

## Avoiding Plagiarism in Academic Writing

### What is Plagiarism?

Basically plagiarism means taking ideas or words from a source without giving credit (acknowledgement) to the author. It is seen as a kind of theft, and is considered to be an academic crime.

Although plagiarism essentially means copying somebody else's work, it is not always easy to define.

**Task 01:** Work with your partner and decide that the following situations are plagiarized or not.

S.no.	Situations	Yes/No
1	Copying a paragraph in inverted commas, but changing a few words and giving a citation.	No
2	Cutting and pasting a short article from a website, with no citation.	Yes
3	Taking two paragraphs from a classmate's essay, without citation.	Yes
4	Taking a graph from a textbook, giving the source.	No
5	Taking a quotation from a source, giving a citation but not using quotation marks.	Yes
6	Using something that you think of as general knowledge, e.g. large areas of rainforest have been cut down in recent years.	No
7	Using a paragraph from an essay you wrote and had marked the previous semester, without citation.	Yes
8	Using the results of your own research, e.g. from a survey, without citation.	No
9	Discussing an essay topic with a group of classmates and using some of their ideas in your own work.	Yes
10	Giving a citation for some information but mis-spelling the author's name.	No

### Ways to avoid plagiarism

1. Summarizing
2. Paraphrasing
3. Acknowledging Sources

Quotations cannot always be used. Therefore, a writer must learn the skills of summarizing and paraphrasing.

Summarizing	Paraphrasing
Summarising means reducing the length of a text but retaining the main points.	Paraphrasing involves re-writing a text so that the language is substantially different while the content stays the same.

## 1. Summarizing

In academic writing it is a vital skill, allowing the writer to condense lengthy sources into a concise form. Like most skills it becomes easier with practice.

### 1.1 Stages of Summary Writing

**Task 02** Study the stages of summary writing below and arrange them in order.

- a. Write the summary from your notes, re-organising the structure if needed.
- b. Make notes of the key points, paraphrasing where possible.
- c. Read the original text carefully and check any new or difficult vocabulary.
- d. Mark the key points by underlining or highlighting.
- e. Check the summary to ensure it is accurate and nothing important has been changed or lost.

**ANSWER:** c, d, b, a, e.

**Task 03** Read the following text and underline the main points.

#### WEALTH AND FERTILITY

For most of the past century an inverse correlation between human fertility and economic development has been found. This means that as a country got richer, the average number of children born to each woman got smaller. While in the poorest countries women often have eight children, the rate fell as low as 1.3 in some European countries such as Italy, which is below the replacement rate. Such a low rate has two likely negative consequences: the population will fall in the long term, and a growing number of old people will have to be supported by a shrinking number of young. But a recent study by researchers from Pennsylvania University suggests that this pattern may be changing. They related countries' fertility rates to their human development index (HDI), a figure with a maximum value of 1.0, which assesses life expectancy, average income and education level. Over 20 countries now have an HDI of more than 0.9, and in a majority of these the fertility rate has started to increase, and in some is approaching two children per family.

**Task 04** Complete the notes of the key points below.

- a) Falling levels of fertility have generally been found in wealthy countries
- b) In some, number of children born getting lower
- c) Two results: smaller populations and increase number of old people
- d) Recent research claims that the pattern has changed
- e) Comparison of HDI (human development index): as countries' HDI increases, fertility rates have started to rise, with fertility found that in most highly rated (+0.9) countries, fertility rates are approaching two children per family.

**Task 05:** Join the notes together and expand them to make the final summary. Then exchange with your partner and assess their summary utilizing the rubrics given at the end of the handout.

Falling levels of fertility have generally been found in wealthier countries. In some, number of children born is getting low which has two results, the first is small population and the other is large number of old people. Recent research claims that the pattern has changed. Comparison of HDI (human development index): as countries' HDI increases, fertility rates have started to rise, with fertility found that in most highly rated (+0.9) countries, fertility rates are approaching two children per family.

**Task 06:** Summarize the summary in no more than 20 words and place it in the portfolio.

Wealthier countries have lower fertility rates, but recent research shows increasing rates as HDI rises, almost two children per family.

## 2. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means changing the wording of a text so that it is significantly different from the original source, without changing the meaning. Effective paraphrasing is a key academic skill needed to avoid the risk of plagiarism: it demonstrates your understanding of a source.

