

# writing terms

## **Summary:**

Condenses information—a chapter into a paragraph, a paragraph into a sentence; an abstract of a journal article is a good example to study. A good summary should state the author's intent, purpose, and main points (see Writing Center handout “writing summaries”).

## **Critique:**

Answers the questions:

- Does the author succeed? How and why or why not?
- What are the strengths? And weaknesses? And why?
- What did the author do well? Not well? And why?

## **Quotation:**

A quotation is an exact, word-for-word copy of a phrase, sentence, or paragraph of your source. It must be surrounded by quotation marks (if consisting of fewer than 40 words), and the author and year must be cited along with the page number (or section and paragraph number from an electronic source without page numbers) from which the quoted material was taken. Use quotations sparingly and only when the author's words are central to the discussion, that is, when you need to 1) state a key theory, model, or point of the author; 2) provide explicit credibility for a critical point; or 3) capture how something of great consequence is expressed.

## **Paraphrase:**

Written in your own words, it provides the essential information and ideas of someone else. A very few words of the source's may be included, and the source **MUST** be cited as well. Good paraphrasing is not easy to do, but it can be learned. Practice reading the original a few times; then put it aside and write it out in your own words. An analogy to keep in mind is how a piece of music can be interpreted in countless ways; this shows that there is no right way of expressing the ideas of another.

## **Plagiarism:**

The use of a writer's ideas or words (exact or not) as one's own without citing that person. Proper reference must be made for ideas and words derived from someone, whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized, and for facts that are not common knowledge. Plagiarism is a serious breach of ethics and carries penalties not only at this school but in the field of copyright law. Plagiarism is usually not the result of a writer's intent to deceive, but it is almost always an expression of his or her insecurity with the subject.