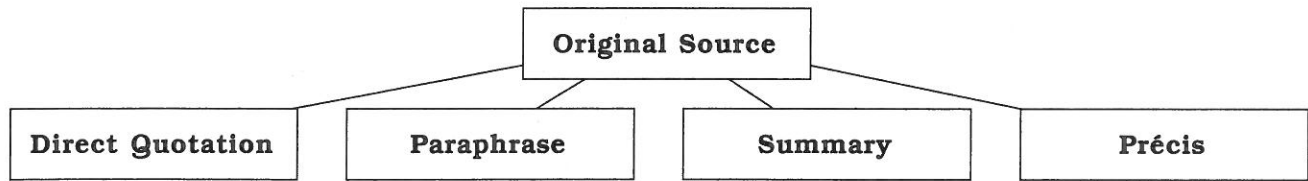


A Note-Taking Overview

Directions: Read the explanations of various methods of recording information from an original source.



Purpose

In all note taking, you have one primary purpose: to record material in a way that is the most beneficial to you.

Techniques

- a. *Direct quotation* records the source's exact words and places them in quotation marks. Use quotations only when the author's wording makes a point extraordinarily vivid, concise, or imaginative. Too much quoting is time-consuming and may interfere with your comprehending the material.
- b. *Paraphrase* translates all of the source's content into different words. It ensures your understanding of the material and records both the author's reasoning and the supportive details. Like quoting, paraphrasing can be time-consuming. Be alert that all the material you record is relevant to your topic and purpose.
- c. *Summary*, like paraphrase, records information in different words, but much more briefly. You write a general statement of the author's content and position. Be careful not to overgeneralize; incorporate specific details likely to help you later.
- d. *Précis* differs from summary only in language. You use different words from those in the source; however, you deliberately select vocabulary and style similar to those in the original. Researchers use précis to capture the tone of the source.

Combining Techniques

In practice, researchers combine techniques to record information as efficiently as possible in order to achieve their goal(s).

Sources

Always keep bibliographical data for your sources: complete name(s) of author(s), complete title, and publishing city, company, and date; for periodicals include the date of the issue and page numbers of the article. This will save you a great deal of time when you assemble your "Works Cited" list. List page numbers for direct quotations. It is also helpful to record the call number and the library where the source can be found. (See **Handout 37.**)

Notes

Many researchers use index card files to collect and organize information. This approach is especially helpful when the topic is complex and the research process is lengthy. Still others use computers to store, organize, and access information. Experiment with various approaches until you find one that works well for you.