

Should I Quote, Paraphrase or Summarise?

In this fact sheet you'll learn the difference between quoting, paraphrasing and summarising.

AT A GLANCE

Quotation

- Uses the exact words of the original author
- Displays the authority of the author
- To be used sparingly

Eg. According to Bullock (2017, p.5) "a concentrated banking system results in large banks that are too big to fail".

Paraphrasing

- Presents the ideas of others in your own words
- Demonstrates your understanding of the concepts
- May present the idea more simply or more clearly

Eg. Bullock (2017, p5) argues that if a banking system has few banks governments cannot allow to let them fail when under financial stress.

Summarising

- A brief overview of the central idea or theory
- Reduces a substantial amount of text to its central idea or structural outline

Eg. In her article, Bullock (2017) argues that banking systems consisting of few banks present greater risks for customers than a system with many competing banks.



What is Quotation?

Quotations are used when the actual words used by the author are important.

The following are some examples:

- When the words are the object of your discussion (eg something an expert said; the actual wording of a statute of law)
- When you are interpreting a statement (we need to know the original statement)
- When you want to make sure there is no confusion about what someone said (if you paraphrase, someone might say you have misrepresented them)
- As a means of distancing yourself from the author (eg When Friedman (1980, p. 2) insists that “Economic freedom is an essential requisite for political freedom” we can detect a potentially ideological prejudice in his argument.)
- When you provide a quote to support an interpretation/summary you have made (eg Neuman et al (2012) argue that formal education is not enough for a child’s knowledge development, they must also be exposed to a rich environment that encourages their interest and demands their interaction. “Children’s ability to process the world around them into a coherent knowledge base appears to be an important and key developmental process” (Neuman et al 2012, p. 12).)

Note:

Quotations are usually short. Only quote the words that need to be quoted. As a general rule, quotations are no more than two lines in length, but usually shorter.



What is Paraphrasing?

Paraphrasing allows you to present an idea in clearer language, it demonstrates your own understanding of the idea and allows you to present it more clearly or simply.

Here are some examples:

1 Paraphrasing

This is a quotation from Yule, 1985, *The study of Language*.

“the term ‘acquisition’, when used in language, refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally, whereas ‘learning’ refers to a conscious process of accumulating knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar.”

This could be paraphrased as:

the acquisition of language is a natural process which occurs through use, whereas the learning of language requires the learner to consciously focus on the grammar and vocabulary (Yule, 1985).

Reference (using Swinburne Harvard guide): Yule, G. 1985, *The Rule of Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK

Paraphrasing allows you to present an idea more simply and in language consistent with your own ‘voice’ and style. The idea reads as part of your understanding (which it is) and not just someone else’s idea (even though the idea comes from a source you must cite). The meaning of the idea can also be nuanced in a way that suits your purpose.

2 Presenting an idea in simpler language

“a superplasticised sand-modified cementitious grout was optimised for use” (Berndt, 2015, p.1)

This might be paraphrased as:

sand was added to a cement grout to improve its efficiency (Berndt, 2015, p.1)

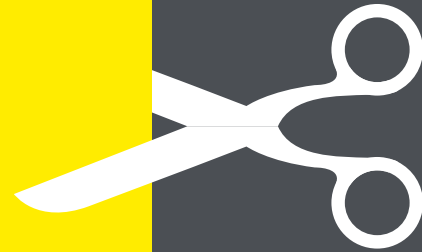
3 Interpreting an idea in a way that suits your argument

“Economic freedom is an essential requisite for political freedom” (Friedman 1980, p.2).

This might be paraphrased as:

For some economists, political freedom is only possible when individuals have economic freedom (Friedman 1980, p2), but this idea, at first look, seems very questionable.

What is Summarising



Summary is used when you want to:

- provide an overall statement of an idea or theory
- clearly state the main idea in brief form
- reduce a fairly long account of an idea to its central elements
- state the main controlling idea of a paragraph/text
- outline the argument/discussion without including details
- simplify a difficult text by reducing it to its main idea
- review or compare a number of articles, arguments, and/or authors on a topic.

These lists of when to quote, paraphrase or summarise are not exhaustive. However, they do highlight important reasons for your choices. You will use paraphrasing and summarising far more frequently than quoting as a means of incorporating other people's ideas into your assignments.

