

# Unit 8: Summarising, Paraphrasing and Referencing

What is summarising/paraphrasing?

- A process of condensing or shortening a written text while preserving its overall meaning.

A summary is frequently made of a complete text (an article, or a chapter in a book), whereas a paraphrase is a short section (one or two sentences, or a paragraph) from the source text which is written in different words, or combination of words, whilst keeping the same meaning; it is a 'translation' of the writer's words into your own words.

Summarising and paraphrasing are essential skills in academic work. They involve extracting the key points from a source text, turning these key points into an abbreviated version (a summary) of the original, and, importantly, expressing this information in your own words. This is necessary to avoid plagiarism (using someone's words or ideas as if they were your own). It is important to note that texts which have been summarised or paraphrased still need to be referenced in your work; otherwise you may be accused of plagiarism.

For the rest of this unit, both summarising and paraphrasing will be referred to as summarising.

## Reasons for summarising

- To demonstrate your understanding of your reading
- To establish ideas you will discuss in your writing
- To inform your readers who might not have read the original text you are summarising
- To support an idea you are discussing in your work.

## Features of a good summary

- It should offer a balanced coverage of **all** the main points in the original text
- It should make the key points of the original clear
- It should be written in your own words as far as possible and not rely on too many phrases lifted from the original. However, you should not choose obscure, uncommon synonyms just to avoid using words or phrases from the original text. You do not need to change technical, specialised, or conventional terminology or phrases, as these can often only be paraphrased by awkward, inaccurate circumlocutions.
- It should generally avoid using exactly the same sentence structure as the original
- It should not overemphasise (or even underemphasise) any of the original points
- It should not include any extra information which is not in the text you are summarising
- It should not include details of secondary importance
- It should not include examples
- It should be shorter, not longer, than the original text
- It must contain a citation (reference).

## Different types of summary

Summaries can be:

1. **Informative** – these provide the main facts and conclusions of a complete work. They tend to be one or two paragraphs long, e.g. most academic journal abstracts and dissertation abstracts (although these may be longer).

### Example

#### *Abstract*

Tropical deforestation is a significant driver of global environmental change, given its impacts on the carbon cycle and biodiversity. Loss of the Amazon forest, the focus of this article, is of particular concern because of the size and the rapid rate at which the forest is being converted to agricultural use. In this article, we identify what has been the most important driver of deforestation in a specific colonization frontier in the Brazilian Amazon. To this end, we consider (1) the land-use dynamics of smallholder households, (2) the formation of pasture by large-scale ranchers, and (3) structural processes of land aggregation by ranchers. Much has been written about relations between smallholders and ranchers in the Brazilian Amazon, particularly involving conflict over land, and this article explicates the implications of such social processes for land cover. Toward this end, we draw on panel data (1996-2002) and satellite imagery (1986-1999) to show the deforestation that is attributable to small- and largeholders, and the deforestation that is attributable to aggregations of property arising from a process that we refer to as frontier stratification. Evidently, most of the recent deforestation in the study area has resulted from the household processes of smallholders, not from conversions to pasture pursuant to the appropriations of smallholders' property by well-capitalized ranchers of speculators.

2. **Evaluative** – in this type of summary you will also describe or inform, but the main difference is that you include your opinion of the original work; you are evaluating the quality of the original work. Evaluative summaries can be long or short, but many of your evaluative summaries will be no more than a paragraph long. They are typically found in your literature review.

### Example

Hayton (1995) points to increased citizen participation as a means of helping local politicians define the public interest and make better decisions in open government. However, this statement suggests that community involvement is a panacea for weak political leadership or poor administrative skills, which it is not. Community consultation focuses on defined topics relating to regeneration and renewal only, and it is no replacement for the normal democratic or administrative process of local government.

When summarising other people's work you frequently introduce it by mentioning the writer's name and use a neutral (objective) verb that indicates the writer's approach to the topic. These verbs describe or report what has been done by others or what the writer does in their paper. The following is a list of some neutral reporting verbs. Table 1 shows verbs which are usually followed by 'that', and Table 2 shows verbs that are usually followed by a 'noun phrase'.

