

RESEARCH WRITING SIMPLIFIED



A Documentation Guide



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RAYMOND H. CLINES
ELIZABETH R. COBB

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S-1 When to Summarize

One of the most important skills that you will need to develop in order to incorporate secondary sources into your writing and to avoid plagiarism is *summarizing*. The ability to summarize—to restate concisely the main facts or ideas of a longer work—is useful for all kinds of learning, and it is essential for writing papers requiring secondary sources. You can summarize entire books, whole articles or essays, or just portions of your sources. Television guides often describe full-length movies and other programs, for example, with summaries of one or two sentences. Essentially, when you summarize, you state the major concepts in your own vocabulary and sentence style, omitting much of the detail of the original. Also, when you summarize a source in your paper, you do so in order to support a point you want to make. All source material must be directed toward the development or explanation of your own ideas. Otherwise, you run the risk of letting someone else's ideas stand for or overshadow your own.

An important reason for summarizing (and paraphrasing) is to convert passages that are difficult, jargon-ridden, or technical into language that is clearly understandable to your reader. If the meaning of a passage is difficult to determine, use the following steps to arrive at an accurate summary:

1. Look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary and substitute easy-to-understand synonyms or definitions. Then read the passage again to make sure that you understand it.
2. Change the sentence structure. After you have reread the passage, put it away so that you cannot refer to it and immediately write your own version. You should understand the passage sufficiently well to reproduce the meaning in your own sentence style and vocabulary.
3. Finally, check your summary against the original to make sure that you did not distort the meaning and that you have the facts recorded accurately and the names spelled correctly.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SUMMARY

A good summary meets both of these criteria:

1. It accurately reflects the meaning and intention of the original without distorting or slanting the information.

2. It is completely reworded to reflect your own vocabulary and writing style.

The following excerpt is from a book by Kate Muir titled *Arms and the Woman*. Specific examples of weak summaries follow the excerpt.

Original: It would make more sense if the military took advantage of perceived, and actual, differences between men and women. When soldiers complain about the problems of integration and the resentment on both sides, these are management and leadership problems, and not the fault of women. An army which accommodates women and uses them to best advantage rather than wasting time making excuses will find integration far less painful.

Weak summary (inaccurate): Women in the military continue to cause problems for leaders and enlisted soldiers, resulting in painful integration (Muir 196).

This summary is inaccurate because although Muir states that integrating women into the military is still causing resentment and problems, she specifically claims that women are not the cause.

Weak summary (slanted): Because of leadership and management problems, sexual discrimination in the military is still commonplace and few women achieve the leadership roles they deserve (Muir 196).

The writer of this summary has given the original passage a slant by identifying sexual discrimination as the cause, something the author does not explicitly state or intend. Although it is perfectly acceptable to draw conclusions based on source information, such conclusions must be identified as your own and not confused with the summaries of those sources.

Weak summary (plagiarized): When soldiers complain about the problems of integration and the resentment on both sides, the leaders and managers should view it as an issue worth addressing (Muir 196).

The writer has plagiarized by using some of the exact wording of the original.

Acceptable summary: The solution to integrating women into the military can be resolved by proper leadership and management, taking advantage of gender differences rather than making excuses (Muir 196).

S-2 Documenting Summaries

The first step in summarizing source material is writing the summary accurately, without bias, in your own words and writing style—as you are asked to do in activity S-3.

The next step is making sure that you give credit to the author for the ideas you have summarized. MLA style requires two pieces of information for proper documentation, the author's last name and the page numbers of the material being used:

(Davidson 12-14)

APA style requires one additional piece of information, year of publication:

(Davidson, 2001, pp. 12-14)

(Notice that the APA uses the abbreviations *p.* and *pp.* for *page* and *pages* and requires commas between the elements.)

From the author's last name, your readers can easily find the complete listing for the source by referring to your Works Cited or References list, which will be arranged alphabetically according to the authors' last names. Remember that your reference list entries do not give the page numbers of specific passages. Book entries contain no page numbers at all, and article entries contain the page numbers of the *entire* article. The only way your readers will know where to find the specific passage you are documenting is by the page (or pages) you list for it *in the text*.