Paraphrasing and summarising are normally used together in essay writing, but while summarising aims to **reduce** information to a suitable length, paraphrasing attempts to **restate** the relevant information.

For example,

**The following sentence:**

There has been much debate about the reasons for the industrial revolution happening in eighteenth-century Britain, rather than in France or Germany.

**could be paraphrased as:**

Why the industrial revolution occurred in Britain in the eighteenth century, instead of on the continent, has been the subject of considerable discussion.

**Note that an effective paraphrase usually:**

- has a different structure to the original
- has mainly different vocabulary
- retains the same meaning
- keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use  
e.g. 'industrial revolution' or 'eighteenth century'

### 2.1 Techniques of Paraphrasing

**(a) Changing vocabulary by using synonyms:**

argues > claims, eighteenth century > 1700s, wages > labour, costs/ economise > saving

Note: Do not attempt to paraphrase every word, since some have no true synonym, e.g. demand, economy, energy

**(b) Changing word class:**

explanation (n.) > explain (v.) , mechanical (adj.) > mechanise (v.) , profitable (adj.) > profitability (n.)

**(c) Changing word order:**

. . . the best explanation for the British location of the industrial revolution is found by studying demand factors.

> A focus on demand may help explain the UK origin of the industrial revolution.

**Task 07 Read the following text and complete the exercises.**

**FOUR WHEELS GOOD**

The growth of the car industry parallels the development of modern capitalism. It began in France and Germany, but took off in the United States. There Henry Ford adapted the moving production line from the Chicago meat industry to motor manufacturing, thus inventing mass production. In the 1920s Alfred Sloan's management theories helped General Motors to become the world's dominant car company. After the second world war the car makers focused on the styling of their products to encourage more frequent model changes. From the 1970s there was criticism of the industry due to the inefficiency of most vehicles, which used petrol wastefully. At the same time, trades unions became increasingly militant in defence of their members' jobs. Today the industry owns some of the most famous brands in the world. However, many car makers are currently threatened by increased competition and saturated markets.

**(a) Find synonyms for the words underlined.**

(i) The growth of the car industry parallels the development of modern capitalism.

Example: The rise of the automobile industry matches the progress of contemporary capitalism.

(ii) It began in France and Germany, but took off in the United States.

It started in France and Germany, but ended in the United States.

(iii) There Henry Ford adapted the moving production line from the Chicago meat industry to motor manufacturing, thus inventing mass production.

There Henry Ford modified the moving manufacturing line from the Chicago meat industry to automobile manufacturing, results in inventing mass production.

**Task 08**

**(b) Change the word class of the underlined words, and then re-write the sentences.**

(i) In the 1920s Alfred Sloan's management theories helped General Motors to become the world's dominant car company.

Example: In the 1920s, with help from the managerial theories of Alfred Sloan, General Motors dominated the world's car companies.

(ii) After the second world war the car makers focused on the styling of their products, to encourage more frequent model changes.

The car makers starts focusing to improve their product's styles after the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> world war in order to enhance the apparent changes in model.

(iii) From the 1970s there was criticism of the industry due to the inefficiency of most vehicles, which used petrol wastefully.

After 1970, the rise in criticizing automobile industry for its inefficient and wasteful use of petrol has been observed.

### Task 09

**(c) Change the word order of the following sentences (other changes may be needed).**

(i) At the same time, trades unions became increasingly militant in defence of their members' jobs.

Example: At the same time increasingly militant trades unions defended their members' jobs.

(ii) Today the industry owns some of the most famous brands in the world.

The industry owns the popular brands around the globe in present times.

(iii) However, many car makers are currently threatened by increased competition and saturated markets.

Automobile producers faced threats due to increasing competition and stable markets.

### Task 10

**(d) Combine all these techniques to paraphrase the paragraph as fully as possible and place it in the portfolio.**

The rise of the automobile industry matches the progress of contemporary capitalism. It started in France and Germany, but ended in the United States. There Henry Ford modified the moving manufacturing line from the Chicago meat industry to automobile manufacturing, results in inventing mass production. In the 1920s, with help from the managerial theories of Alfred Sloan, General Motors dominated the world's car companies. The car makers starts focusing to improve their product's styles after the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> world war in order to enhance the apparent changes in model. After 1970, the rise in criticizing automobile industry for its inefficient and wasteful use of petrol has been observed. At the same time increasingly militant trades unions defended their members' jobs. The industry owns the popular brands around the globe in present times. Automobile producers faced threats due to increasing competition and stable markets.