Table 1: Neutral reporting verbs usually followed by 'that'.

acknowledge	conclude	comment	confirm	demonstrate
Establish	explain	find	indicate	note
Observe	point out	propose	report	show
State	suggest			

Table 2: Neutral reporting verbs usually followed by a 'noun phrase'.

Analyse	define	describe	discuss	examine
Explore	focus on	identify	investigate	list
Mention	present	question	review	study
survey				

However, another set of verbs exist for referring to a writer's position or opinion. These can be called 'opinion' (evaluative) verbs. These verbs also tend to be used when a writer is writing a critique of another person's work. Table 3 shows some of these verbs.

Table 3: Opinion reporting verbs

Advocate	agree	allege	allude to	argue
Assert	assume	believe	challenge	claim
Concede	contend	criticise	emphasise	highlight
Imply	insist	maintain	refute	suppose

### How to summarise effectively:

1. Read the original text until you understand it fully.
2. Make notes of the main points in your own words.
3. Write your summary from your notes without reference to the original.
4. Check your version against the original to ensure that you have covered the content and meaning.
5. If you have included some of the original text in your summary (generally more than three words together), put quotation marks around it.
6. Include the citation. If you incorporate material from other sources into your own text, through summary, paraphrase or quotation, you must cite the source material. Failure to do this is to commit plagiarism.

## Referencing/Citing

Acknowledging sources and correctly referencing them is an essential part of academic writing. Writing references is relatively straightforward and easy to learn, but attention must be paid to accuracy and consistency.

### When to use references

References are used to acknowledge another person's words, ideas or research; to indicate your familiarity with other research on the topic; to lend authority to your writing; and to enable the reader to find the original source.

They should be used not only when you have used a direct quotation (reproduced the exact words of the source text), but also when you have summarised ideas from sources. It is important that the reader is able to distinguish clearly between ideas which you have obtained from other sources and your own comments.

### Styles of referencing

The University of Manchester does not have a standard referencing system to be used in a Masters or PhD thesis. It is suggested that you ask your supervisor which system is preferred within your subject area.

There are three main referencing systems: the Harvard (author, date) system, the footnote system, and the Vancouver (author, number) system. There are many other 'systems', but these are generally adaptations of these. This unit will briefly introduce the three systems and provide references where you can find more detailed information.

It is important that you check with your Programme Director to see which system they want you to use, as many Schools have a preferred, indeed mandatory, style. It is also important that when you intend to submit a paper for publication in a journal you are aware of the system used, as journals usually also have a preferred style and produce 'Style Sheets/Guides' which contributors must follow. If you use 'EndNote' (a database for storing and retrieving bibliographic references), you can automatically format your reference list for many journals (there are currently over 700 different styles).

To view an online tutorial for EndNote look at:

Deakin University – EndNote

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/library/search/endnote/index.php>

Also, check the John Rylands website for an introduction to EndNote and for EndNote training courses:

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/usingthelibrary/training>

### The Harvard System

In the Harvard System, cited publications are referred to in the text by giving the author's surname and the year of publication and page number(s) for direct quotation, and are listed in full in an alphabetical reference list at the end of the text. Within the Harvard system you will notice a number of small variations, such as punctuation, and italicising or underlining the title of the publication. However, the overall format is the same. Whichever format you use, the most important thing is to ensure that you are consistent.

### Examples in text

Academic representations of punk and punk rock date back more or less to the emergence of punk in Britain during the late 1970s. Hebdige (1979) interprets punk style as a visual response to the socio-economic crisis of Britain during the late 1970s. According to Hebdige, punk 'appropriated the rhetoric of crisis which had filled the airwaves and editorials throughout the period and translated it into tangible (and visible) terms' (1979: 87). A similar reading of punk is offered by Chambers who suggests that it signalled a period when 'a particular music, a highly visible subcultural style, and an increasingly public crisis momentarily fused together' (1985: 175).

### Examples in reference list

Chambers, I. (1985) *Urban Rhythms: Pop Music and Popular Culture*. London: Macmillan.

Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Routledge.

