



Paraphrasing

What is paraphrasing?

- Paraphrasing is simply re-writing a phrase or sentence to present the same meaning. Loosely translated, **it is the phrase or sentence in another group of words.**
- In language tests, you can surely **demonstrate your vocabulary by using paraphrasing skills in the writing and speaking sections.** Still, you will need to apply paraphrasing skills **to relate the sentences of the questions with the listening contents and the reading articles,** which will help you to get a better score.

Why do you need to paraphrase?

1. **To show the examiner that you understand the question** well enough to put it in your own words.
2. **To serve as the background information** so to lead it to your argument, discuss the topic, and create your thesis statement.
3. **To fulfill the exam criteria** by demonstrating the vocabulary variety and answering the question clearly in the thesis statement.

Paraphrasing & Essay Writing

- Now, take a closer look at writing an essay of English Exams. Paraphrasing is one of the most important skills you will need to use.
- Many students often copy the statement of the questions directly, which will definitely lower the score. **Do not copy.** For the examiners, it is to "plagiarize" from the question! So, **paraphrasing the question statement is the very first thing to start with in writing an exam essay.**
- The following parts are the purposes and techniques of paraphrasing in the language writing tests.

Techniques for Paraphrasing

- 1) **Change a word to a different form,** noun \leftrightarrow verb; adj. \leftrightarrow noun, etc.
- 2) **Use synonyms**
- 3) Replace words with **phrases/clauses**
- 4) Arrange **the information in a new order:** this might include
 - ①changing from active to passive voice or
 - ②moving modifiers to different positions, or
 - ③breaking the complex ideas into smaller units; hence necessary grammar and sentence structure changes shall be made accordingly.

Paraphrasing Example 1

- Original: **①Paraphrasing ②involves ③④changing a text ⑤so that it is quite ⑥dissimilar to ⑦the source ⑧yet retains all the meaning** (Bailey 2000, p.21).
- Paraphrase: **①Paraphrase ②requires ③④a text to be altered ⑤in a way which makes it ⑥different from ⑦the original ⑧while keeping the same meaning.**

In this example, the following changes have been made:

1. Paraphrasing \Rightarrow Paraphrase (*change word forms of a noun*)
2. involves \Rightarrow requires (*synonyms*)
3. changing a text \Rightarrow a text to be altered (*change word order*)
4. changing \Rightarrow altered (*synonyms*)
5. so that it is \Rightarrow in a way which makes it (*Replace words with phrases/clauses*)
6. dissimilar to \Rightarrow different from (*synonyms*)
7. the source \Rightarrow the original (*synonyms*)
8. yet retains all the meaning \Rightarrow while keeping the same meaning (*synonyms*)

Paraphrasing Example 2

- Original: ① Medical professor John Swanson ② says that ③ global changes are ④ influencing ⑤ the spread of disease.
- Paraphrase: ② According to John Swanson, ① a professor of medicine, ③ changes across the globe are ④ causing ⑤ diseases to spread (James, 2004).

In this example, the following changes have been made:

- ① Medical professor → a professor of medicine (*change word form, adj. ← → noun*)
- ② says → According to (*Replace words with phrases*)
- ③ global changes → changes across the globe (*change word form, noun ← → verb*)
- ④ influencing → causing (*synonyms*)
- ⑤ the spread of disease → diseases to spread (*change word form, noun ← → verb*)

Paraphrasing Example 3

- Original: ① Malaria ② kills ③ more than one million people ④ annually, ⑤ the overwhelming majority of ⑥ them are children ⑦ in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Paraphrase: ④ Every year, ③ more than a million people ② are killed by ① malaria, and ⑤ most of the ⑥ victims are children ⑦ who live in sub-Saharan Africa (Angier, 2001).

- ① Malaria –[subject] → malaria –[object] (*from active to passive voice*)
- ② kills → are killed by (*from active to passive voice*)
- ③ more than one million people → more than a million people (*synonyms*)
- ④ annually → Every year (*synonyms*)
- ⑤ the overwhelming majority of → most of the (*synonyms*)
- ⑥ them → victims (*synonyms*)
- ⑦ in sub-Saharan Africa → who live in sub-Saharan Africa (*Replace words with phrases/clauses*)

