Citation Skills

Paraphrasing

For further research assistance access the Wahlstrom Library website via the myUB Portal.

Ask a Librarian via Chat: Available when the Library is open through the Library website.

E-mail a Librarian: reference@bridgeport.edu

Call a Librarian: 203-576-4747

Walk-ins welcome, no appointment needed!
What is Paraphrasing?

To express the meaning of (something written or spoken) using different words, usually to achieve greater clarity.

Paraphrasing is a different way to integrate external sources into an assignment than direct quotes. Where direct quotes repeat the precise words of a writer or speaker, paraphrasing involves the use of your words.

The trick is you can’t just change a few words. It involves creating a brand new sentence. Here are two methods you can use to create quality paraphrases.

Method 1

1. Read a paragraph. As you read, be sure to think what the words mean.
2. Ask yourself, “What were the main ideas and details of the paragraph?”
3. Put the main ideas and details into your own words.

Tip: Main ideas are often in the first sentence, or repeated throughout the paragraph.

Method 2

1. Read a paragraph. As you read, be sure to think what the words mean.
2. Take notes as you read. Write down the main ideas and what you plan to use in your paper. Important: Do not write exactly what appears in the text.
3. When writing your paper and you want to use the information from your source, use your notes. Using your notes instead of the original source makes it less likely for you to create a sentence too similar to what was written in your source.

Tip: A thesaurus is a great way to find synonyms, but be sure you know the precise meaning of the word you want to use. Sometimes words can have similar meanings, but swapping them out drastically changes the meaning of the sentence.

REMEMBER

Whether you’re paraphrasing from a source or directly quoting from it, you must provide a citation for that source on the reference page. You must also place an in-text citation for that source within the body of your paper.