

Introduction to Writing; Paraphrasing and Plagiarism

Exercise 1: Introduction to Writing Letters

- A) Read the following email carefully. How would you describe the writing style of the author? And can you say anything about the context of the email and the relationship between the recipients?**

To: Sara Ling; Bob Riggins
 From: Franklin Potter
 Subject: Student Loan Project: My Sections
 Attached: Potter_P1.doc

Hi.

I've attached the draft of my sections of our paper to this message. One thing I'm a bit unsure about in my sections is how evenhanded I am when I talk about the private loan consolidation companies. I want to make sure that I point out problems while still recognizing that they are businesses and have a right to operate for a profit. Anyway, keep that in mind as you read the sections.

I also emailed the people at Federated Loan Consolidation Corporation and asked them whether they were affiliated with a federal agency and about the kinds of guarantees they provide for fixed interest rates. I guess one issue I really want to get at is how those private corporations represent themselves. I'll pass on any information they send me.

See you in class.

Frank

No matter the context, several basic writing rules apply:

- Messages you receive represent individuals – do not say or do anything you wouldn't say or do face to face
- Pay careful attention to tone and make sure how to properly address others
- Avoid saying anything in email that you would not say in a printed document
- Proofread your text!

Exercise 2: Referencing, paraphrasing, and plagiarism.

- A) Read the textbook extract below. Identify a) cited material, b) references to cited material, and c) the authors' own material.**

An almost universal finding has been that vegetarians and vegans are lighter in weight than their meat-eating counterparts. The Oxford cohort of the EPIC Study found a difference of 1 unit of BMI [Spencer et al 2003]. The lower BMI would be expected to be associated with a decreased risk of type 2 diabetes and gallstones. However, BMI tends to fall abruptly over the age of 60 in vegetarians and especially vegans compared with meat-eaters, which suggests that elderly vegans may have difficulty

Adapted from Jones, Leo. *New Cambridge Advanced English*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.

Day, Trevor. *Success in Academic Writing*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Swales, John a Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. 2nd ed. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2004. Paraphrasing Exercise. *Graduate Student Instructor Teaching & Resource Center*. Berkeley, University of California. UC Regents. 2017.

Fowler, Henry Ramsey. *The Little, Brown Handbook*. 8th ed. New York: Longman, 2000.

maintaining muscle mass in old age. This is of concern as a low body mass is associated with increased mortality particularly from respiratory disorders. As vegans have a low proportion of body fat, the decrease in BMI with age is likely to be due to a decrease in muscle mass. This finding would be consistent with the lower reported concentrations of insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) in vegans compared with omnivores [Allen et al 2000].

References:

Allen, N. E., Appleby, P. N., Davey, G. K., & Key, T. J. (2000). Hormones and diet: low insulin-like growth factor-I but abnormal bioavailable androgens in vegan men. *British Journal of Cancer*, 83, 095-7.

Spencer, E. A., Appleby, P. N., Davey, G. K., & Key, T. J. (2003). Diet and body mass index in 38000 EPIC-Oxford meat-eaters, fish-eaters, vegetarians and vegans. *International Journal of Obesity and Related Metabolic Disorders*, 27, 728-34.

B) Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

- a) Is the authors' material clearly distinguished from the cited material?
- b) How did you work out which material was the authors' and which was citation?
- c) Why do the in-text references come *after* the citations in this text?

C) Select two sentences from the text to paraphrase. Then exchange paraphrases and answer the following questions.

- a) How easy is it to identify the original sentences?
- b) How clear is the meaning and language of the paraphrases?

Paraphrasing

- Involves using your own words to restate what the author of a source is saying
- Needs to include a citation reference
- The point of paraphrasing is to display your understanding of the original text

Original

Mental rehearsal has long been a key element employed by successful Olympic teams (Suin 1997). The benefits of mental rehearsal extend beyond physical skill and performance per se, but include qualities such as strengthening commitment, confidence and concentration, and enhancing the ability to control one's emotional state beneficially (Hale 1998; Hale et al. 2005). Such attributes clearly have relevance to learning in the classroom and elsewhere, not just applied to performance in sport.

(Day, T. and Tosey, P. (2011). 'Beyond SMART? A New Framework for Goal Setting'. *The Curriculum Journal*, 22(4): 515-34.

Paraphrasing

Day and Tosey (2011) draw comparison with the mental rehearsal athletes use to improve their performance in sport, and the mental rehearsal that students might use in learning in the classroom to prepare for examinations. They argue that using mental rehearsal to develop better concentration, commitment and confidence, along with an improved ability to control emotional state, can apply to both the sports field and the exam room.

Plagiarism

- Presenting someone else's ideas as your own

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- Using the same line of thinking and including the same words, phrases or sentence structure is also plagiarism!

Original

In the secondary and 16-19 education sectors in England and Wales some form of action planning, in which a teacher or tutor sits down with a student and discusses their progress and negotiates learning targets with plans to achieve them, has emerged to become a recognizable feature of teaching practice within the last 25 years. (Day, T. and Tosey, P. (2011). 'Beyond SMART? A New Framework for Goal Setting'. *The Curriculum Journal*, 22(4): 515-34.

Plagiarism

In secondary and further education, action planning has **become a recognizable feature of teaching practice within the last 25 years** (Day and Tosey, p. 515).

Not plagiarism

Day and Tosey (2011, p. 515) contend that staff and students engaging in action planning towards negotiated learning targets has become common practice in 11-19 education.

D) Paraphrasing Practice. Look at the original text and then on the paraphrased passages. Decide which paraphrases are acceptable and which are plagiarism.

Original text

A key factor in explaining the sad state of American education can be found in overbureaucratization, which is seen in the compulsion to consolidate our public schools into massive factories and to increase to mammoth size our universities even in underpopulated states. The problem with bureaucracies is that they have to work hard and long to keep from substituting self-serving survival and growth for their original primary objective. Few succeed. Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience. If there is a single stumbling block on the road to the future, it is the bureaucracy as we know it. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*, Anchor Publishing, 1977, p. 219

Paraphrase 1

American education is overly bureaucratic. This is manifest in the increasing size of educational institutions, even in small states. Bureaucracies are bad because they tend to work to promote their own survival and growth rather than that of the institution, as was their initial objective. Most bureaucracies fail because they have a conscience or a soul. I believe that bureaucracies are the biggest stumbling block on the road to the educational future.

Paraphrase 2

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. Bureaucracies have to work long and hard to keep from promoting their own survival rather than the educational goals that were their primary objective.

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Paraphrase 3

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. This means that, as Edward T. Hall says in his book, *Beyond Culture*, today's educational institutions "have no soul, no memory, and no conscience."

Paraphrase 4

In his book, *Beyond Culture*, Edward T. Hall discusses the problems posed by the increasing bureaucratization of American educational institutions. Hall maintains that overbureaucratization is one of the key factors governing the state of education in America today. He points to the tendency of bureaucracies to promote their own growth and survival first and foremost, and observes that few overcome that tendency. He believes that this is responsible for the fact that many public schools bear a closer resemblance to factories than to educational institutions. In Hall's words, "Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience."