

# Six steps for effective paraphrasing

To paraphrase is to include the ideas or information from a source in your paper by rephrasing those ideas or information in your own words. Paraphrased text must include a proper citation. Use these steps to help you paraphrase in your writing.

- 1 Before reading or viewing the text, try to learn more about the topic by reviewing similar ideas.** This will help you become familiar with vocabulary and ideas around the topic.
- 2 Read and reread the passage, and then determine the big picture of what it means.** Try to figure out the main idea and supporting details from the text.
- 3 Reflect on your comprehension by asking yourself, “What does this mean?”** When necessary, go back and reread the text from beginning to end. Look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary to help you understand what those words mean.
- 4 Try paraphrasing the text aloud before writing.** Explain the main idea of the text to a partner or on your own.
- 5 Paraphrase the text by writing the meaning in your own words.** Consider how you can change the sentence structure or voice, or rephrase the sentence in new ways. Compare your writing with the original to make sure the meaning remains the same. Credit the initial author with a citation after your paraphrased text and don't forget to include the source at the end of your paper!
- 6** When in doubt, a good general rule of thumb to follow is:  
**Read, Think, Restate in your own words.**

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