

Summarizing Strategies

A summary condenses the ideas in a source to just the main points, *leaving out* the details. It is typically used to relate large sections of a source (or the entire content of a source) concisely.

Draw a graphical overview of the source that you can convert into a summary, or create a sentence outline of the source that you can convert into a summary.

Either way, *read the entire piece you are trying to summarize before you begin*, and break summarizing into smaller tasks:

- Annotate the text, labeling and underlining important material.
- Delete unimportant detail, examples, and redundancy.
- Compress words in the original into fewer words, and provide general terms to cover specific items.
- Locate and emphasize thesis and topic sentences. Invent thesis and topic sentences if none are found.
- Identify and imitate the organizational pattern of the source.
- Identify and incorporate rhetorical context and the author's rhetorical purpose.
- Document the summary.

Paraphrasing Strategies

A paraphrase translates the ideas in a source into your own words, *keeping all* of the details in the original source. It is typically used for relating short segments of a source's ideas, as an alternative to quoting.

There are many more techniques you can use to create a paraphrase than just replacing a few words. Remember that to be clear, a paraphrase quite often ends up being *longer* than the original.

- Locate the individual statements or major idea units in the original.
- Change the order of ideas, maintaining the logical connections among them.
- Substitute synonyms for words in the original, making sure the language in your paraphrase is appropriate for your audience.
- Combine and divide sentences as necessary.
- Compare the paraphrase to the original to ensure that the rewording is sufficient and the meaning has been preserved.
- Weave the paraphrase into your essay in accordance with your rhetorical purpose.
- Document the paraphrase.