

## Three Strategies for Using Evidence: Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

This resource is designed for English Language Learners (ELLs) who require assistance in a particular academic skill. Each handout provides brief explanations related to different core skills (reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking), and it offers some simple examples of mistakes and how these might be corrected.

While these handouts are designed primarily for ELL students, anyone seeking to improve their writing may find these documents useful. Check out the links at the end of the handout for more resources.

### 1. Quoting

Quoting is used to repeat exactly what another source has said or written. Use a quote to show evidence for an argument. Always back up the quote with an explanation for why it is useful to your overall argument.

#### When to quote:

- You want to **use a part** of the author's argument to express your own thoughts.
- The author's words are written so **perfectly** that you cannot improve them by paraphrasing.
- You want to **criticize** the author's original words.
- You want to avoid **plagiarism** (i.e., claiming someone else's words are your own).

#### How to quote:

- Put quotation marks around the original author's exact words.
- Include a page number afterwards.

#### How to use a quote:

You must:

- include exactly what the author said or wrote.
- use quotation marks.
- include a citation.
- remove unnecessary words.

#### Removing words from a quote

Shortening a quote by an author will help your argument to focus on its point more effectively. Show the words you have removed by using an ellipse (...).

#### Example

**Original text:** While the relationship between emotional stress and disease, and mental

and physical health more broadly, is often considered controversial within medical orthodoxy, Dr. Maté argues too many doctors seem to have forgotten what was once a commonplace assumption, that emotions are deeply implicated in both the development of illness, addictions and disorders, and in their healing. (Source: Goodman, Amy. “Dr. Gabor Maté on the Stress- Disease Connection, Addiction, Attention Deficit Disorder and the Destruction of American Childhood”, *Democracy Now!*, December 24, 2010)

**Paraphrase:** While linking physical illness and emotions is discouraged by many doctors, “Dr. Maté argues too many doctors seem to have forgotten... that emotions are deeply implicated in both the development of illness, addictions and disorders.”

This paraphrase focuses on the central idea of the paragraph and removes a lot of details. Removing words from a quote is useful, but make sure not to change the author’s intended meaning in the quote.

### Changing words in a quote

Writers can clarify the meanings of words to better match their own arguments or styles. To do so, put the changes in square brackets.

### Example

**Original text:** With scientists’ warning that sharply higher temperatures would devastate the global south and threaten the viability of industrial civilisation in the northern hemisphere, campaigners said the new paper reinforced the imperative to cut emissions. (Source: “Scientists shocked by Arctic permafrost thawing 70 years sooner than predicted”. *The Guardian*. June 18, 2019.)

**Paraphrase:** With scientists’ warning that sharply higher temperatures would devastate the global south and threaten the viability of industrial civilisation in the northern hemisphere, campaigners said the new [research] reinforced the imperative to cut emissions.

In this example, “paper” is replaced by “research” which is more specific.

### Formatting long quotes

The exact formatting for a long quote depends on your citation style and the type of the source used. In general, a long quote usually has more than 40 words. The entire quote should be indented as a paragraph.

### Introducing quotes in a sentence

To avoid repetition, vary the way you introduce your quotes. Some examples include

Lee states, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

As Lee claims, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

From Lee’s perspective, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

In their article \_\_\_\_\_, Lee and Park suggest that “\_\_\_\_\_.”

Avoid ending your paragraph with a quote because this shows the paper has not used your own words for the argument. Instead, interpret the meaning of the quote for the paper's argument.

- x The point of an international institution, according to Dr. Hemel, cannot be simply “to put a stamp of approval on every decision by world powers.”
- ✓ The point of an international institution, according to Dr. Hemel, cannot be simply “to put a stamp of approval on every decision by world powers.” A truly democratic global order must learn how to debate and resolve problems from all its members.

## 2.Paraphrasing

State the information in your own words. Paraphrasing gives you more control over incorporating a source into your writing.

### How to paraphrase

You must:

- write the information in your own words.
- keep the author's original intention.
- include the citation.

