A NEW TURN AT PARAGRAPH WRITING

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ABSTRACT

This work, A New Turn at Paragraph Writing, seems a novel academic attempt. It in particular has been written for international school, college and university students who either struggle with writing or crave to (re)learn writing through short and easy ways. This work in general targets the English language seekers as well. The present work differs at least from some other writing books as enclosed in the bibliography. It holds a diverse perspective (if not better). It is featured with briefness, clarity, and simplicity. It in plain English trains students on how to develop paraphrases. The current script in other words, is an instructional endeavor to concentrate on the academic aspect of writing which as such deals with the way an acceptable paraphrase comes to existence. In effect, students might gain the benefits of being able to (i) skim a text or lecture note, (ii) identify the most important components of a text or paragraph such as the main idea, supporting points, and conclusion, (iii) create their own paraphrase using others' ideas and information, (iv) credit the authors of the sources they use properly, and (v) develop the literature reviews of their own proposals and theses.

Key words: instructional, communication, literature review, paragraph, writing, script, paraphrase

HOW THIS NOTE WORKS

This short manuscript is composed of five sections that include view, grammar stop, review, bibliography, and appendix. View offers the main idea of the note and helps readers grasp some theoretical and practical points. Next, the grammar stop is a spot where grammar points are explained using examples. The review section then wraps the communication note by recapping its important points and central message. Bibliography enlists the cited sources of the note and finally, the note users could get down to exercises at the appendixes left at the end of the work

VIEW

A paraphrase is defined as a reproduction of an original text. It is in one sense, the act of expressing someone else's idea using your own words. In doing so, a paraphrase needs to use different words and phrases while the whole meaning of the original text remains fully intact. This skill is abundantly used by postgraduate and maybe undergraduate students who research and develop academic papers to be published or presented. In a paraphrase, you have to duly acknowledge the author's name in order to make the reader understand that these points are not yours and belong to someone else.

To create an efficient paraphrase, a writer is advised to:

- ➢ keep the original central meaning of the text.
- ➢ make changes in grammar and structure (conjoining two short sentences and split up a long one).
- ➢ use synonyms where applicable.
- ➢ cite the source appropriately.

Text citation as indicated above refers to crediting the source of information. In summarizing as well as paraphrasing, there is an urge to identify the source of the data used with the two types of text citations: in-text and end-of-text citations.

In order to write a paraphrase, one should follow the three steps below:

- ➢ to skim : reading the text quickly to grasp the main idea
- ➢ to chart : filling the above identified ideas in a grid/table like the one on the next page
- ➢ to expand : developing the charted points/ideas into full sentences on your own

As mentioned above, a paraphrase grid or chart which is optional helps you organize the information taken from the original passage. To practice, read the following excerpt of an article about time management.

> Time management is an important skill that all students should develop. Daily and weekly timetables are two excellent ways to plan a study program. Students can use them to manage their studies and set themselves study goals. A great amount of time can then be set aside for activities such as sports and other social commitments. Apart from that, proper time management help students to prioritize. By doing this, they will be able to concentrate on more urgent tasks first, before moving on to the next. Moreover, if time has been allocated for specific purposes, it is easier to cope with unforeseen circumstances such as emergencies, visitors, and invitations.
>
> Nandan, T., Crucial management (2003)

Below here, a paraphrase grid/chart has been developed on the above passage.

Main Idea	Supporting Details
Time management is essential.	➢ It allows students to manage their studies and social affairs. ➢ It enables them to give priorities. ➢ It helps to cope with unforeseen situations.

Once such a chart like the above one, is prepared, writing a paraphrase just requires stating the identified main idea as well as expanding the supporting points to form a paragraph. It should be noted that a paraphrase ought to begin with source citation. To better understand, the above original text has been paraphrased below:

> According to Nandan (2003), effective time management causes students to organize their time to complete their study requirements. It also allows them to cope with their tasks and assignments and lastly, proper time management assists students to effectively handle unexpected situations.

Let us further practice how to write a paraphrase from the below original excerpt without using a chart:

> Statements that appear pleasing in one context may be inappropriate in another. For example, women in business are usually uncomfortable if male colleagues or superiors compliment them on their appearance. The remarks suggest that the women are being regarded as decorative items rather than as contributing workers.
>
> Ashraf, Learning Etiquette (2004)

Now, read the following paraphrase and compare it with the original excerpt above.

> Ashraf (2004) maintains that statements should fit into context. Women, for example, are usually reluctant to receive positive feedback on their clothes as well as looks as it shall convey the message of their being decorative rather than contributing staff.