## Task 11

Use the same techniques to paraphrase the following text and place it in the portfolio.

### THE PAST BELOW THE WAVES

More than three million shipwrecks are believed to lie on the seabed, the result of storms and accidents during thousands of years of sea-borne trading. These wrecks offer marine archaeologists valuable information about the culture, technology and trade patterns of ancient civilisations, but the vast majority have been too deep to research. Scuba divers can only operate down to 50 metres, which limits operations to wrecks near the coast, which have often been damaged by storms or plant growth. A few deep sea sites (such as the Titanic) have been explored by manned submarines, but this kind of equipment has been too expensive for less famous subjects. However, this situation has been changed by the introduction of a new kind of mini submarine: the automatic underwater vehicle (AUV). This cheap, small craft is free moving and does not need an expensive mother-ship to control it. Now a team of American archaeologists are planning to use an AUV to explore an area of sea north of Egypt which was the approach to a major trading port 4,000 years ago.

### THE PAST BELOW THE WAVES:

Over three million shipwrecks are thought to be lying on the ocean floor, caused by storms and accidents over thousands of years of sea trading. These wrecks can give marine archaeologists important insights into the cultures, technologies, and trade routes of ancient civilizations, but most are too deep to study. Scuba divers can only reach about 50 meters, so they mostly explore coastal wrecks, which often get damaged by storms or plant growth. Some famous deep-sea sites, like the Titanic, have been investigated with manned submarines, but those are really expensive for lesser-known wrecks. Fortunately, there's a new type of mini submarine called the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) that's changing things. It's small and affordable, and it can move around on its own without needing an expensive mother ship. A team of American archaeologists is now planning to use an AUV to explore a part of the sea north of Egypt, which used to be the entrance to a major trading port 4,000 years ago.

## 3. Acknowledging Resources

If you borrow from or refer to the work of another person, you must show that you have done this by providing the correct acknowledgement. There are two ways to do this:

### 3.1. Summary and citation

Smith (2009) claims that the modern state wields power in new ways.

### 3.2. Quotation and citation

According to Smith: 'The point is not that the state is in retreat but that it is developing new forms of power . . .' (Smith, 2009: 103).

These in-text **citations** are linked to a list of **references** at the end of the main text, which includes the following details:

Author	Date	Title	Place of publication	Publisher
Smith, M.	(2009)	<i>Power and the State</i>	Basingstoke	Palgrave Macmillan

The citation makes it clear to the reader that you have read Smith and borrowed this idea from him. This reference gives the reader the necessary information to find the source if the reader needs more detail.

### 3.3. Citations and references

It is important to refer correctly to the work of other writers that you have used. You may present these sources as either a summary/ paraphrase or as a quotation. In each case a citation is included to provide a link to the list of references at the end of your paper:

Smith (2009) argues that the popularity of the Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) is irrational, as despite their high cost most are never driven off-road. In his view ‘they are bad for road safety, the environment and road congestion’ (Smith, 2009: 37).

<b>References</b>
Smith, M. (2009) <i>Power and the State</i> . Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

### 3.4. Giving Citations

A quotation	Author’s name, date of publication, page no.	(Smith, 2009: 37)
A summary	Author’s name, date of publication	Smith (2009)

### 3.5. Using Quotations

Using a quotation means bringing the original words of a writer into your work. Quotations are effective in some situations, but must not be overused.

They can be valuable:

- when the original words express an idea in a distinctive way
- when the original is more concise than your summary could be
- when the original version is well-known

All quotations should be introduced by a phrase that shows the source, and also explains how this quotation fits into your argument:

Introductory phrase	Author	Reference verb	Quotation	Citation
This view is widely shared;	as Friedman	stated:	‘Inflation is the one form of taxation that can be imposed without legislation’	(1974: 93).

(a) Short quotations (2–3 lines) are shown by single quotation marks. Quotations inside quotations (nested quotations) use double:

As James remarked: ‘Martin’s concept of “internal space” requires close analysis.’