Page numbers can be omitted if you are citing the entire work. Page numbers are also unnecessary if you are citing one-page articles and nonprint sources without page or paragraph numbers. For example, the four-page article "NASA Fears Long Silence End of Mars Pathfinder," written by Samuel Barber and retrieved from <www.washingtonpost.com> does not include page or paragraph numbers. Cite only the author for MLA (Barber) and the author and date for APA (Barber, 2000). If the summary is longer than one sentence, create a frame and credit the source at the end in place of a page number. (See guidelines 3 and 7 that follow.)

There are three basic stylistic options for incorporating documentation, and you should be able to use them all in your writing:

Option 1. You can work all of the information about your source smoothly into the wording of your sentence. Such explanatory material is called a *lead-in*. Including a page number in the narrative or lead-in is

usually a bit awkward, and placing it in parentheses is preferable. You may want to use this option when a specific page reference is unnecessary, such as with electronic sources or one-page articles.

MLA or APA: As early as page one of his 2001 book *Environmental Crises*, Martin Mahler begins uncovering the political motivation behind much of our nation's pollution problems.

Option 2. You can put part of the source information in the narrative of your paper (or lead-in) and part of it in parentheses:

MLA: Martin Mahler argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems (1).

APA: Mahler (2001, p. 1) argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems.

or

Mahler (2001) argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems (p. 1).

Option 3. You can put all of your documentation in parentheses, usually at the end of the sentence. This method is generally used once you have established the identity of the source and now want to emphasize the ideas without repeatedly cluttering the narrative with reference information:

MLA: The cleaning of our nation's environment is often impeded by political interests (Mahler 1).

APA: The cleaning of our nation's environment is often impeded by political interests (Mahler, 2001, p. 1).

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTING SOURCES

- 1. Lead-Ins** The first time you cite a source, it is best to use a narrative lead-in giving the author's name (first and last for MLA; last name only is acceptable for APA) and as much additional information as you can fit smoothly into your sentence. By including information about the author's background, current title or position, and level of expertise, you are doing your readers a service. The more information you provide, the more convincing and credible your source will seem:

MLA: Martin Mahler, a well-known advocate of environmental protection and author of several books, states that political interests are impeding environmental cleanup (1).

APA: Mahler (2001), a well-known advocate of environmental protection and author of several books, states that political interests are impeding environmental cleanup (p. 1).

Once the identity of your source has been established, you need only mention the last name for either MLA or APA in later references.

2. **Multiple Authors** If your source has more than one author, mention them in the same order in which they are listed in the source:

MLA: Herman, Brown, and Martel predict dramatic changes in the earth's climate in the next 200 years (174).

APA: Herman, Brown, and Martel (2001) predict dramatic changes in the earth's climate in the next 200 years (p. 174).

For later references to sources with three or more authors, both MLA and APA cite only the first author followed by *et al.*

(Herman et al.)

3. **Frames** If you use a direct quote, quotation marks are used to mark the *beginning* and *end* of the source material. Summaries and paraphrases present a unique problem because no quotation marks are used. If your summary or paraphrase is longer than one sentence, it is not necessary to document each sentence, but you must make it clear that *all* of the information is from a source. You need to mark the boundaries so readers know exactly where source material begins and ends. The best way to handle this situation is to "frame" your summary with documentation information at the beginning and end of the source material, and without the use of quotation marks this must be done with narrative wording or parenthetical citation: A single citation either at the beginning or end of a paragraph is insufficient. Usually a page number in parentheses will serve as the end boundary or frame. However, if you are working with source material without page numbers (Internet sites) you will need to create a narrative lead-in for the beginning and a narrative end frame at the end of any summary or paraphrase that is longer than one sentence. The

following examples show unacceptable and acceptable methods of documenting a summary of more than one sentence. Although the formatting follows MLA style, the same general principles apply to APA.

Unacceptable: David Hernandez, the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission, reports that consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint (112). Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints (Hernandez 112). Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process (Hernandez 112).

The documentation after each sentence is unnecessary and awkwardly interrupts the flow of the summary.

Unacceptable: David Hernandez, the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission, reports that consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint (112). Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints. Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process.

Because the last two sentences are not documented, the reader would incorrectly assume that they are not part of the Hernandez report but are original ideas from the writer.

Unacceptable: Consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint. Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints. Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process (Hernandez 112).

Because the first two sentences are not documented, the reader would incorrectly assume that they are not part of the Hernandez report but are original ideas of the writer.

