

A Guide to Summary, Paraphrase, and Direct Quotations

What is the difference between Summary, Paraphrase, and Direct Citation?

- **Summary:** A summary condenses the main ideas of a larger text into a brief overview. It focuses on the core arguments or findings, leaving out specific details and examples.
- **Paraphrase:** Paraphrasing involves rephrasing a specific passage from a source in your own words while maintaining the original meaning. Unlike summaries, paraphrases are usually similar in length to the original text but differ in wording and sentence structure.
- **Direct Citation:** Direct citations involve quoting the exact words from a source. They are used when the original wording is particularly powerful, precise, or authoritative.

Best Practices for Using Summary, Paraphrase, and Direct Quotations.

- When **summarizing**, aim to capture the essence of the source material in your own words. Best practices include understanding the source thoroughly, keeping the summary objective and concise, and always citing the original source to acknowledge the author's work.
- Unlike summaries, **paraphrases** are usually similar in length to the original text but differ in wording and sentence structure. Best practices for paraphrasing include reading the original passage several times, writing your version without looking at the source to avoid plagiarism, and comparing your paraphrase with the original to ensure accuracy. Always cite the source to give credit to the original author.
- Best practices for **using direct quotes** include using them sparingly to avoid over-reliance on others' words, integrating quotes smoothly into your text, and using quotation marks along with a proper citation format (e.g., APA, MLA) to attribute the source.

Common structure of a paragraph:

With increased student enrollment and large classrooms creating increasingly heterogeneous environments, laboratory instructional methods present a new pathway as instructors look to provide individual instruction in composition. In “Individual Teaching: The Pueblo Plan,” Preston W. Search (1894), Superintendent of Schools in Pueblo, Colorado, argues that laboratory teaching should not aim to “consume time by entertainment, lecturing, and development of subjects; but to pass from desk to desk as the inspiring director and pupil’s assistant, with but one intent: the development of the self-reliant and independent worker” (p. 158). Here, nurturing and flexible environments function as tools in the new system of teaching. In fact, from Search’s description, the crux of laboratory work clearly focuses on the individual student’s personal and academic growth. As a part of the whole of writing center praxis, this philosophy is evidenced through some of the earliest laboratory work and remains a focus of writing center work. In such settings, writing instruction departs from a one size fits all curricular model to one with laboratory practitioners seeking to develop students through one-on-one consultations or through students engaging in the work together.

- Note how this writer follows the “set it up,” “provide it,” and “follow it up” model in writing paragraphs: the writer has provided context and a claim in the first sentence of the paragraph to set up the citation. They provide the citation which supports the claim the writer makes in the first sentence, and the writer provides follow up to explain how the citation relates to their claim. Traditionally, the follow up makes up the bulk of the paragraph. It is the most significant part of the paragraph because it explains and provides a rationale for the citation.