



# Paraphrases and Quotes

In history classes, you will often find yourself working with the words and ideas of others. It is therefore very important to learn to paraphrase accurately and cite your sources according to a recognized manual of style. This tells your instructors where your information comes from, and demonstrates that you are not trying to cheat.

## Paraphrasing

In paraphrasing, you summarize information from another source in your own words. This is more than simply changing a couple of words in a sentence. One easy and effective way to paraphrase is to read the passage you are referencing, close the book or put away the article, and try to summarize the ideas yourself.

Remember -- it is still vital to cite the source of your information (including page numbers) after your paraphrased passage.

## Quoting

Sometimes the exact words of an author are so important or well-presented that you may want to quote them directly. There are three things to remember when you do this:

- Always anchor your quote. The words of another author should not just float around in the middle of your paragraph, but must serve to support an argument you have already stated in your introduction. To that end you should always make sure that you properly introduce your quote (who wrote it, for example?) and explain the relevance of the material to your thesis.
- Quote sparingly. Ninety-nine percent of your paper should be in your own words. Quotes help your argument, but cannot substitute for your own original work.
- Always cite your source. First, words that belong to someone else must be copied exactly and enclosed in quotation marks. Second, you must tell your

reader where the information comes from. Citation formats vary, so always be clear on what your instructor expects.

If you fail to follow these rules, you will be committing plagiarism.

### Block Quotes

On occasion, quotes in scholarly work are quite long, and since double spacing is usually required, these quotes take up too much space on the printed page. To alleviate this problem, use block quotes. The guidelines for formatting a block quote are as follows:

- A block quote is separated from the rest of the text by a double-space.
- It is internally single-spaced.
- It is also indented one-half inch on the left to set it apart.
- Lastly, quotation marks are eliminated, since the indentation and single spacing clearly identify it as a quote.

Block quotes should be used if a quote is ten lines or more of text, and in shorter papers that threshold may be lower.

### Using Ellipses

Sometime you may decide to use a direct quote but want to avoid including a lengthy passage when the essential meaning that you want to include is much shorter. To replace unnecessary words in a quoted sentence, you may use an ellipses - a series of three periods followed by the remainder of the quotation.

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~histwrit/website/paraphrases%20and%20quotes.htm>