Acceptable: David Hernandez, the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission, reports that consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint. Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints. Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process (112).

Here the summarized material is "framed" with source information at the beginning (author's name in a lead-in) and at the end (page number in parentheses).

Acceptable: Margaret Gibbs, a cardiologist at the University of California, warns that heart attacks occur when arteries become clogged with fatty deposits. Over time the deposits can become large enough to restrict blood flow. Gibbs suggests exercise and a vegetarian diet as a way to reduce the risk of heart disease.

Here the summarized material does not have a page reference so it is framed with source information at the beginning and a source credit in the last sentence ("Gibbs suggests [. . .]"). This method of framing summaries and paraphrases is necessary with Internet sources and one-page articles.

4. **No Author** If the source does not list an author, you must mention the title, since that is how it will be listed in your reference list. If you are putting that information in parentheses, you need not use the entire title, just enough so that the reader can find it:

Full Title in Lead-In

MLA: The article "Rising Toll of Teenage Alcoholism" points out that television beer commercials present drinking role models that most young people see as desirable (17).

APA: The article "Rising Toll of Teenage Alcoholism" (2002) points out . . . as desirable (p. 17).

Shortened Title in Parentheses

MLA: A recent *New York Times* article makes the point that television beer commercials present drinking role models that most young people see as desirable ("Rising Toll" 17).

APA: A recent *New York Times* article makes . . . as desirable ("Rising Toll," 2002, p. 17).

5. **More than One Source by the Same Author** If your reference list contains more than one source by the same author, you must indicate which work you are documenting by including the title (for MLA only):

MLA: It is now theoretically possible to recreate an identical creature from any animal or plant by using the DNA contained in the nucleus of any somatic cell (Thomas, "On Cloning" 73).

APA format includes the date of each source in all documentation, and because different works by the same author will rarely have the same date, they can be easily identified on the reference list. If two or more works by the same author *do* have the same publication date, list them alphabetically by title on the reference list, and place lowercase letters after the year to identify them in the text:

APA: . . . of any somatic cell (Thomas, 2000a, p. 73).

6. **Abstracts** Abstracts of articles are created to assist you in determining the usefulness of those articles, not to serve as primary source material. If an abstract seems promising, try to locate the article itself. If the original source is not available and you still want to include information from an abstract of it, you need to indicate in your lead-in that your source is an abstract:

Unacceptable: David Linder insists that negative feelings toward others often come from irrational beliefs.

Acceptable: An abstract of Linder's article "Interpersonal Relationships" states that negative feelings toward others often come from irrational beliefs.

7. **No Page Numbers** Electronic sources usually do not have fixed page numbers or section numbering (such as numbering of paragraphs) even if the print counterpart does. Without page references, you must take care to frame summaries of more than one sentence (see guideline 3). If your electronic source has page or paragraph numbering, include it in the Works Cited or References citation and in the parenthetical citation.

(Hargrave, pars. 9-10).

Pars. is the abbreviation for *paragraphs*.

Hargrave, Thomas. "Reflections in Literary Criticism. *Exemplaria* 10.2 (1998): 12 pars. 22 June 2000 <<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/english/exemplaria/calth.html>>.

Often, computer databases allow you to retrieve a photocopy of a source as it originally appeared in print, in which case you can use the page numbers available there.

P-1 When to Paraphrase

A paraphrase (or indirect quotation, as it is also called) restates another person's ideas in your own words. Unlike a summary, it is used with short passages—usually a sentence or two—and it does not necessarily condense or shorten the original.

Paraphrasing is necessary because as you incorporate your source material into your paper, you cannot string together a series of quotations from a variety of sources. The material must be integrated into a consistent and even style. Also, by recasting the ideas of your sources into your own words, you maintain control over the material and can more easily use it to support and develop your own views. If you have trouble restating a passage, you probably do not understand it thoroughly. Ideas that are paraphrased have been assimilated, a process far different from copying material word for word.

As with summaries, paraphrases must be accurate, undistorted, and *completely* rewritten into your own wording and sentence structure. The most blatant form of plagiarism is following too closely the wording of another writer while giving the impression that the wording is your own. To avoid plagiarism in your paraphrases (or summaries), consider the following suggestions:

1. Rearrange the order of the information in the original.
2. Have a thesaurus or dictionary handy and look up synonyms for key words.
3. Rephrase complex material into easy-to-understand sentences.
4. If you retain unusual terminology or phrases from the original, enclose them in quotation marks.

