2-3 sentences, you may omit author’s name after the first mention.**

When to quote and when to paraphrase:

The series of questions below can help underscore the reason(s) why good, savvy research writers use more paraphrases than quotes in their writing.

- ❖ Is the source point worded vividly, powerfully, memorably?
- ❖ Is the source point made fairly briefly without a lot of excess phrasing and unnecessary language?
- ❖ Is a point you are trying to make vigorously or directly supported or countered by the exact wording of the source?
- ❖ Is the source’s language/style fairly similar to the language/style you yourself would use?
- ❖ If the source point is lengthy, is its length crucial to feature in its entirety (or nearly so—perhaps with an ellipsis or two) in order to clinch a point you are trying to make?

If your answer to any of the questions above is “yes,” then your best bet is the quotation source integration method. Remember that embedding quotes into your own sentence’s structure or clearly and smoothly introducing the quote in a solid signal phrase are generally the best and most sophisticated ways to handle a quote.

- Is the source point specific enough to warrant covering but not especially vivid, powerful, or memorable in wording?
- Is the language/style of the source point cumbersome or hard to follow?
- Is the information you wish to use presented in a detailed fashion that would make shortening it or omitting big sections of it a bad idea? (for instance, the life cycle of a Japanese beetle covered in a sequence-building 3-4 sentences)

If your answer to any of the questions above is “yes,” then your best bet is the **paraphrase** source integration method. Remember that careful and correct use of paraphrase impresses your evaluator/reader because it suggests additional time and effort spent engaging in your research. Also remember that paraphrasing well is a challenge: Not only should you be sure to document the author’s ideas (not words), but you should also be sure that meaning is not altered once you’ve translated the idea. **For these reasons and more, paraphrase is the preferable source integration method.**

Practice with Paraphrase: Read through these couple of sets of paraphrase attempts and, working from the information provided above, select which of the paraphrases of the featured quote is best and why.

- 1) From “Agency, Militarized Femininity. . .” by Laura Sjoberg: “That Jessica Lynch went down fighting was described as remarkable even though it would be expected of most soldiers. That a girl fought was emphasized as anomalous” (Sjoberg 85).
 - a. Paraphrase #1: That Jessica Lynch was captured while fighting was considered amazing although fighting would be a reasonable expectation of most soldiers (Sjoberg 85). That a female actually resisted was made to seem unusual (85).
 - b. Paraphrase #2: Jessica Lynch’s aggression upon being captured seemed to surprise people despite the fact that fighting is generally part of a soldier’s job description (Sjoberg 85). Her being female rather than male seemed to be presented as a special case (85).
 - c. Paraphrase #3: Jessica Lynch’s behavior shocked everyone for several reasons (Sjoberg 85).
- 2) From “Australian Nurse POWs” by Christina Twomey: “The language of the battlefield, of the front, is saturated with the grammar of masculinity: a concern with manhood, manliness, virility, and brotherhood structures many accounts of combat. The implicit contrast here, the other half of the equation, is the ‘home front,’ a supposedly more feminine world where there is an atmosphere of nurture for those who have returned and an environment supportive of the main war effort” (Twomey 262).
 - a. Paraphrase #1: When people talk about war and what men do in it and the home front where women typically reside, they clearly imply that men’s jobs are more important and valuable than women’s jobs (Twomey 262).

- b. Paraphrase #2: Men on the battlefield speak a masculine language based on manly behaviors and brotherhood (Twomey 262). In contrast, women back at home are there to offer a nurturing environment that supports the men (262).
 - c. Paraphrase #3: The worlds of war and home can seem like different cultures (Twomey 262). In war, a language that people consider “manly” is often spoken, and the players view having each other’s backs and being brave as essential qualities; however, back at home, the “feminine” language of caring and assistance for male soldiers seems to hold sway (262).
- 3) From “Kingsley Browne Talks to Kate Fillion” by Kate Fillion: Kingsley Browne claims, “The traits men identify in effective fighters tend to be very stereotypically masculine: courage, physical strength, leadership. In dangerous situations, women don’t trigger that kind of trust in men” (Fillion, par. 11).
- a. Paraphrase #1: Kingsley Browne claims that, because men in the military often equate strength and prowess in battle with traditionally defined male qualities, they are less likely to place their confidence in female combatants (Fillion, par. 11).
 - b. Paraphrase #2: Kingsley Browne argues that men don’t easily trust women to lead them in battle or to be particularly strong, which is a very sexist belief (Fillion, par. 11).
 - c. Paraphrase #3: Kingsley Browne claims that the qualities that men describe in good fighters are typically masculine-sounding, like bravery, physical power, and leadership (Fillion, par. 11). In high-stress times, women don’t make men feel very trusting (Fillion, par. 11).