Remember: whether you quote, paraphrase or summarise you must cite your source

Prepared by Dr Stephen Price, 2019

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<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/current-students/study-support/improve-skills/drop-in-advice/>

Engaging with the Idea or the Author?

In this fact sheet you'll learn how to decide whether to give prominence to the author or idea when quoting, paraphrasing and summarising.

AT A GLANCE

Information Prominence

- Puts the idea first
- Usually used when ideas are known or are factual

Eg. "A concentrated banking system results in large banks that are too big to fail" (Bullock 2017, p5).

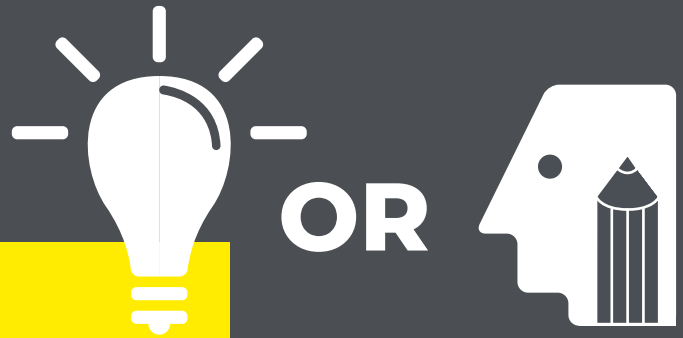
If a banking system has only a few banks, governments cannot afford to let them fail when under financial stress (Bullock 2017, p5).

Author Prominence

- Puts the author first
- Used when presenting arguments, beliefs or when formulating a position on a topic
- Also used when the idea of the author is different to others, or when comparing and contrasting viewpoints

Eg. According to Bullock (2017, p.5) "a concentrated banking system results in large banks that are too big to fail".

Bullock (2017, p5) argues that if a banking system has few banks governments cannot allow to let them fail when under financial stress.



How to choose between Engaging with Ideas or engaging with the Authors?

Information prominent representations often give the impression the idea is 'given', maybe 'factual'; the citation simply shows where you found this piece of information. This is more typically used when referring to sources of facts, such as textbooks or data bases.

Author prominent representations make the author the subject of the statement. We attach the idea to the author, it is 'according to' the author, or something the author argues, claims, believes, or asserts. This is typically used when referring to texts which are presenting arguments, or formulating a position on a topic, such as research or journal articles.

Basis of choice

In academic writing you typically engage with debates, arguments, controversies and so on, and so you engage with the positions authors take in these debates as you develop your own position. In this case, agreed 'facts' are yet to be confirmed or established. So author prominence is very typical.

However, you will also cite sources for claims that you present as established or known (that is, you will make information prominent attributions), and sometimes you may wish to present an idea as established, even when it is still being debated or argued over, because it suits your purpose to do so.

Thus, making the choice between author or information prominence is not only unavoidable, but doing it well contributes to the effectiveness of your argument. Such choices are part of what is called the 'rhetoric of writing'.

Reasons for choosing between these alternatives

You cannot avoid making these kinds of choices, and the more skilful you become in making them, the more persuasive you can make your writing. Your choice of verb of attribution is also a choice on how to represent the author's position. For example, stating that 'Bullock argues...' generally gives more credibility to the author's statement than 'Bullock claims'.

You might choose to use the verb 'claims' if you are arguing against the position Bullock stands for. If you make such an attribution you will probably go on to provide evidence which shows why Bullock's position is weak.

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Verbs of Attribution

In this fact sheet you'll learn about how to use verbs to attribute statements, and why they're important.

The verbs we use to attribute a statement (eg Smith argues/claims/asserts/suggests etc.) are important because they indicate your reading of what the author is doing, and also your attitude to the claim made.

- Do you agree Smith is presenting fact? (Smith shows/demonstrates . . .)
- Can Smith's claim be challenged? (Smith claims/suggests/asserts/argues)
- Do you want to foreground other actions the author is doing? (Smith implies/challenges/questions/defines...)

It is important not only to understand the meaning of the verb of attribution, but also that it appropriately describes the action of the author. For example:

- Smith questions X; or
- Smith challenges X; or
- Smith concedes X; or
- Smith speculates that X;
- and so on.