Original: With their strange haircuts and hello-Dali lyrics, the Pixies are déjà vu rebels, college radio's latest great white hope.

Weak paraphrase: The rock group Pixies are déjà vu rebels appealing to college students with their hello-Dali lyrics.

The phrases "déjà vu rebels" and "hello-Dali lyrics" should be in quotation marks, if they are used at all, because they are unique phrases of the original.

Acceptable paraphrase: One critic notes that the "hello-Dali lyrics" of the Pixies rock group have made them popular with college students.

or

The Pixies' visual and lyrical eccentricity, reminiscent of the rebellion of earlier times, makes them popular on college campuses.

In the first acceptable example, the borrowed phrase is identified with quotation marks; in the second, the wording has been completely changed, although the meaning has been accurately preserved.

P-2 Documenting Paraphrases and Using Lead-Ins

Since you must acknowledge the source of all ideas that are not your own, you must provide documentation with all paraphrases. As with summaries, source information can be identified with your choice of one of three stylistic options. Documentation can be placed (1) entirely in the narrative of the text, (2) partly in the text and partly in parentheses, or (3) entirely in parentheses. (See section S-2.)

OPTIONS FOR LEAD-INS

As explained earlier, whenever you place information about the source in the narrative of your paper, you are creating a *lead-in* or *tag*. The first time you cite a source, it is preferable to give both first and last name and some information about the author. A lead-in can be placed at the beginning, as in the following paraphrase (lead-in is underlined):

MLA: James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school, states that more than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result of tobacco smoking (31).

APA: Prochaska (2002), a professor at Harvard's medical school, states that . . . smoking (p. 31).

A lead-in can be placed in the middle (lead-in is underlined):

MLA: Despite the fact that the U.S. public has been warned for years about the serious health threat posed by tobacco smoking, James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school, believes that more than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result (31).

APA: Despite the fact . . . Prochaska (2002), a professor at Harvard's medical school, believes that . . . result . . . (p. 31).

Or a lead-in can be placed at the end (lead-in is underlined):

MLA: More than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result of tobacco smoking, asserts James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school (31).

APA: More than 300,000 Americans . . . smoking, asserts Prochaska (2002), a professor at Harvard's medical school (p. 31).

Literary Present Tense

Even though most sources have been written in the past, it is preferable to cast all lead-ins in "literary pres-

ent tense." Note that any number of active verbs can be used. Avoid repetition and be exact in your word choice. Consider the following list:

accepts	concedes	negates
acknowledges	declares	notes
adds	denies	observes
affirms	describes	outlines
agrees	disagrees	proposes
argues	discusses	refutes
asserts	disputes	rejects
believes	emphasizes	reports
cautions	endorses	responds
challenges	explains	shows
claims	grants	suggests
comments	highlights	thinks
confirms	implies	urges
contends	insists	verifies
contradicts	maintains	writes

Paraphrasing: Activities

P-3 Practice in Paraphrasing

On a separate sheet of paper, write a *one-sentence paraphrase* of each of the following sentences. Try to include most of the information from the excerpt in your sentence without using any of the original wording.

Because paraphrasing the writing of others, particularly professional or technical writing, can be difficult, the following activity is designed to give you practice, at first, with paraphrasing alone. Do not include information about the sources at this time. To minimize the chances of following the wording of the original too closely, after reading the passages, create your paraphrases *using your own wording and phrasing* without looking at the originals.

1. If we want to do something about violence, we have to do something about education, about jobs, about TV violence, about the myriad social problems for which we have no answers.
2. In the 5 million years since we hominids separated from apes, our DNA has evolved less than 2%.
3. Not only do animals provide companionship and devotion, they also lower our blood pressure, ease our

stress, and according to some researchers, even prolong our lives.

4. We tell girls that they need to be big and strong if they want to play and succeed at certain sports such as basketball; but the minute the game is over we expect them to go back to the skinny, anorexic look.
5. Central to Hinduism is the belief in karma, the cosmic law of cause and effect, in which each person creates his or her destiny based on his or her own actions.

