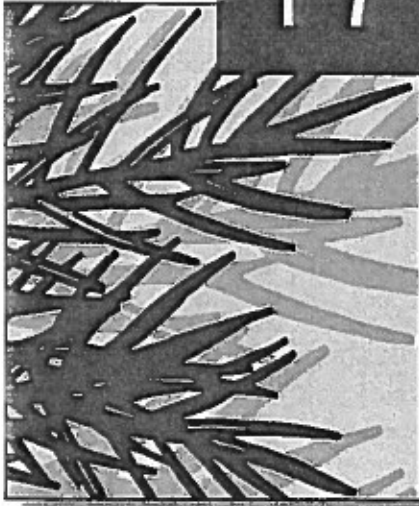


Special College Skills: Summary and Quotation



PART A Avoiding Plagiarism

PART B Writing a Summary

PART C Using Direct and Indirect Quotation

Welcome to the Information Age! Now more than ever before, it is important for you to know how to find, evaluate, and use information from **outside sources**—that is, sources outside yourself (for example, books, articles, Internet sites, or other people). In some college courses, you will write papers with no outside sources. However, many courses and jobs will require you to refer to outside sources as you write reports, essays, and research papers. Besides, information from outside sources can vastly enrich your writing with facts, statistics, experts' ideas, and more.

In this chapter, you will learn what **plagiarism** is and how to avoid it. You will also learn and practice three excellent ways to use outside sources in your writing: **summarizing, quoting directly, and quoting indirectly.**

Part A

Avoiding Plagiarism

Before we discuss how to summarize or quote from an outside source, it is all-important that you understand—so you can avoid—**plagiarism**. Plagiarism is failing to give proper credit to an author whose words or ideas you have used. That is, plagiarism means passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own. Whether intentional or careless, plagiarism is stealing. A college student who plagiarizes a paper may be expelled from the course or from college. In the business world, publishing material copied from someone else is a crime.

To avoid plagiarism, you must give proper credit to the original author, as this chapter and the next will explain. Meanwhile, keep this simple rule in mind: **Always tell your reader the source of any words and ideas not your own. Give enough information so that a reader who wants to find your original source can do so.**

- PRACTICE 1** What is your college's policy on plagiarism? That is, what consequences or penalties follow if a student is found to have plagiarized a paper or other work? The reference librarian can help you find this information.

Part B

Writing a Summary

A **summary** presents the main idea and supporting points of a longer work *in much shorter form*. A summary might be one sentence, one paragraph, or several paragraphs long, depending on the length of the original and the nature of your assignment.

Summarizing is important both in college and at work. In a persuasive essay, you might summarize the ideas of an expert whose views support one of your points. A professor might ask you to summarize a book, a market survey, or even the plot of a film—that is, to condense it in your own words, presenting only the highlights. Of course, many essay exams also call for written summaries.

Compare this short newspaper article—the *source*—with the *summary* that follows:

Source

Fido may be cute, cuddly, and harmless. But in his genes, he's a wolf. Researchers tracing the genetic family tree of man's best friend have confirmed that domestic dogs, from petite poodles to huge elkounds, descended from wolves that were tamed 100,000 years ago.

"Our data show that the origin of dogs seems to be much more ancient than indicated in the archaeological record," said Robert K. Wayne of UCLA, the leader of a team that tested the genes from 67 dog breeds and 62 wolves on four continents:

Wayne said the study showed so many DNA changes that dogs had to have diverged genetically from wolves 60,000 to more than 100,000 years ago.

The study suggests that primitive humans living in a hunting and gathering culture tamed wolves and then bred the animals to create the many different types of dogs that now exist.

Recer, Paul. "Dogs Tamed 100,000 Years Ago." *The Herald* 13 June 1997: 9A.

Summary

Dogs began evolving from wolves between 60,000 and 100,000 years ago, reports Paul Recer in *The Herald*. Apparently, humans tamed wolves far earlier than was previously thought. Researchers at UCLA, led by Robert K. Wayne, came to these conclusions after studying the genes of 67 breeds of dogs and 62 wolves on four continents (9A).

- Notice that sentence 1 states the author and source of the original article. Sentence 1 also states the main idea of the article. What is its main idea?

- What evidence supports this idea?

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- The original is short, so the summary is very short—just three sentences long.
 - The summary writer does not add his own opinions about dogs or evolution but simply states the main ideas of the source. Unlike many kinds of writing, a summary should not contain your personal opinions and feelings.
 - Note that the page number of the original source appears in parentheses at the end of the summary.*

Preparing to Write a Summary

The secret of writing a good summary is clearly understanding the original. If you doubt this, try to summarize out loud Chapter 3 of your biology book. To summarize well, you have to know the subject matter.