Look at the following short text:

> The education of undergraduate is different from the education in school; undergraduates learn under tutelage of numerous professors of diverse expertise.
>
> Nair, V., The Global Education (2005)

Now, read the below paraphrase and compare it with the original excerpt above.

> Nair (2005) in his scholarly work 'The Global Education' discerns between undergraduate and school education as the earlier is done under the varied guidance of professionals.

GRAMMAR STOP

Dashes and Parentheses

This grammar stop, centers on dashes and parentheses. Dashes will be explained first followed by parentheses. 'Dashes' are actually of two types: en dash and em dash. There are many uses of the en and em dashes and also many ways to form these dashes using your computer. The following explanations offer the most common uses and methods for forming these dashes.

1. **Dash**

a) **En Dash**

An en dash, roughly the width of an 'n', is a little longer than a hyphen. It is used for periods of time when you might otherwise use to.

Examples:

- The years 2001–2003

- January–June

An en dash is also used in place of a hyphen when combining open compounds.

Examples:

- North Carolina–Virginia border

- a high school–college conference c

Most authorities recommend using no spaces before or after en or em dashes. To form an en dash with most PCs, type the first number or word, then hold down the ALT key while typing 0150 on the numerical pad on the right side of your keyboard. Then type the second number or word.

b) **Em Dash**

An em dash is the width of an 'm'. Use an em dash sparingly in formal writing. In informal writing, em dashes may replace commas, semicolons, colons, and parentheses to indicate added emphasis, an interruption, or an abrupt change of thought.

Examples:

- You are the friend—the only friend—who offered to help me.

- Never have I met such a lovely person—before you.

- I pay the bills—she has all the fun.

- A semicolon would be used here in formal writing.

- I need three items at the store—dog food, vegetarian chili, and cheddar cheese.

- Remember, a colon would be used here in formal writing.

- My agreement with Fiona is clear—she teaches me French and I teach her German.

- Again, a colon would work here in formal writing.

- Please call my agent—Jessica Cohen—about hiring me.

- Parentheses or commas would work just fine here instead of the dashes.

- I wish you would—oh, never mind.

- This shows an abrupt change in thought and warrants an em dash.

To form an em dash on most PCs, type the first word, then hold down the ALT key while typing 0151 on the numerical pad on the right side of your keyboard. Then type the second word. You may also form an em dash by typing the first word, hitting the hyphen key twice, and then typing the second word. Your program will turn the two hyphens into an em dash for you.

2. **Parentheses**

Rule 1

Use parentheses to enclose words or figures that clarify or are used as an aside.

Examples:

- I expect five hundred dollars ($500).

- He finally answered (after taking five minutes to think) that he did not understand the question.

Commas could have been used in the above example. Parentheses show less emphasis or importance. Em dashes, which could also have been used instead of parentheses, show emphasis.

Rule 2

Use full parentheses to enclose numbers or letters used for listed items.

Example:

- We need an emergency room physician who can (1) think quickly, (2) treat patients respectfully, and (3) handle complaints from the public.

Rule 3

Periods go inside parentheses only if an entire sentence is inside the parentheses.

Examples:

- Please read the analysis (I enclosed it as Attachment A.).

    OR

- Please read the analysis. (I enclosed it as Attachment A.)

    OR

- Please read the analysis (Attachment A).

REVIEW

Paraphrasing is a form of reproduction whose main idea belongs to its original text. These days, due to the added value of (higher) education, a large number of students and scholars are busy carrying out paraphrasing. They might paraphrase previous works of literature or other materials to create their own novel pieces of research. This is just one usage of paraphrasing.

In paraphrasing, one should retain the original central message and ensure the paraphrase's ownership. In doing so, a paraphrase writer ought to use new synonyms for the words in the original text. Citing the source of information is also a must.

Biography

Hassan Fartousi, an academician and researcher, is working at the faculty of Language and Education of the Geomatika College International. As well as Malaysia, he holds 16 years of experience in the English language teaching in the UAE and Iran. Hassan has published and presented tens of papers in Semantics, writing skill, English Language Teaching (ELT), and Rhetoric. Holding a Master's of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from the IIU, a public university in Malaysia, he has decided to create an instructional note different (if not better) with the intent of streamlining as well as facilitating the academic skill of writing.

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APPENDIX I

Take your time writing a paraphrase based on the original text given below.

Many medical treatments and procedures are developed from experiments performed on animals. Since animals share many features with humans, scientists use animal to test the safety and effectiveness of newly developed drugs before pilot testing them on small groups of patients. Without animal testing, many procedures or new drugs would be extremely unsafe.

                                                    Teo Kim Mun, Treatments and Testing (2006)

Now, reread the above text carefully and write your own paraphrase in the box provided:

_____
_____
_____
_____
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