Paraphrasing without Plagiarising

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Learning Outcomes

- Define paraphrasing
- Learn the steps involved in paraphrasing
- Learn how to use paraphrasing to avoid plagiarism
Paraphrasing is an essential part of academic writing

- You must support your discussion in your assignments with evidence and ideas from academic sources such as journal articles, textbooks and quality websites and pages.

- However, you cannot just copy them and pass them off as your own. You must “paraphrase” the ideas in your own words, reference them and then integrate them into your paragraphs.

(Slideshare, n.d.)
Paraphrasing involves reading a passage of text from an academic source and rewriting the information it contains in your own words and your own style.

- It must represent the original author’s idea accurately.
- It must be in-text referenced.
- It is roughly the same length as the idea in the original text.
Paraphrasing “No” list

You cannot copy and paste ideas from sources and insert them into your work!

This would be considered plagiarism unless it is formatted as a direct quote and referenced.

TIP: Direct quotes are rarely used in academic writing in the health sciences.
Paraphrasing “No” list

❌ You cannot just change a few words in the original text and think that you have paraphrased!

This would be considered plagiarism.
Paraphrasing “No” list

❌ You cannot include a paraphrase in your work if it doesn’t have an in-text reference. Even it is a well-written one!

This would be considered plagiarism.
Paraphrasing “No” list

You cannot change the meaning of the original author’s idea or add in extra information!

This would be considered plagiarism.
Paraphrasing Steps

1. Closely read and reread the entire passage you wish to use until you fully understand it.
2. Repeat the core idea to yourself or write it down. Imagine yourself explaining it to someone else.
3. Read the passage again, noting down the key words.
4. Put the original text aside and write your paraphrase, using only the key words.
Paraphrasing Steps

5. Check your paraphrase against the original. The meaning should be the same, but *the writing style and structure should be different.*

6. Use an *in-text reference* at the end of your paraphrase.
Some more paraphrasing tips

1. Use **synonyms** (except for technical terms).

2. **Vary the sentence pattern** by using different parts of speech (e.g. change verbs to nouns and nouns to verbs)

3. Change or **reverse the order of ideas**. Move the last part of the sentence up but check that the new sentence is grammatically correct.

4. **Break long sentences** into two or more short sentences.

5. Make abstract ideas **concrete** (simplify).

(Davies, 2011, p. 60)
Ways to format and reference a paraphrase

Paraphrase … where the focus is on the content and the authors are in the brackets at the end of the sentence.

Public health is ………………..(Lin, Smith, & Fawkes, 2007).

Paraphrase … where it is deemed valuable to have the authors as part of the sentence.

Lin, Smith, and Fawkes (2007) stated public health is ....

According to Lin, Smith, and Fawkes (2007), public health is …….

(Note use of the reporting verb “stated”. There are many other academic reporting verbs that you can use in your writing.)
Turnitin is a helpful tool when learning paraphrasing

- Use Turnitin to review your paraphrasing and how similar it is to the original text to make sure you are not plagiarising.

- Refer to the section on Turnitin in Module 7 on Academic Integrity for more on how to use it and how to read the reports in order to improve your paraphrasing and avoid plagiarism.
Where to from here?

Paraphrasing successfully is a skill that takes time to develop.

Practice makes perfect!