Paraphrase Worksheet

Whether working on a research paper or a personal narrative, presenting the ideas of a credible source using your own language is an effective way to integrate evidence into your academic writing. However, paraphrasing is more complex than directly quoting source material, and it is important to practice paraphrasing in order to succeed. Here are some steps you can take to construct a successful paraphrase.

Step 1: In the space below, take notes on the most important aspects of the sentence(s) that you are attempting to paraphrase. Even though it’s tempting to use the “perfect” wording from your original source, try thinking of synonyms or related terms to get these ideas down in your words. If you must use a unique term or phrase from your original source, be sure to insert quotation marks around it.

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Step 2: Now that you’ve taken notes on your chosen evidence, walk away and do something unrelated to this project for a few minutes: work on an assignment for a different class, listen to a song, or just take a short walk. Most importantly, walk away from your source material.

When you return, flip this page over.
Step 3: In the space below, draft a paraphrase of the important concepts and ideas from your notes—without looking at the original material. Don’t worry if your draft doesn’t sound perfect yet; you can always come back and revise it later.

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Step 4: Now that you have drafted a paraphrase, compare it to your notes and source material to ensure that you have included the most important concepts in your paraphrase. Additionally, record the relevant citation information in the space below and integrate it with your paraphrase so that you are providing credit to your source’s author(s).

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