



Paraphrasing Tips

1. Work to understand the passage as much as you can before attempting to paraphrase
2. Don't look at the original while paraphrasing
3. Always compare your paraphrase to the original, assessing your paraphrase for accuracy, completeness, fairness, and the right level of generality/specificity.
4. Don't try to paraphrase word-by-word, phrase-by-phrase, from beginning to end. Instead, think about what your reader would need to know first to understand the ideas in the passage and start with that.
5. Don't use a thesaurus to paraphrase. Use the every-day language at your command unless you're using technical terms that are specific to a field or profession.
6. Do use a dictionary to look up key words you need to paraphrase. Be sure to read all definitions to find the sense of the word that is active in the sentence you're trying to paraphrase.
7. Don't use the sentence structure or pattern of organization of the original passage.
8. Break ideas down into separate sentences.
9. Know that paraphrased passages are often longer than the original.

Source: Eric Drown, UNE SASC

Think-Pair-Write Activity

1. Ask students to choose a passage to paraphrase in pairs (both students will paraphrase the same passage).
2. Give them a few minutes to paraphrase the passage. It's important that students NOT LOOK at the source while paraphrasing nor to try paraphrasing word-by-word. Doing so will likely result in patchwriting and incomplete paraphrase (and hence incomplete comprehension) of the passage.
3. Ask them to turn to a partner and compare their paraphrases to one another and to the original, assessing one another's paraphrases for accuracy, comprehensiveness, and the right level of specificity/generality
4. Have students rewrite their paraphrase, leaving the first paraphrase intact.

5. Have them compare notes again and repeat until the paraphrase is complete and both students understand the passage fully.
6. If students aren't looking at the original or one another's paraphrases while writing, the sentence-structure, word-choice, and sequence of ideas in each paraphrase should be unique. If not, it's likely there are still comprehension errors.
7. Alternative: After students choose the passage, have them discuss what the passage means and then ask them to write their paraphrases.

Source: Eric Drown, UNE SASC