



Quotation, Paraphrase, Summary, and Analysis

The distinction between paraphrase, summary, and analysis is central to academic writing, especially for assignments that require critical responses to sources. Paraphrase, summary, and analysis are important for accomplishing different jobs in the essay:

- **Quotation** allows the writer to fully use the original author's words using quotation marks in order to make a point or to provide support for an idea.
 - Example: The professor said, "The sun is shining."
- **Paraphrasing** enables the writer to comprehend the content of a source by putting the original words into the writer's own words.
 - Example: The professor explained that the weather would be sunny all day today.
- **Summary**: Summary is used to provide a brief understanding of the main points of a source. In this case, only the most important or most essential information from a source is used.
 - Example: Today in class, we talked about the sunny day outside.

- **Analysis**, which relies on the writer’s own observations and ideas, shows how the components function as parts of a whole (the source itself, the subject which the source addresses, the academic discipline to which the source contributes). In analysis, a new idea is born from the original source.
 - Example: When the professor mentioned the sunny day in class, he meant to establish a personable relationship with the students so they may be more open to his forthcoming lecture.

The following examples illustrating the distinction between quotation, paraphrase, summary, and analysis are based on a well-known nursery rhyme:

“Jack and Jill ran up the hill to fetch a pail of water. Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling after.”

QUOTATION: In the classic nursery rhyme, “Jack and Jill,” the two characters are tasked with “fetch[ing] a pail of water.”

PARAPHRASE: In the nursery rhyme, “Jack and Jill,” the two title characters are racing to get water from the well when Jack trips without warning, hitting his head, and Jill falls down the hill after him.

SUMMARY: In the classic children’s nursery rhyme, “Jack and Jill,” two children are in the midst of completing a domestic chore, gathering water from the well, when an accident happens. First Jack slides down the hill and gets hurt, and then Jill also falls down the hill.

ANALYSIS: The classic children’s nursery rhyme, “Jack and Jill,” depicts two children in an act of domestic chores, which in the 1760s when the rhyme was published, was often what children were sent by their parents to do so as to contribute to the running of the home. Generally, the idea that the two run “up the hill” is nonsense because water typically comes from the bottom of hills (since water follows the downward flow of gravity). In modern usage, the rhyme provides a slapstick comedy for children to enjoy, but might also provide a lesson that children should take care when accomplishing their chores so that they do not injure themselves.