Before you summarize a piece of writing, notice the title and subtitle (if there is one); these often state the main idea. Read quickly for meaning; then carefully read the work again, underlining or jotting down notes for yourself. What is the author's thesis or main point? What points does he or she offer in support? Be careful to distinguish between the most and least important points; your summary should include only the most important ones.

To help you understand *what the author thinks is important*, notice which ideas get the most coverage. Read with special care the topic sentence of each paragraph and the first and last paragraphs of the work. If you are summarizing a magazine article or a textbook chapter, the subheads (often in boldface type) point out important ideas.

Your written summary should include the following:

1. The author, title, and source of the original
2. The main idea or thesis of the original, in your own words
3. The most important supporting ideas or points of the original, in your own words

Try to present the ideas in your summary in proportion to those in the original. For instance, if the author devotes one paragraph to each of four ideas, you might give one sentence to each idea. To avoid plagiarism, when you finish, compare your summary with the original; that is, make sure you have not just copied the phrasing and sentences of the original.

A summary differs from much other writing in that it *should not* contain your feelings or opinions—just the facts. Your job is to capture the essence of the original, with nothing added.

Following are two summaries of the student essay in Chapter 15, Part F, of this book. Which do you think is the better summary, A or B? Be prepared to say specifically why.

*For more precise information on how to cite sources, see Chapter 18, Part C.

Summary A

(1) In the essay "E-Notes from an Online Learner," printed in Fawcett, *Evergreen*, 7th Edition, student and mother Brenda Wilson contrasts her learning experiences in traditional and online classrooms. (2) Whereas Wilson's long commute to campus once made her late to class or anxious, she finds online classes more convenient because she can read lectures or submit coursework any time, from home. (3) Next, Ms. Wilson says that other students might prefer the energy of live class discussion, but she feels freer online, writing her thoughts with less self-consciousness. (4) Finally, she stresses that online students must be self-motivated, unlike regular students who can rely on professors to prod them or on the "group adrenaline rush of seeing other students hunched over their notebooks." (5) Less focused students might procrastinate and drop out. (6) Overall, Wilson prefers distance learning (210–211).

Summary B

(1) This excellent essay is by Brenda Wilson, student. (2) I enjoyed reading about online learning because I have never taken a course online. (3) This year Ms. Wilson attended her history class dressed in dancing cow pajamas and fluffy slippers. (4) This was not a bizarre college ritual but part of the University of Houston's Distance Education Program. (5) Virtual courses are very different. (6) She has a job and a son, so she is very busy, like many students today. (7) Online classes are great for this type of student, more convenient. (8) Students have to motivate themselves, and Ms. Wilson has only the soft bubbling noise of her aquarium screen saver to remind her to work. (9) She ends by saying it is 12:14 A.M. and her cat is nuzzling her fluffy pink slippers. (10) I also liked her cat's name.

- The test of a good summary is how well it captures the original. Which better summarizes Ms. Wilson's essay, A or B?

- If you picked A, you are right. Sentence 1 states the author and title of the essay, as well as the name and edition of the book in which it appears. Sentence 1 also states the main idea of the original, which *contrasts* the author's experience of traditional classes and virtual classes. Does any sentence in B state the

main idea of the original essay? _____

- Compare the original with the two summaries. How many points of contrast does A include? B? _____

- Does each writer summarize the essay *in his or her own words*? If not, which sentences might seem plagiarized? _____

- Writer A once quotes Ms. Wilson directly. How is this shown? Why do you think the summary writer chose this sentence to quote? _____

- Do both summaries succeed in keeping personal opinion out? If not, which sentences contain the summary writer's opinion? _____

- Note that summary writer A includes the source page number in parenthesis at the end of the summarized material. On the other hand, writer B refers to Brenda Wilson but does not name her essay or the source in which it appears.

PRACTICE 2 In a group with three or four other classmates, choose just one of the following essays to summarize: "Libraries of the Future—Now" (Chapter 15, Part A); "The Day of the Dead" (Chapter 15, Part C); "Stopping Youth Violence: An Inside Job" (Chapter 15, Part I); or "Skin Deep" (Chapter 14, Part D). Read your chosen essay in the group, aloud if possible. Then each person should write a one-paragraph summary of it, referring to the following checklist (15–20 minutes).

Now read your finished summaries aloud to your group. How well does each writer briefly capture the meaning of the original? Has he or she kept out personal opinion? What suggestions for improvement can you offer? Your instructor may wish to have the best summary in each group read aloud to the whole class.

