

Paraphrasing, quoting and summarising

STUDENT HANDOUT

Much of the work that you undertake as an undergraduate student involves reading the work of experts in your field and incorporating their ideas into your own assignments. You can gain information, ideas and evidence to help develop your argument or to back up your argument, for example. Three techniques that you can use to incorporate the ideas of other researchers and writers into your work are paraphrasing, quoting and summarising.

Work through the questions given below, answering each as fully as possible. These questions will help you to understand what is meant by paraphrasing, quoting and summarising, recognise the similarities and differences and work out how, when and why each should be used in your assignments. If you understand how to carry out these tasks correctly you will be able to produce better assignments, build well-structured arguments and avoid plagiarism (taking the words and ideas of others and passing them off as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally).

1. What is paraphrasing?

2. When should you paraphrase?

3. Why should you paraphrase?

4. How do you paraphrase? Think about issues such as how to identify and highlight the main points, key words and essential information; how to reword or rephrase the information (changes to grammar, sentence structure and word order, for example); how to identify and reproduce the point of view or attitude of the author.

5. How do you reference a paraphrase? What information do you need to record?

6. Can you think of any occasions when it might not be appropriate to paraphrase?

7. What is a quotation?

8. When should you use a quotation?

9. Why should you use a quotation?

10. How do you use a quotation? Think about issues such as quotation marks, length of quotation, what happens

when words are omitted and what happens if words need to be added.

11. How do you reference a quotation? What bibliographical information should be included and in what format?

12. Can you think of any occasions when it might not be appropriate to use a quotation?

13. What is a summary?

14. When should you summarise?

15. Why should you summarise?

16. How do you summarise?

17. How do you reference a summary?

18. Can you think of any occasions when it might not be appropriate to summarise?

19. What are the main differences between paraphrasing, quoting and summarising?

20. Why should you integrate paraphrases, quotations and summaries into your assignment?

Learning outcome: By the end of this activity you will understand what is meant by paraphrasing, quoting and summarising and will know how, when and why to use these techniques in your written work.