(b) Longer quotations are either indented (given a wider margin) or are printed in smaller type. In this case quotations marks are not needed.

(c) Page numbers should be given after the date.

(d) Care must be taken to ensure that quotations are the exact words of the original. If it is necessary to delete some words that are irrelevant, use points . . . to show where the missing section was:

‘Few inventions . . . have been as significant as the mobile phone.’

(e) It may be necessary to insert a word or phrase into the quotation to clarify a point. This can be done by using square brackets [ ]:

‘modern ideas [of freedom] differ radically from those of the ancient world. . .’

## **Practice**

**Study the following paragraph from an article titled ‘The mobile revolution’ in the journal ‘Development Quarterly’ (Issue 34 pages 85–97, 2009) by K. Hoffman. p. 87.**

According to recent estimates there are at least 4 billion mobile phones in the world, and the majority of these are owned by people in the developing world. Ownership in the developed world reached saturation level by 2007, so countries such as China, India and Brazil now account for most of the growth. In the poorest countries, with weak transport networks and unreliable postal services, access to telecommunications is a vital tool for starting or developing a business, since it provides access to wider markets. Studies have shown that when household incomes rise, more money is spent on mobile phones than any other item.

### **(a) Summary**

Hoffman (2009) stresses the critical importance of mobile phones in the developing world in the growth of small businesses.

### **(b) Quotation**

According to Hoffman, mobile phone ownership compensates for the weaknesses of infrastructure in the developing world: ‘In the poorest countries, with weak transport networks and unreliable postal services, access to telecommunications is a vital tool for starting or developing a business, since it provides access to wider markets’ (2009: 87).

### **(c) Summary and quotation**



Hoffman points out that most of the growth in mobile phone ownership now takes place in the developing world, where it has become crucial for establishing a business: ‘. . . access to telecommunications is a vital tool for starting or developing a business, since it provides access to wider markets’ (2009: 87).

**Task 12 Read the following paragraph.**

In such countries the effect of phone ownership on GDP growth is much stronger than in the developed world, because the ability to make calls is being offered for the first time, rather than as an alternative to existing landlines. As a result, mobile phone operators have emerged in Africa, India and other parts of Asia that are larger and more flexible than Western companies, and which have grown by catering for poorer customers, being therefore well-placed to expand downmarket. In addition Chinese phone makers have successfully challenged the established Western companies in terms of quality as well as innovation. A further trend is the provision of services via the mobile network which offer access to information about topics such as healthcare or agriculture.

- (a) Write a summary of the main point, including a citation.

Hoffman (2009) highlights that owning mobile phones has a much bigger impact on GDP growth in parts of Asia, especially in developing countries where people are getting access to communication for the first time. He also points out that Western companies are facing challenges from innovative Chinese manufacturers in this changing market.

- (b) Introduce a quotation to show the key point, referring to the source.

Hoffman notes, "mobile phone operators have emerged in Africa, India and other parts of Asia that are larger and more flexible than Western companies" (2009, p. 87).

- (c) Combine (a) and (b), again acknowledging the source.

Hoffman (2009) highlights that mobile phone ownership plays a crucial role in enhancing GDP growth in parts of Asia, especially in developing countries where people are gaining access to communication for the first time. He points out that "mobile phone operators have emerged in Africa, India and other parts of Asia that are larger and more flexible than Western companies" (p. 87), indicating that Western firms face increasing competition from innovative Chinese manufacturers in this rapidly changing market.

**3.6. Abbreviations in citations**

In-text citations use the following abbreviations, derived from Latin and printed in italics:

**et al.:** normally used when there are three or more authors. The full list of names is given in the reference list:

Many Americans fail to vote (Hobolt et al., 2006: 137).

**ibid.:** taken from the same source (i.e. the same page) as the previous citation:

Older Americans are more likely to vote than the young (ibid.) . . .

**op. cit.:** taken from the same source as previously, but a different page.

### 3.7. List of references

At the end of an essay or report there must be a list of all the sources cited in the writing.

the list is organised alphabetically by the family name of the author. You should be clear about the difference between first names and family names. On title pages the normal format of first name then family name is used:

Sheila Burford, Juan Gonzalez

But in citations only the family name is used:

Burford (2001), Gonzalez (1997)

In reference lists use the family name and the initial(s):

Burford, S., Gonzalez, J.