PRACTICE 3 Flip through a copy of a current magazine: *Newsweek*, *People*, *Essence*, *Wired*, or another. Pick one article that interests you, read it carefully, and write a one- to three-paragraph summary of the article, depending on the length of the article. The points you include in your summary should reflect the emphasis of the original writer. Try to capture the essence of the article. Remember to give your source at the beginning, to keep out personal opinion, and to check your summary for plagiarism. Refer to the checklist.

Checklist

The Process of Writing a Summary

- _____ 1. Notice the title and subtitle of the original; do these state its main idea?
- _____ 2. Read the original quickly for meaning; then carefully read it again, underlining important ideas and jotting down notes for yourself.
- _____ 3. Determine the author's thesis or main idea.
- _____ 4. Now find the main supporting points. Subheads (if any), topic sentences, and the first and last paragraphs of the original may help you find key points.

- 5. Write your topic sentence or thesis statement, stating the author's thesis, title, source, and date of the original.
- 6. In your own words, give the author's most important supporting points, in the same order in which the author gives them. Keep the same proportion of coverage as the original.
- 7. Write your summary, skipping lines so you will have room to make corrections.
- 8. Now revise, asking yourself, "Will my summary convey to someone who has never read the original the author's main idea and key supporting points?"
- 9. Proofread, making neat corrections above the lines.
- 10. Compare your final draft with the original to avoid plagiarism.

Part C

Using Direct and Indirect Quotation

Sometimes you will want to quote an outside source directly. A quotation might be part of a summary or part of a longer paper or report. Quoting the words of others can add richness and authority to your writing; in fact, that is why we include a Quotation Bank at the end of this book—a kind of minireader of great thoughts. Use short quotations in these ways:

- Use a quotation to stress a key idea.
- Use a quotation to lend expert opinion to your argument.
- Use a quotation to provide a catchy introduction or conclusion.
- Use a quotation about your topic that is wonderfully written and "quotable" to add interest.

However, avoid using very long quotations or too many quotations. Both send the message that you are filling up space because you don't have enough to say. Of course, to avoid plagiarism, you always must credit the original author or speaker.

Here are some methods for introducing quotations:

Ways to Introduce Quotations

Mr. Taibi says, . . .	Ms. Luboff writes, . . .
One expert had this to say:	. . . , one authority reported.
In a recent <i>Times</i> column,	According to Dr. Haynes, . . .
Maureen Dowd observes . . .	

Following are a passage from a well-known book and two ways that students quoted the author:

Source

On film or videotape, violence begins and ends in a moment. "Bang bang, you're dead." Then the death is over. This sense of action-without-consequences replicates and reinforces the dangerous "magical" way many children think. Do the twelve- and fourteen-year-olds who are shooting each other to death in Los Angeles, Chicago, or Washington, D.C., really understand that death is permanent, unalterable, final, tragic? Television certainly is not telling them so.

Prothrow-Stith, Deborah. *Deadly Consequences*.
New York: Harper Perennial, 1991: 34

Two students who wrote about the effects of TV violence correctly quoted Dr. Prothrow-Stith as follows:

Direct Quotation

"This sense of action-without-consequences replicates and reinforces the dangerous 'magical' way many children think," writes Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith in *Deadly Consequences* (34).

Indirect Quotation

In *Deadly Consequences*, Prothrow-Stith points out that TV and movie violence, which has no realistic consequences, harms children by reinforcing the magical way in which they think (34).

- The first sentence gives Dr. Prothrow-Stith's exact words inside quotation marks. This is **direct quotation**. Note the punctuation.
- The second sentence uses the word *that* and gives the *meaning* of Prothrow-Stith's words without quotation marks. This is **indirect quotation**, or **paraphrase**. Note the punctuation.
- Both students correctly quote the writer and credit the source. Both include the page number in parentheses after the quoted material and before the period. (See Chapter 18, Part C, for more information on this style of citing sources.)

Now read this passage from a third student's paper:

Plagiarism

On film and television, violence begins and ends in a minute, and then the death is over. Teenagers killing each other across the country don't realize that death is "unalterable, final, and tragic" because they do not see its consequences on TV.

- Can you see why this passage is plagiarized (and why the student received a failing grade)?
- Both the ideas and many of the words are clearly Prothrow-Stith's, yet the student never mentions her or her book. Four words from the original are placed in quotation marks, but the reader has no idea why. Instead, the student implies that all the ideas and words are his own. What exact words are plagiarized from the source? What ideas are plagiarized?

- Revise this passage as if it were your own, giving credit to the original author and avoiding plagiarism.

