

# Synonyms for Paraphrasing

## Vocabulary – Synonyms & Antonyms

One of the most important skills when facing speaking and writing sessions is to be able to paraphrase effectively. Examiners and professors pay careful attention to whether you are repeating the exact same words as the questions used or if the candidate has the ability to change the words to express their own ideas.

Paraphrasing requires much more than just learning the meaning of words, it is necessary to know what situations are appropriate to use them. One great idea to start increasing your vocabulary is to use any of the thesaurus you find on the internet and learn group of words that go together such as collocations. Don't use synonyms for specialist terms (such as "microeconomics", "aluminium")

Every time you are analysing your writing and speaking check how many times you repeat the same word and check ways to change it with more sophisticated ones. One common word to be used when speaking is "things" depending on the context you are using you can change it by aspects, characteristics, concepts or situations.

Below you will find a short excerpt, an example of a poor paraphrase in which the writer simply substituted synonyms for the original words, not significantly varying the sentence structure. Then you will find an example of an improved paraphrase.

### Original

*Student activists have helped retire a third of the nation's on-campus coal plants since 2009. And for several years, students have rallied behind the banner of the Fossil Free movement (gofossilfree.org), urging their universities to divest from stock in fossil fuel companies, along the way notching a dozen successes.*

*Source: McManus, Reed. "Financial Statement." Sierra Sept/Oct 2014: 43-45. Print.*

### Poor paraphrase

Student environmentalists have aided in removing one third of U.S. campus coal plants in the last 8 years. They have also convinced campus leaders to get rid of their stock in fossil fuel manufacturers (McManus 45).

## Better Paraphrase

*Student efforts on campuses have resulted in progress for environmental efforts, including reducing the amount of fossil fuel stock universities hold and reducing the number of coal plants on university property (McManus 45).*

Paraphrasing may take a lot of time at the beginning but the more you practice, the better you are going to become at it. There are two types of paraphrasing:

### 1. Literal

Substitute the original words of each sentence with synonyms. You can use the process as a first step in drafting paraphrases. There are two objections to this form of paraphrasing: since you paraphrase sentence by sentence, your overall structure may be awkward; and you also run a greater risk of plagiarism. Therefore, you should use free paraphrasing for all of your final drafts.

### 2. Free

Use synonyms and rearrange the sentence structure. You can borrow the main ideas without necessarily keeping the same organization. This form of paraphrasing sounds more natural and is recommended.

Example:

#### The Original Quotation

*Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal . . . .*

#### A Literal Paraphrase

*Eighty-seven years before, our ancestors founded in North America a new country, thought of in freedom and based on the principle that all people are born with the same rights.*

#### A Free Paraphrase

*Our ancestors thought of freedom when they founded a new country in North America eighty-seven years ago. They based their thinking on the principle that all people are born with the same rights.*

There are some webpages you can visit to help you with your synonym search:

<http://www.thesaurus.com/>

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus>



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