



Summarising and Paraphrasing

What is a summary?

A summary provides a broad overview of a text. Key ideas are identified and details such as supporting material (evidence and/or examples) are excluded. When summarising, ensure you reference the original text.

Summaries can be used to:

- Provide a brief outline of a range of ideas on a topic;
- Include the ideas of others in your own words;
- Provide supporting evidence to back up a claim you making;
- Compare and contrast differing points of view.

How to summarise

- Firstly, read the text (as many times as you can) so that you understand the subject matter / topic very well.
- Next, read the text again and highlight the key ideas (do not include examples or evidence).
- Now note down the key ideas.
- The next step is to rewrite your notes into sentences using your own words.

Example of a summary:

“Cold Chisel convoy in hot water” (Eliot 2011)



A senior Constable has been charged with reckless driving and two other police officers will get speeding fines after a speed camera allegedly caught them going too fast while taking Cold Chisel band members to their concert at Margaret River. The speed camera image is not the only snap of the incident. A picture of Cold Chisel front man Jimmy Barnes published on Twitter shows the singer smiling in the front passenger seat of a police car driven by Dunsborough Sgt Craig Anderson, who is expected to be fined.

The officers based in the South West were asked to drive the legendary Australian rock band from Busselton airport to Sandalford Estate Winery at the weekend because they were running late.

Police usually refuse such as escort requests. But they agreed to help Cold Chisel amid concerns that delays at the end of the concert may have caused problems between concert goers and high school leavers who were celebrating the end of exams.

The convoy included two marked police cars and a marked police motorcycle.

The officers activated the emergency lights on the vehicles but it is alleged they did not have permission to drive under priority conditions, so they were required to stick to the speed limit.

Yesterday, the senior constable riding the motorcycle was charged with reckless driving. It is alleged he was doing 129 km/h in an 80 km/h zone.

It is alleged Sgt Anderson and a constable were driving marked police cars at 110 km/h and 116 km/h. The officers are also subject to internal disciplinary actions.

Summary (The main points in the article above)

e.g. A number of policemen are facing speeding fines they incurred when transporting Jimmy Barnes to a concert at a winery in the southwest of WA (Eliot 2011).

What is paraphrasing?

Paraphrasing provides a restatement of text in your own words. It can include the use of examples and evidence and should always be referenced. Paraphrasing allows you to use supporting sources while still writing in your own academic voice.

Paraphrasing can be used to:

- Reword facts and opinions from other sources;
- Keep the original meaning of a source but present it in your own words;
- Express the content of whole sentences or paragraphs.

How to paraphrase

- Firstly, read the section of text (as many times as you can) so that you understand the example or evidence you want to integrate into your paper.
- Now, cover / close the text and write out these parts in your own words.
- Finally, ensure that the meaning of the text has been kept from the original to your work.
- If your text is too similar after the first attempt, underline key words and attempt to restructure or use synonyms in place of some of these words.

Paraphrasing is difficult for everyone, even experienced writers. It takes time and effort to convey someone else's ideas accurately in your own words. However, it is an essential study skill, helping you demonstrate your learning in assignments and also assisting you to become a better writer.

Example of paraphrasing:

“Cold Chisel convoy in hot water” (Eliot 2011)



A senior Constable has been charged with reckless driving and two other police officers will get speeding fines after a speed camera allegedly caught them going too fast while taking Cold Chisel band members to their concert at Margaret River. The speed camera image is not the only snap of the incident. A picture of Cold Chisel front man Jimmy Barnes published on Twitter shows the singer smiling in the front passenger seat of a police car driven by Dunsborough Sgt Craig Anderson, who is expected to be fined.

The officers based in the South West were asked to drive the legendary Australian rock band from Busselton airport to Sandalford Estate Winery at the weekend because they were running late. Police usually refuse such as escort requests. But they agreed to help Cold Chisel amid concerns that delays at the end of the concert may have caused problems between concert goers and high school leavers who were celebrating the end of exams.

The convoy included two marked police cars and a marked police motorcycle. The officers activated the emergency lights on the vehicles but it is alleged they did not have permission to drive under priority conditions, so they were required to stick to the speed limit.

Yesterday, the senior constable riding the motorcycle was charged with reckless driving. It is alleged he was doing 129 km/h in an 80 km/h zone.

It is alleged Sgt Anderson and a constable were driving marked police cars at 110 km/h and 116 km/h. The officers are also subject to internal disciplinary actions.

Paraphrase (the main points in the article above in your own words)

e.g. A number of police officers will face traffic charges, ranging from fines to loss of license, after allegedly breaking the law to get Jimmy Barnes to a concert in SW WA on time. Police would generally not take part in an escort for a celebrity (this is the role of private security) however there were concerns about clashes with other events nearby finishing at the same time (Eliot, 2011).

Final points to remember:

- ✓ Integrating information and ideas from sources into your writing is a complex task, involving several skills. **Regular practice will improve this skill.**
- ✓ Direct quotes should generally not make up any more than 10-15% of any paper.

Handy links:

Paraphrasing and Summarising, Monash University:

<http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/writing/information-technology/sources/2.5.3.xml>

Summarising and Paraphrasing, Deakin University:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/students/study-support/referencing/summarising-paraphrasing-quoting>