### Task 13 Study the reference list below and answer the following questions.

#### REFERENCES

Bialystock, E. (1997). 'The structure of age: In search of barriers to second language acquisition'.  
*Second Language Research*, 13(2), 116-37.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Flege, J. (1999). 'Age of learning and second language speech' in Birdsong, D. (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 101-32.

Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Larson-Hall, J. (2008). 'Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal input situation'. *Second Language Research* 24, (1) 35-63.

Myles, F. (nd). 'Second language acquisition (SLA) research: its significance for learning and teaching issues'. *Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies*.  
[www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421](http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421). Accessed 1 May 2010.

The International Commission on Second Language Acquisition (nd). 'What is SLA?' <http://hw.ac.uk/langWWW/icsla/icsla.htm#SLA>. Accessed 6 May 2010

(a) Find an example of:

(i) a book by one author

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(ii) a journal article

Larson-Hall, J. (2008). 'Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal input situation'. *Second Language Research*, 24(1), 35-63.

(iii) a chapter in an edited book

Flege, J. (1999). 'Age of learning and second language speech' in Birdsong, D. (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 101-32.

(iv) an authored undated website article

Myles, F. (nd). 'Second language acquisition (SLA) research: its significance for learning and teaching issues'. Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies.  
[www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421](http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421). Accessed 1 May 2010.

(v) an anonymous webpage

The International Commission on Second Language Acquisition (nd). 'What is SLA?'  
<http://hw.ac.uk/langWWW/icsla/icsla.htm#SLA>. Accessed 6 May 2010.

(vi) a book by two authors

Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

(b) What are the main differences in the way these sources are referenced?

(i) Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(ii) Larson-Hall, J. (2008). 'Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal input situation'. *Second Language Research*, 24(1), 35-63.

(iii) Flege, J. (1999). 'Age of learning and second language speech' in Birdsong, D. (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 101-32.

(iv) Myles, F. (nd). 'Second language acquisition (SLA) research: its significance for learning and teaching issues'. Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies.  
[www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421](http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421). Accessed 1 May 2010.

(v) The International Commission on Second Language Acquisition (nd). 'What is SLA?'  
<http://hw.ac.uk/langWWW/icsla/icsla.htm#SLA>. Accessed 6 May 2010.

(vi) Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

© When are italics used?

Italics are used for the titles of books and journals, while the titles of articles or chapters are placed in single quotation marks.

(d) How are capital letters used in titles?

In titles, the first word and any proper nouns are capitalized. For journal names, all major words are capitalized.

(e) How is a source with no given author listed?

A source with no given author is listed using the title of the work or the organization responsible for it as the author or using NA in place of author.

(f) Write citations for summaries from each of the sources.

(i) Bialystock, E. (1997). 'The structure of age: In search of barriers to second language acquisition'. *Second Language Research*, 13(2), 116-37.

(ii) Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(iii) Flege, J. (1999). 'Age of learning and second language speech' in Birdsong, D. (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 101-32.

(iv) Myles, F. (nd). 'Second language acquisition (SLA) research: its significance for learning and teaching issues'. Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies. [www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421](http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421). Accessed 1 May 2010.

(v) The International Commission on Second Language Acquisition (nd). 'What is SLA?' <http://hw.ac.uk/langWWW/icsla/icsla.htm#SLA>. Accessed 6 May 2010.

(vi) Gass, S. and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

(vii) Larson-Hall, J. (2008). 'Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal input situation'. *Second Language Research*, 24(1), 35-63.

### Rubrics for Summary Writing

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Ineffective</b>
<b>Main Idea</b>	Clear Main Idea	Clear Main Idea	Main idea is unclear-not specifically stated in the writing.	The main idea is not present.
<b>Details</b>	All important details are included	Important details are included but some might be missing	Some critical information is missing	Contains only some details
<b>Order</b>	Details are in logical order	Ideas are in logical order	Ideas are in random order and not logical	Ideas are not in a logical order
<b>Understanding</b>	Demonstrates clear understanding of information in the text.	Demonstrates adequate understanding	Demonstrates basic understanding of information in text	Demonstrates little or no understanding