PRACTICE 4 Following are passages from two sources. Read each one, and then, as if you were writing a paper, quote two sentences from each, one directly quoting the author's words and one indirectly quoting the author's ideas. Review the boxed ways to introduce quotations and try several methods. Finally, write a brief summary of each passage. Check your work to avoid plagiarism.

Source 1 In most cultures throughout history, music, dance, rhythmic drumming, and chanting have been essential parts of healing rituals. Modern research bears out the connection between music and healing. In one study, the heart rate and blood pressure of patients went down when quiet music was piped into their hospital coronary care units. At the same time, the patients showed greater tolerance for pain and less anxiety and depression. Similarly, listening to music before, during, or after surgery has been shown to promote various beneficial effects—from alleviating anxiety to reducing the need for sedation by half. When researchers played Brahms' "Lullaby" to premature infants, these babies gained weight faster and went home from the hospital sooner than babies who did not hear the music. Music may also affect immunity by altering the level of stress chemicals in the blood. An experiment at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital found that a single thirty-minute music therapy session could increase the level of salivary IgA, an immunoglobulin that protects against respiratory infections.

Institute of Noetic Sciences with William Poole. *The Heart of Healing*.
Atlanta: Turner Publishing, 1993: 134

Direct quotation: _____

Indirect quotation: _____

Summary:

Source 2 The television commercial is not at all about the character of products to be consumed. It is about the character of the consumers of products. Images of movie stars and famous athletes, of serene lakes and macho fishing trips, of elegant dinners and romantic interludes, of happy families packing their station wagons for a picnic in the country—these tell nothing about the products being sold. But they tell everything about the fears, fancies and dreams of those who might buy them.

Postman, Neil. Amusing Ourselves to Death.
New York: Viking Penguin, 1985: 128

Direct quotation: _____

Indirect quotation: _____

Summary:

PRACTICE 5 Following are four sources and four quotations from student papers. If the student has summarized, directly quoted, or indirectly quoted the source correctly, write C. If you believe the source is plagiarized, write P; then revise the student's work as if it were your own to avoid plagiarism.

- Does each student clearly distinguish between his or her ideas and the source's?
- Does each student give enough information so that a reader could locate the original source?

Source 1 "Binge drinking, according to criteria used in periodic surveys by the Harvard researchers, is defined as five or more drinks on one occasion for a man or four or more drinks on one occasion for a woman. Students who reported one or two such episodes in the two weeks preceding the survey were classified as occasional binge drinkers; those reporting three or more were considered frequent binge drinkers."

Okie, Susan. "Survey: 44% of College Students Are Binge Drinkers."
The Washington Post 25 Mar. 2002: A6

Student's Version — Binge drinking is a dangerous problem on campuses, but college administrators are not doing enough to stop it. An amazing 44 percent of college students are binge drinkers. Let us define binge drinking as five or more drinks on one occasion for a man or four or more drinks on one occasion for a woman. College officials need to ask why so many students are drinking dangerously.

Source 2 “The image of the Kitchen God (alternatively known as the Hearth God) usually stood above the family stove, from where he would observe the household. Every New Year he was said to visit heaven to give an account of the behavior of the family in the past year.”

Willis, Roy. Dictionary of World Myth. London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 1995: 116

Student's Version — My Chinese grandmother has a Kitchen God above her stove. It says in the dictionary that this is a special god who observes the household and then visits heaven every New Year to report on the behavior of the family in the past year.

Source 3 “Although astronomers often speak of the ‘solar surface,’ the Sun actually has no surface at all. The Sun is gaseous throughout its volume because of its high internal temperature. If you were somehow able to enter the Sun without vaporizing, you would encounter only denser and denser gases as you went to greater depths.”

Kaufmann, William J., and Roger A. Freedman. Universe. 5th ed. New York: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1999: 422

Student's Version — As Kaufmann and Freedman explain in Universe, the sun is too hot to have a solid surface but is made up instead of very dense gases (422).

Source 4 “As alpine glaciers around the world succumb to warming, scientists are reaping grand harvests of frozen organic objects—and with them previously unavailable information on past wildlife, human culture, genetics, climate and more. Tissues with intact DNA and archaeological objects of wood and bone provide pictures that stone tools only hint at, and because they can all be radio-carbon dated, there is little guessing about chronology.”

Krajick, Kevin. “Melting Glaciers Release Ancient Relics.”
Science 19 Apr. 2002: 454–456

Student's Version — There might be a positive side to global warming after all. Kevin Krajick reports in Science, April 19, 2002, that melting glaciers are providing scientists with many objects and tissue samples that will give them “previously unavailable information on past wildlife, human culture, genetics, climate and more.”