

## Quoting & Paraphrasing

### Quoting

**What is it?** When you quote, you are reproducing another source's words exactly as they appear on the page. *Tip: use direct quotes only when you have a good reason to.*

#### Tips on when to quote\*

- to present a particularly well-stated passage whose meaning would be lost or changed if paraphrased or summarized (eg: language that is witty, edgy, distinctive, moving, historically significant)
- to show an authority supports your point
- when taking a position that relies on the reader's understanding of exactly what another source says about a topic
- to present a position or argument to analyze or comment on
- when analyzing diction, tone, or a source's use of a specific word or phrase
- when including literary evidence

→ note: do NOT quote factual historical information such as dates, events, statistics, etc.

**How to cite:** Include quotation marks and cite source correctly using proper in-text citation.

### Paraphrasing

**What is it?** Paraphrasing is taking a specific section of a text and putting it into your own words. This does not mean just changing or rearranging a few of the author's words. *Tip: to paraphrase well and avoid plagiarism, set aside the source and restate sentence or paragraph you have just read, as though you were describing it to another person.*

#### Tips on when to paraphrase\*

- you can express the key point in fewer words
- you want the idea expressed, and not the specific language used to express it
- when you want to comment on a particular example another source uses
- when you want to introduce a source's position, but the original words aren't special enough to quote
- providing relevant statistics and numerical data that is not general or common knowledge\*\*

**How to cite:** Indicate paraphrasing by citing your source as you would with a quotation, excluding quotation marks.

The information above was compiled from: [University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill](#) and [University of Wisconsin – Madison](#) (for more particulars & examples, please use these links)

\* Not a rule, but generally speaking information from **primary sources is quoted and secondary sources paraphrased**. Because it is best to cite and quote from original sources, take time to seek these out – ask for help if you cannot find the source. Additionally, it may be appropriate to paraphrase evidence even when it is from a historical primary source, here are two examples: (see [Primary vs. Secondary Source](#) reminders here)

#1 In George Washington Williams' letter to King Leopold, he raises the concern that the Europeans had not built a single hospital in the entire Congo to aid in healing either the European or the Congolese who fell sick (Williams).

*Why paraphrase?* Williams' own words on this topic are not particularly special or impactful, but his message makes an important point about Leopold's lack of care for the Congolese people that you may want to use as evidence or context.

#2 Just because you CAN paraphrase doesn't mean you SHOULD. Consider which is stronger:

Leopold's soldiers would engage in extremely brutal raids against natives, including the murder and cannibalism of children (Williams).

"There are instance in which they have brought the heads of their victims to their white officers on the expeditionary steamers, and afterwards eaten the bodies of slain children" (Williams).

\*\* The only source material you do not have to cite is information considered **common knowledge**. This is because 1) it is not considered the work of any particular person, 2) is widely known or can be easily found, and 3) is generally considered factual and beyond dispute. For clarification and examples, see these resources [University of Wisconsin](#), [Johns Hopkins](#), [Harvard](#).