

## WelTec/Whitireia Writing Series

# Paraphrasing

When you complete an assignment that requires research, you will need to use the ideas of other authors in your writing. You can do this by **paraphrasing** the words of another author.

## Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is putting the ideas of others into your own words. It's **not** just copying the sources you have used. Below is an example of a paraphrase.



**Original text:** *Indeed, psychological functioning appears to matter more than physical functioning in determining the quality of life of chronic disease patients.*

**Your work:** The factor that has the greatest impact on a chronically ill patient's quality of life is psychological wellbeing (Brannon, Feist & Updegraff, 2014).

## Steps to paraphrase

1. Choose the idea you want to paraphrase.
2. Make sure you understand it – for example, think about how you would explain it to a friend.
3. Look at the words you cannot change – these are usually the technical or specialist words.
4. Look at the remaining words and think of synonyms for them (words with similar meanings).
5. Write out the idea – keeping the technical words but changing the sentence structure and some of the words. Check the sentence has the **same meaning** as the original text.
6. Acknowledge the source using an in-text citation and adding the full reference to your reference list at the end of your assignment.

The best way to use other peoples' words in your assignments is to make them a part of your own writing.



To effectively use the words of another author in your writing, first **introduce** the paraphrased words by using **reporting verbs**. Reporting verbs are the words that are used to talk about or report on other people's work (*see the list over the page*).

Ensure you have used **correct punctuation** to make sure the ideas you have paraphrased fit in smoothly with the rest of your sentence.

If possible, put **your own opinion** about the source while you are paraphrasing. This shows that you understand the idea. It also shows you can evaluate its usefulness, and apply it in the assignment.

## Examples

Smith (2015) **states** that it is important for a growing company to have sufficient knowledge not only of its target market, but also the actions of its competitors. This approach would ensure that the company could maintain its market position without falling behind its competition.

Smith (2015) **argues** that, “a company’s potential to grow is primarily dependent on its ability to interpret the actions of its customers” (p. 45). This is at odds with Jones (2016), who **claims** that it is the product base that makes a company successful rather than being concerned with the latest trends in the market.

Jones (2016) **concurs** with Brown (2013) that a company’s financial stability is dependent on its customer base. This would mean that customers are more important to a company’s growth than a functioning product base.

Brown (2017) **evaluates** the claim that environmental accounting is a seminal practice for New Zealand businesses, **concluding** that this isn’t always the case. An environmental accounting approach may ensure that New Zealand maintains its clean, green image to the world at large.

Below is a list of words that you could use when reporting what another author is saying when you use their ideas in your writing. Don’t forget you can also use the author you have used to highlight your own opinion.

### To agree

*accepts*  
*acknowledges*  
*agrees*  
*concurs*  
*confirms*  
*recognises*

### To conclude

*concludes*  
*discovers*  
*sums up*

### To disagree/question

*doubts*  
*questions*  
*challenges*  
*debates*  
*disagrees*  
*disclaims*  
*refutes*  
*opposes*

### To discuss

*explores*  
*comments*  
*discusses*

### To analyse or examine

*analyses*  
*critiques*  
*evaluates*  
*investigates*

### To present

*comments*  
*defines*  
*identifies*  
*presents*  
*shows*