Before paraphrasing, ensure that you really understand the source's message so that you can write it in your own words. After paraphrasing, check the original source for accuracy and make sure that your word choice is not too similar to that of the original text.

### Example

**Original text:** Asked for confirmation of the story, Belmont told the Toronto audience that he would not “be drawn into commenting on that sort of rumour.” When journalists demanded to know whether his fight with a colleague showed he was unstable, Belmont insisted he would only comment on his program “to make the city a better place to live.”

### Bad Paraphrase

Local politician David Belmont was asked whether his fight with a colleague showed he was unstable, but he insisted he would only comment on his program.

This is a bad paraphrase because only a few words were changed. The author's original sentence structure is still visible.

### Good Paraphrase

Local politician David Belmont refused to answer questions about his alleged fight with a colleague, refusing to “comment... on that sort of rumour,” and instead focused on the record of his contribution to the city.

This keeps one original quote, but it shortens and focuses on the sentence significantly.

### 3. Summarizing

A summary is a more general and condensed version of the source text.

#### How to summarize:

- Write the information in your own words.
- Keep the author's original intent and meaning.
- Focus on key ideas.
- Shorten the original passage.
- Include the citation.

#### Example

**Original text:** The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) [group of countries], which includes the Philippines, Bangladesh and Costa Rica, want a cap on global temperature rises of 1.5C [to limit the damage from global warming]... “We are the countries who will suffer the most from climate change and against whom all the big [negotiating] groups like the US, EU and G77 are aligned... But there is no democracy here. It's a power game and the powerful are not on our side,” said CVF spokesman Saleemul Huq. “We accept it is not realistic in these talks but it is the right thing to do.” (Source: “Major powers pledge \$20bn for green energy research” in *The Guardian*, Nov. 30, 2015)

A summary condenses the text and focuses only on key ideas.

#### Good Summary:

Many members of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), such as the Philippines, Bangladesh and Costa Rica, plan to oppose the G77 group of developing countries' position on limiting the damage from global warming. The CVF will “suffer the most from climate change,” and 106 countries want to meet a 1.5C target. But CVF spokesman Saleemul Huq acknowledges that this target is “not realistic,” even as “it is the right thing to do” because of the power of wealthier countries.

**This summary lacks a focus. It can also be shorter** because it has included some extra ideas. Generally, summaries also omit examples.

#### Better Summary

CVF spokesperson Huq is skeptical about the prospects for a climate agreement, arguing that most poor countries need to limit any temperature rise to 1.5C. His statement that “It is a power game and the powerful are not on our side” recognizes that climate justice will demand global political changes which may not be supported by the wealthiest countries.

This summary removes extra details, such as the names of countries, to focus on the main argument about the political power.

### **When to Quote, Paraphrase, and Summarize:**

Quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing should be based on your argument. Try

- quoting when you need a strong reference to provide evidence, yet the source is too well-written to change.
- paraphrasing when the reference is essential to the argument, but you can rewrite the source to more closely match your own argument and phrasing.
- summarizing when you need to highlight key points. Remove irrelevant ideas and develop the argument on your own.

### **More resources for quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing**

Paraphrase and Summary – University College, the University of Toronto

<https://www.uc.utoronto.ca/paraphrase>

When to Summarize, Paraphrase, and Quote – Writing Centre, George Mason University

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/when-to-summarize-paraphrase-and-quote>

What is the difference between quotation, paraphrase, and summary? – University of Louisville Writing Centre

<https://louisville.edu/writingcenter/for-students-1/common-writing-questions-1/what-is-the-difference-between-quotation-paraphrase-and-summary>

Paraphrase and Summary – The University of Kansas

<https://writing.ku.edu/paraphrase-and-summary>

Develop your academic language, improve your academic skills, and get a Co-Curricular Record notation. Attend the Professional English Language Skills (PELS) workshops: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/professional-english-language-skills-pels>

Get feedback on your writing and discuss your thought process. Book an appointment with an instructor: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/appointments-undergraduate>.

**Looking for more learning strategies?** Visit us at: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/>.