It is very boring to keep saying 'Smith says!' You can be far more precise and indicate your reading of an author by choosing appropriate verbs of attribution carefully.

In academic writing we are engaging with the authors, not just reproducing what they say. We enter into a conversation about our topic, a conversation which is going on in the literature. Usually, especially at advanced levels, we are dealing less with facts and more with arguments and evidence. Your choice of verbs of attribution can reflect your stance towards the position taken by authors you engage with and contributes to the consistency and effectiveness of your argument.

Verbs of Attribution you might like to try to use in your written work:

accepts	challenges	defines	interprets	replies
accounts for	charges	denies	introduces	reports
acknowledges	cites	describes	lists	responds
addresses	claims	disagrees	maintains	reveals
adds	comments	discusses	mentions	sees
admits	compares	disputes	mumbles	shows
advises	complains	emphasizes	notes	speculates
affirms	concedes	endorses	objects	states
agrees	concludes	exclaims	observes	suggests
alleges	concur	explains	offers	supports
allows	confesses	expresses	opposes	supposes
analyses	confirms	finds	points out	thinks
answers	considers	grants	proposes	uses
argues	contends	hypothesizes	questions	utilizes
asks	contents	illustrates	realizes	verifies
asserts	criticizes	implies	reasons	whines
assumes	deals with	indicates	refutes	writes
believes	decides	insinuates	rejects	
categorizes	declares	insists	remarks	

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USING ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES



What to avoid

Contract cheating, also known as ghost writing, occurs when a student knowingly submits work that has been completed by another person or agency. This guide explains how to detect such unethical services and why you should avoid using them. Note that any advertisement of these services is now [prohibited by law](#).

WHERE TO SEEK HELP

University study can present challenges. We know that students can benefit from support to ensure that they can achieve their potential. Assistance to help you complete your assessments is offered in an educative way from teaching and support staff at the university.

Online English Language Clinic provides English language-related support such as practice on reading, writing, grammar, listening, or speaking. The Support Team also assists students with the comprehension of their learning materials, exercises, and worksheets. They would look at English-related essays and report drafts written by students and provide some feedback or input.

The Strategies for Success Program offers workshops to help you make the most of your time, and to make stress work for you. Workshops on Academic Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism, Harvard Referencing, and Presentation Skills are arranged to help to show you how to build your skills to take assessment tasks on successfully. Subject specific clinics are also made available by the respective Schools. For details of the language, subject specific clinic and academic learning skills support, do visit the [Swinburne Central Homepage](#) on Canvas for more information.

Asking other people to complete your assessments is not acceptable, is not fair to other students who have done the work themselves and is not in your own interests as you will miss out on the opportunity to develop your skills. Engaging in academic misconduct can result in leaving university with fewer skills. This can lead to being less prepared for the workplace and can potentially limit career progression. You might also leave without a degree as you risk exclusion.

HOW CONTRACT CHEATING SITES ATTRACT STUDENTS

Students can access contract cheating sites readily through search tools, however often these services promote themselves directly to you through pop-up ads on social media. Contract cheating sites seek to gain credibility and your trust by making claims, but they cannot be relied on. These are some of their claims.

What they claim	Reality
Qualified writers	FALSE - Writers often lack any qualifications , are offshore and English is not their native language
Quality work	FALSE - They often do not comply with your assignment requirements
Payment security	FALSE AND DANGEROUS – You are often required to provide your bank account details as others forms of payment such as PayPal may be 'denied'
Affordability	FALSE - The premium services (which are sold as add-ons) are very expensive
On time delivery	FALSE - Often not the case including bad communication (no response to your emails and attempts to contact them)
Testimonials	FAKE - Rarely from genuine students or real customers
University approval (e.g. using Swinburne branding and colours to make them look like an official service)	FALSE - Only services using a Swinburne URL or Studiosity, are approved providers/services
Confidentiality	FALSE - They often share your details and may even report you to your university engaging in blackmail .
Satisfaction guaranteed	FALSE - They rarely able to meet your requirements and expectations
Refunds for substandard work	FALSE – These requests are often simply ignored

SITES AND SERVICES TO AVOID (NOTE: THIS IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST)

All Assignment Help	Edubirdie	Law Teacher	Student VIP	Transtutor
Chegg	Fiverr	My Assignment Help	Studoc	UK essays
Course Hero	Grademiners	Sparknotes	Study Bay	

CHECKLIST FOR DETECTING UNETHICAL SITES

If you are seeking support or assistance from sites with some or all of these features, you are about to engage in contract cheating and academic misconduct. BEWARE!!