P-4 Practice in Documenting Paraphrases

Rewrite your paraphrases from section P-3 to include appropriate lead-ins and documentation as directed. Information about the sources for each of the quotes in section P-3 follows. Assume that in each exercise you are using the source for the first time and will, therefore, want to include some information about the author, and for MLA format, use first and last names. Use a variety of present-tense active verbs with your lead-ins. (See section P-2 for examples of the different placement options of lead-ins and a list of active verbs.)

1. (a) Put the lead-in in the middle of the paraphrase. In your research, you have discovered that Jennifer Allen has completed a research study on the causes of violence.

(b) Put the lead-in at the end.

Allen, Jennifer. "The Danger Years." *New York Times* 21 Dec. 1999, late ed.: C7-C8. *New York Times OnDisc*. CD-ROM. UMI-ProQuest. Jan. 2000. (The text retrieved from this electronic database does not have page numbers, even though the original article is paginated.)

2. (a) Put the lead-in at the beginning of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference. In your research, you have discovered that Walter Isaacson is a senior staffwriter for *Time* who specializes in science and medicine.

(b) Put all documentation in parentheses (no lead-in).

Isaacson, Walter. "The Biotech Century." *Time* 11 Jan. 1999: 42-43. (Excerpt is from page 43.)

3. (a) Put the lead-in at the end of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference. In your research, you have discovered that Karen Dale Dustman is a nationally recognized veterinarian.

(b) Put the lead-in at the beginning, using parentheses for the page reference.

Dustman, Karen Dale. "Is Your Dog a Doctor?" *Natural Healing* Jan./Feb. 1999: 62-64. (Excerpt is from page 62.)

4. (a) Put the lead-in in the middle of your paraphrase. In your research, you have discovered that Jesse Sherwood is a former member of the United States Olympic women's basketball team.

(b) Put the lead-in at the end.

Sherwood, Jesse. "Conflicting Values in Women's Sports." *Miami Herald Online* 18 Apr. 1999. 20 Apr. 1999 <<http://www.miami.com/70/herald/nat/cgi-bin>>. (Hint: no page reference available.)

5. (a) Put the lead-in at the end of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference. In your research, you have discovered that Anne Cushman and Jerry Jones have traveled extensively in India.

(b) Put the lead-in at the beginning of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference.

Cushman, Anne, and Jerry Jones. *From Here to Nirvana*. New York: Riverhead, 1998. (Excerpt is from page 54.)

P-5 Practice in Writing and Documenting Paraphrases

Write a one-sentence paraphrase for each quotation, including the lead-in and documentation as indicated. Follow the format for either MLA or APA.

1. Put the lead-in at the end of the paraphrase. (Hint: No page reference available.)

The oldest and most widely accepted view of our natural environment is that it is man's personal property at our disposal to be consumed, ornamented, or destroyed as we wish.

Levine, William. "The Long-Term Effects of Eco-Tourism." Ed. William Levine. May 1998. University of Wassau Department of Environmental Sciences. 21 June 1999. <<http://www.uwassau.edu/-biodept./html>>.

2. Put all documentation in parentheses.

Our new understanding of the interrelatedness of all life does not seem to stop us from walking bootshod over the open face of nature, subjugating and exploiting it.

Thomas, Lewis. *Lives of a Cell*. Boston: Viking, 1992. (Excerpt is from page 102.)

3. Put the lead-in at the beginning of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference.

Paleontologists have studied many of the areas humans have reached within the past 50,000 years, and in every one, human arrival coincided with massive extinctions.

Diamond, Jared. "Playing Dice with Megadeath." *Discover* Apr. 1990: 22-27. (Excerpt is from page 23.)

4. Put the lead-in in the middle of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference. Assume that this is the first time you have cited this source. In your research, you have discovered that Michael Huebner is a respected professor of environmental law at University of California, Berkeley.

A recent Gallup poll indicated that 76 percent of Americans regard themselves as "environmentalists," and yet truly crucial issues such as air and water pollution and the near extinction of thousands of plant and animal species are treated with only passing concern.

Huebner, Michael. *The Future of Environmentalism*. New York: Scribner's, 1995. (Excerpt is from page 122.)

5. Put the lead-in in the middle of the paraphrase, using parentheses for the page reference.

Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are expected to raise the earth's average temperature from four to eight degrees fahrenheit over the