



# Paraphrasing

## What is paraphrasing?

- Paraphrasing is simply re-writing a phrase or sentence to present the same meaning. Loosely translated, **it is the phrase or sentence in another group of words.**
- In language tests, you can surely **demonstrate your vocabulary by using paraphrasing skills in the writing and speaking sections.** Still, you will need to apply paraphrasing skills **to relate the sentences of the questions with the listening contents and the reading articles,** which will help you to get a better score.

## Why do you need to paraphrase?

1. **To show the examiner that you understand the question** well enough to put it in your own words.
2. **To serve as the background information** so to lead it to your argument, discuss the topic, and create your thesis statement.
3. **To fulfill the exam criteria** by demonstrating the vocabulary variety and answering the question clearly in the thesis statement.

## Paraphrasing & Essay Writing

- Now, take a closer look at writing an essay of English Exams. Paraphrasing is one of the most important skills you will need to use.
- Many students often copy the statement of the questions directly, which will definitely lower the score. **Do not copy.** For the examiners, it is to "plagiarize" from the question! So, **paraphrasing the question statement is the very first thing to start with in writing an exam essay.**
- The following parts are the purposes and techniques of paraphrasing in the language writing tests.

## Techniques for Paraphrasing

- 1) **Change a word to a different form,** noun $\leftrightarrow$ verb; adj.  $\leftrightarrow$ noun, etc.
- 2) **Use synonyms**
- 3) Replace words with **phrases/clauses**
- 4) Arrange **the information in a new order:** this might include
  - ①changing from active to passive voice or
  - ②moving modifiers to different positions, or
  - ③breaking the complex ideas into smaller units; hence necessary grammar and sentence structure changes shall be made accordingly.

## Paraphrasing Example 1

- Original: **①Paraphrasing ②involves ③④changing a text ⑤so that it is quite ⑥dissimilar to ⑦the source ⑧yet retains all the meaning** (Bailey 2000, p.21).
- Paraphrase: **①Paraphrase ②requires ③④a text to be altered ⑤in a way which makes it ⑥different from ⑦the original ⑧while keeping the same meaning.**

In this example, the following changes have been made:

1. Paraphrasing  $\Rightarrow$  Paraphrase (*change word forms of a noun*)
2. involves  $\Rightarrow$  requires (*synonyms*)
3. changing a text  $\Rightarrow$  a text to be altered (*change word order*)
4. changing  $\Rightarrow$  altered (*synonyms*)
5. so that it is  $\Rightarrow$  in a way which makes it (*Replace words with phrases/clauses*)
6. dissimilar to  $\Rightarrow$  different from (*synonyms*)
7. the source  $\Rightarrow$  the original (*synonyms*)
8. yet retains all the meaning  $\Rightarrow$  while keeping the same meaning (*synonyms*)

## Paraphrasing Example 2

- ❑ Original: ❶ Medical professor John Swanson ❷ says that ❸ global changes are ❹ influencing ❺ the spread of disease.
- Paraphrase: ❷ According to John Swanson, ❶ a professor of medicine, ❸ changes across the globe are ❹ causing ❺ diseases to spread (James, 2004).

In this example, the following changes have been made:

- ❶ Medical professor → a professor of medicine (*change word form, adj. ← → noun*)
- ❷ says → According to (*Replace words with phrases*)
- ❸ global changes → changes across the globe (*change word form, noun ← → verb*)
- ❹ influencing → causing (*synonyms*)
- ❺ the spread of disease → diseases to spread (*change word form, noun ← → verb*)

## Paraphrasing Example 3

- ❑ Original: ❶ Malaria ❷ kills ❸ more than one million people ❹ annually, ❺ the overwhelming majority of ❻ them are children ❼ in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Paraphrase: ❹ Every year, ❸ more than a million people ❷ are killed by ❶ malaria, and ❺ most of the ❻ victims are children ❼ who live in sub-Saharan Africa (Angier, 2001).

- ❶ Malaria –[subject] → malaria –[object] (*from active to passive voice*)
- ❷ kills → are killed by (*from active to passive voice*)
- ❸ more than one million people → more than a million people (*synonyms*)
- ❹ annually → Every year (*synonyms*)
- ❺ the overwhelming majority of → most of the (*synonyms*)
- ❻ them → victims (*synonyms*)
- ❼ in sub-Saharan Africa → who live in sub-Saharan Africa (*Replace words with phrases/clauses*)

### References:

- <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/writing/sources/techniques-paraphrasing>
- <https://www.eapfoundation.com/writing/paraphrase/>