- Asking for payment to complete assignment work for you
- Assurances that they offer good quality writers/writing
- An "Order" button
- Prices linked to assignment length and completion times
- Attempts to justify why buying assignments might be "ok"
- Testimonials from "customers", often accompanied by stock photos of people who aren't real students
- Guarantees of "plagiarism-free" work
- The need to create a personal account and login
- One of a number of nearly identical sites with different domain names
- "Terms of service" that disclaim responsibility if students are caught submitting work from the site
- Various service guarantees such as 24/7 support, live chat, feedback, money-back if unsatisfied (research shows they don't always deliver on these).

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREPARED BY THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY WORKING PARTY

Find out about academic integrity, go to <https://www.swinburne.edu.au/current-students/manage-course/exams-results-assessment/plagiarism-academic-integrity>

Checklist to help you prevent plagiarism in your work

Make sure you have:

1. **Paraphrased correctly and included a reference to clearly indicate the parts of your work that are drawn from another person's work.**
You must clearly indicate which part of your work is drawn from somewhere else. Paraphrasing is when you use what someone else has said or written, but you write it in your own words. A paraphrase is the rephrased or rewritten material within your own work. If you paraphrase you must include an in-text citation so the reader can locate the source.
2. **Used direct quotations sparingly.**
To quote is to reproduce, in your own written work, the precise words that someone else has written or spoken. A quotation (or 'quote') is the reproduction of original material within your work. Direct quotes are generally put in italics and should always be put inside quotation marks. Longer quotes can be indented so they stand apart from the main body of the text. Each quote must be followed by an in-text citation.
Make sure you carefully select quotes that add to the points you are making, but don't overuse quotes. It is fine to occasionally quote other people, and it is expected that you do – but make sure you provide your own contribution or viewpoint. It is your work that earns you marks.
3. **Provided a reference for every image, diagram or figure (unless you created it).**
Even if you edit an existing item it still needs to be referenced.
4. **Included a reference list of all work cited.**
Make sure you understand what type of referencing protocol you are required to follow for your unit. Refer to your Unit Outline or talk to your tutor or lecturer if you are not sure what sort of referencing you should use.
5. **Used the correct referencing system.**
The style of referencing varies between disciplines and units of study. Make sure you understand what type of referencing protocol you need to follow for your unit. Refer to the Unit Outline or talk to your tutor or lecturer if you are unsure.
6. **Kept a copy of the original sources that you have referenced.**
Always keep your work and the original reference together. Losing the original source of the information is poor academic practice, and it means you might end up submitting work without a reference; or, you might end up submitting it with the wrong reference. You could, at any time, be required to produce the original source for comparison.
7. **NOT used copy and paste to take text from another source (unless it is a direct quote and you reference it).**
This is VERY important. If you copy and paste from a source and fail to reference it properly then you have plagiarised. It doesn't matter whether you did this intentionally or not. Depending on the circumstances of the case, plagiarism may be treated as academic misconduct where serious penalties can apply.
8. **NOT used another student's work, or submitted someone's work as your own.**
Often students are encouraged to work together, to cooperate by sharing ideas and understandings. However, individual assessments (where your name is the only name on the cover sheet) are meant to be your own work.
Copying from someone else's work is plagiarism and serious penalties can apply.
Do not allow anyone else to submit your work as their own: this is collusion which is considered academic misconduct.
If you have found yourself in a situation where you have considered copying other work, it may be because you are having problems with time management or you have found the assessment task difficult. If you find yourself in this situation, it is far better to talk to your tutor or lecturer or to ask for an extension to submit your work at a later date. This is a better outcome than being accused of plagiarising.
9. **NOT copied from a previous assignment submitted to this or any other unit.**