The following provides examples of how to cite the most common sources of information i.e. books, journals, a chapter (paper) in an edited book, and internet sites.

### A book:

Surname(s) followed by initials, date of publication (in brackets), title (in italics), place of publication, publisher.

### Examples:

Pass, C. and Lowes, B. (1997) *Business and Microeconomics*. London: Routledge.

Weiss, L. (1998) *The Myth of the Powerless State*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

### A journal article:

Author(s), date of publication (in brackets), title (possibly in inverted commas), journal (in italics), volume (possibly in bold), number (usually in brackets), page numbers.

### Examples:

Brannen, J. and Nilsen, A. (2002) 'Young People's Time Perspectives: from Youth to Adulthood', *Sociology* 36 (3) 513–37.

Burgess, S.F. (1997) 'Smallholder Voice and Rural Transformation: Zimbabwe and Kenya Compared', *Comparative Politics* 29 (2) 127-49.

### A chapter/article in an edited book:

Author(s) of chapter/article, date of publication (in brackets), title of chapter (possibly in inverted commas), editor of book, title of book (in italics), pages, place of publication, publisher.

### Example:

Dunkel, P.A. and Davis, J.N. (1995) 'The Effects of Rhetorical Signalling Cues on Recall' in Flowerdew, J. (ed.) *Academic Listening*, pp. 24-41, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Medhurst, A. (1999) 'What Did I Get? Punk, Memory and Autobiography' in Sabin, R. (ed.) *Punk Rock: So What? The Cultural Legacy of Punk*, pp. 219-331, London: Routledge.

### An electronic journal:

Author(s), date of publication (in brackets), title of document, title of journal (in italics), volume, issue, page numbers. Available from: URL (sometimes in angle brackets), date accessed (in square brackets)

**Example:**

Sohmer, S. (1999) 'The Lunar Calendar of Shakespeare's *King Lear*', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 5 (2) no pages, <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/05-2/sohmlear.htm> [Accessed on 10 February 2006].

For more detailed information on the Harvard system visit one of the following:

Thames Valley University – Guidelines on referencing  
<http://www.tvu.ac.uk/lrs/guides/harvard.html#bibsingl>

Bournemouth University – Citing References  
[http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library/citing\\_references/docs/Citing\\_Refs.pdf](http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library/citing_references/docs/Citing_Refs.pdf)

Anglia Ruskin University – Harvard system of referencing  
[http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/guides/new\\_harvard.php](http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/guides/new_harvard.php)

**The Footnote system (sometimes called the Oxford system)**

In the Footnote system, references are given in numbered footnotes at the bottom of the relevant page (or sometimes all together at the end of a chapter, article or book/thesis, in which case they are called Endnotes). Superscript numbers are placed in the text, usually at the end of a sentence and following any punctuation.<sup>1</sup> The first reference to a book, article, or other publication is given in full in the footnote, while subsequent references are given in an abbreviated form: usually the author's name, an abbreviated title (if necessary), and page number. A book/thesis will also contain a separate alphabetical Bibliography giving full details of all sources used.

**Examples in text**

This article draws on data from a wider doctoral study concerned to explore such questions as, historically, what is the meaning of higher education for women? Has higher education significantly improved the social position of those women who undertook a university education? And to what extent is higher education a vehicle for social change?<sup>2</sup> The opponents of women's higher education in the nineteenth century certainly feared that a university education for women would radically alter the separate spheres and ultimately lead to a sexual revolution,<sup>3</sup> but recent research has suggested that, at the beginning of the twenty-first century clear gender divisions remain in employment.<sup>4</sup>

**Examples of footnotes**

<sup>2</sup> S.J. Aiston, 'The Life Experiences of University-educated Women: Graduates of the University of Liverpool, 1947 to 1979', Ph.D., University of Liverpool (2000).

<sup>3</sup> J. Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (London, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> S. Dench, *Key Indicators of Women's Position in Britain* (London, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> Burstyn, *Victorian Education*, p.102

For a very detailed guide to the Footnote system look at Sections 9 and 10, pages 39-54 and 56-57, of *MHRA Style Guide*, London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2002.

