EFFECTIVE PARAPHRASING

Paraphrasing shows you understand an idea, and helps you integrate this idea into your paragraph. **It's important to use your own words to reflect the idea in the original source material.** If you use too many words or grammar patterns from the original source material, you could be in danger of plagiarism.
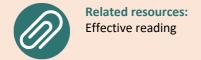
How to paraphrase effectively:

1. Read the source material till you understand the ideas.

2. Write some keywords from the ideas.

3. Put the source material OUT OF SIGHT.

4. Write your OWN sentences explaining the ideas, using the keywords. This is your paraphrase. (Still keep the source material out of sight!)

5. Edit your paraphrase to ensure it makes sense.

6. Now you can look at the source material again. Does your paraphrase adequately represent the ideas, but using YOUR words?

7. Cite the author and publication date of the source material according to your subject's preferred style, and list full details in the reference list.

Using Synonyms:

Synonyms are words that have the same meaning. For example, *'need'* and *'require'* are synonyms. Synonyms can be useful when paraphrasing. You can find synonyms on Microsoft Word or a thesaurus. However, you need to be careful when using synonyms to paraphrase:

1. Check the synonym has the **same part of speech** as the original word (noun, verb etc.).
2. Check the synonym has the same meaning as the original word **in that context.**
3. Check the synonym can be used **with the other words** around it. In the example overleaf, the original text uses the expression 'confined to the four walls'. These words can be used together to show a clear meaning. Although the synonym *'cramped'* *can* mean *'confined'*, "cramped" and "to" and "walls" can't be used together, so the paraphrase does not make sense.

Which is the best paraphrase?

Here is a passage from page 1 of an academic article:

> "The internet has changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work today.
> The library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. It has, instead, extended
> into cyberspace. Many librarians have gone into cyberspace to locate on-line resources."

Abas, Z. W. (1996, December 4). On-Line Libraries and Cybrarians. *Kekal Abadi.*
http://eprints.um.edu.my/8977/1/KA15(4)1996-A1.pdf

Read the three examples of 'paraphrasing' below: which paraphrase is best, and why? Our answer is
intemtionally upside down.

A	Today, the internet has changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work and the library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. Instead, the library has extended into cyberspace and so many librarians go into cyberspace to locate on-line resources (Abas, 1996).	**A** is too close to the original. The student has only changed a few words and the order of a few phrases. By not using quotation marks or providing the page number, this is an example of plagiarism.
B	The internet has so rehabilitated the form of libraries and how librarians labour today. The library is no longer cramped to the four walls of a structure. It has, instead, prolonged into cyberspace and voluminous librarians have gone into cyberspace to trace on-line possessions (Abas, 1996).	**B** doesn't make sense. This student has changed key words in the original by using synonyms. Sometimes this is ok, if you do it for a few words and those words still make sense. However, this student has not checked the context or if words can be used together. For example, 'rehabilitated' can mean changed, but only for people (not for buildings), and 'prolonged' means 'extended' over time, not space. Simply replacing words is not paraphrasing.
C	Libraries are no longer limited to the building. Instead, libraries have stretched into cyberspace, meaning many librarians now access resources online. This shows how the Internet has affected how libraries look, as well as the work of librarians (Abas, 1996).	**C** is the best paraphrase. It expresses the original meaning in clear, simple language. The sentence order has been changed and synonyms well-chosen to fit the context, clearly showing the student understands the ideas in the original text.