

Paraphrasing

Master Level

Paraphrasing means...

- ▶ changing the wording of a text so that it is significantly different from the original source, without changing the meaning.

Effective paraphrasing....

- ▶ is a key academic skill needed to avoid the risk of plagiarism:
- ▶ demonstrates your understanding of a source.

Paraphrasing and summarising....

- ▶ normally used together in essay writing, *but* while summarising aims to **reduce** information to a suitable length, paraphrasing attempts to **restate** the relevant information

An example....

- ▶ *There has been much debate about the reasons for the industrial revolution happening in eighteenth-century Britain, rather than in France or Germany.*

Could be paraphrased.....

- ▶ *Why the industrial revolution occurred in Britain in the eighteenth century, instead of on the continent, has been the subject of considerable discussion.*

An effective paraphrase.....

- ▶ In groups, or alone and with reference to the previous example, discuss what an effective paraphrase should contain

- ▶ *has a different structure to the original*
- ▶ *has mainly different vocabulary*
- ▶ *retains the same meaning*
- ▶ *keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use*

e.g. 'industrial revolution' or 'eighteenth century'

Techniques for paraphrasing

(a) Changing vocabulary by using synonyms:

argues > claims/

eighteenth century > 1700s/

wages > labour costs/ economise > saving

NB. Do not attempt to paraphrase every word, since some have no true synonym, e.g. demand, economy, energy

(b) Changing word class:

explanation (n.) > explain (v.) / mechanical (adj.) > mechanise

(v.) / profitable (adj.) > profitability (n.)

(c) Changing word order:

. . . the best explanation for the British location of the industrial revolution is found by studying demand factors.

> A focus on demand may help explain the UK origin of the industrial revolution.