Hints for Good Paraphrasing

- When quoting an original source word-for-word, or even a key phrase within a paraphrase, put quotation marks around it. And CITE IT!

- When paraphrasing an original source, restate in your own words the ideas of the author. While you will hopefully use the paraphrase to support your own ideas and, in turn, write an evaluative response to the paraphrase, you must still indicate in your paper that the original idea is not yours but someone else’s. And CITE IT!

- When summarizing an original source, you’re essentially paraphrasing but including only the general ideas and a few of the details that support those ideas; thus, the summary will be shorter than a paraphrase. When using summary in your paper, you must indicate that the idea is someone else’s, not yours. CITE IT!

- If the reader of your paper can’t tell which ideas are yours and which ideas belong to another source, then you’ve plagiarized. When in doubt, CITE! See below for information on how to avoid plagiarism.

- As for what to include in the actual citation within your text, much depends upon which documentation style you’re using. Learn the basics of your required documentation style, be it MLA, APA, or Chicago Style, for example. Refer to the appropriate manuals for each style, and use RefWorks and Write-n–Cite to help you keep track of that formatting. Check Purdue University’s On-line Writing Lab for basic information about APA and MLA: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

- Check the same source for a good discussion of paraphrasing.

- The key is to include enough information so that the reader could find the original source if she wanted to.

Plagiarism

The following information is taken from Andrea Lunsford’s Easy Writer, 2nd edition:

Plagiarism, the use of another’s intellectual property without crediting the person, breaks trust with the research conversation you are a part of and with readers as well. As a mark of dishonesty, it can destroy the credibility of both research and researcher and can have serious consequences.

The safest way to avoid plagiarism is to acknowledge use of all of your sources, with the following three exceptions, which do not need to be credited:

- *Common knowledge*: a specific source of information most readers would be likely to know (that President George W. Bush was first inaugurated in 2001, for example)
• **Facts available in a variety of sources** (for instance, that water boils at 100 degrees Celsius or that the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7, 1941)

• **Your own findings from field research** (interviews, observations, experiments, or surveys you have conducted, which should be announced as such.

For all other source material, give credit as fully as possible, using quotation marks around any quoted material, citing the source according to the documentation style required, and, if necessary, listing it in a bibliography or list of works cited. Be sure to acknowledge and give full credit for all of the following:

• Facts not widely known: arguable assertions

• Judgments, opinions, and claims of others

• Statistics, charts, tables, and graphs from any source

• Help from friends, instructors, or others

• Material found on the Internet or World Wide Web, with the name of the author and the URL. Although intellectual property conventions are in flux, remember that, for material you intend to include in a paper that you will post on the Web, you may need to ask permission—for example, to quote from email communication or to use someone else’s images or graphics. (160-61)