This publication can be downloaded from: <http://www.mhra.org.uk>

**The Vancouver system**

In the Vancouver System, cited publications are referred to in the text by giving the author's surname and a number, or simply by number. The number is either given in brackets (1) or in superscript.<sup>1</sup> The original number assigned to the reference is used each time the reference is

cited in the text, regardless of its position in the text. The full reference list, which follows the text, is in numerical order.

### Examples in text

In his theory of psychological types, Carl Jung (6) introduced sensing and intuition as the two ways in which people tend to perceive the world. Sensing involves observing, gathering data through the senses; intuition involves indirect perception by way of the unconscious—speculation, imagination, hunches. Everyone uses both faculties, but most people tend to favour one over the other.

In the 1940s Isabel Briggs Myers developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), an instrument that measures, among other things, the degree to which an individual prefers sensing or intuition. In the succeeding decades the MBTI has been given to hundreds of thousands of people and the resulting profiles have been correlated with career preferences and aptitudes, management styles, learning styles, and various behavioural tendencies. The characteristics of intuitive and sensing types (7) and the different ways in which sensors and intuitors approach learning have been studied (1), (2).

### Examples in reference list

- (1). Lawrence, G., *People Types and Tiger Stripes: A Practical Guide to Learning Styles*, 2nd edition, Gainesville, Fla.: Center for Applications of Psychological Type 1982.
- (2). Lawrence, G., 'A Synthesis of Learning Style Research Involving the MBTI', *J. Psychological Type*, 1984: 8, 2-15.
- ...
- (6). Jung, C.G., *Psychological Types*, Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971. (Originally published in 1921.)
- (7). Myers, I.B. and Myers, P.B., *Gifts Differing*, Palo Alto Calif.: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980.

As can be seen from the examples above, the main formatting difference in the reference list is the position of the year of publication. In the Harvard system this comes after the author, while in the Vancouver system it comes towards the end of the reference.

### A book:

Surname(s) of author(s) followed by initials, title (in italics), place of publication, publisher, date of publication.

### Example:

- (8). Chomsky, N., *Language and Mind*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968.

### A journal article:

Author(s), title (possibly in inverted commas), journal (in italics), date of publication, volume (possibly in bold), number (usually in brackets), page numbers.

### Example:

- (9). Waldheim, G.P., 'Understanding How Students Understand', *Engineering Education*, 1987; 77 (5) 306-308.

### A chapter in an edited book:

Author of chapter, title of chapter (possibly in inverted commas), title of book (in italics), editor of book, pages, place of publication, publisher, date of publication.

**Example:**

- (10). Kagan, J., 'Impulsive and Reflective Children: The Significance of Conceptual Tempo'. In J. Krumboltz, ed., *Learning and the Educational Process*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965.

**An electronic journal:**

Author, title of document, title of journal (in italics), date of publication, volume, issue, page numbers. Available from: URL (sometimes in angle brackets), date accessed (in square brackets)

**Example:**

- (11). Koehn, D. 'The Ethics of Handwriting Analysis in Pre-Employment Screening', *The Online Journal of Ethics* 1995; 1 (1) no pages. Available from <[http://condor/depaul.edu/ethics/hand.html](http://condor.depaul.edu/ethics/hand.html)> [Accessed on 20 February 2006].

For more detailed information on this system visit one of the following:

Monash University – Vancouver Style

<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/vancouver.html>

University of Leicester – The Vancouver System

<http://www.le.ac.uk/li/sources/subj3ect3/biol/ist/vancouver.html>

## **Further information on summarising**

You can find more information about summarising at the following websites:

Deakin University – Academic Skills

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/studentlife/academic-skills/undergraduate/handouts/ideas.php#summary>

The Australian National University - Plagiarism

[http://www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/online\\_materials/reading\\_and\\_notetaking/plagiarism.pdf](http://www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/online_materials/reading_and_notetaking/plagiarism.pdf)

You should also read the following information about plagiarism which is contained on the University of Manchester website:

Manchester University – Guidance to Students

<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/staffnet/policies/plagiarismguidancetostudents>