

LESSON THREE: Summarizing and Paraphrasing - Practice

Activity 1: Identify Appropriate Paraphrases

The following are sample paraphrases, but which is acceptable, and which is not? Why?

- **Original:** "Color blindness is a visual defect resulting in the inability to distinguish colors. About 8% of men and 0.5% of women experience some difficulty in color perception. Color blindness is usually an inherited sex-linked characteristic, transmitted through, but recessive in, females" (*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2000).

- **Sample 1:** Color blindness is a visual impairment resulting in the disability to distinguish colors. About 8 percent of men and a half percent of women experience problems in color viewing. Color blindness is usually a hereditary sex-linked characteristic, transmitted through, but usually recessive in, women.

- **Sample 2:** Color blindness, affecting approximately 8% of men and 0.5% of women, is a condition characterized by difficulty in telling one color from another, most often hereditary (*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2000).

Activity 2: Highlight the important information in the passage, then summarize it.

In the year 1439 the city in which Gutenberg lived was planning to exhibit its large collection from Emperor Charlemagne (a famous ruler who had united much of Western Europe around 800 AD). The exhibit was expected to bring many visitors to the town, so Gutenberg took investments and created polished metal mirrors which were to be sold to the visitors (it was a common belief at that time that mirrors were able to capture holy light from religious relics). The mirrors which Gutenberg produced probably would have sold well, but due to severe flooding the event was delayed by one year. The impatient investors demanded that Gutenberg return their investments, but he had already spent the money on producing the unsaleable mirrors. He was trapped in a difficult situation. Gutenberg decided to share his greatest secret with them.

Activity 03: write a paraphrase for the following passage. Try not to look back at the original passage.

Matisse is the best painter ever at putting the viewer at the scene. He's the most realistic of all modern artists, if you admit the feel of the breeze as necessary to a landscape and the smell of oranges as essential to a still life. "The Casbah Gate" depicts the well-known gateway Bab el Aassa, which pierces the southern wall of the city near the sultan's palace. With scrubby coats of ivory, aqua, blue, and rose delicately fenced by the liveliest gray outline in art history, Matisse gets the essence of a Tangier afternoon, including the subtle presence of the bowaab, the sentry who sits and surveys those who pass through the gate. **From Peter Plagens, "Bright Lights." Newsweek (26 March 1990): 50.**

Activity 04: Read the following original passage, then summarize and paraphrase it in the provided space.

Language is the main means of communication between peoples. But so many different languages have developed that language has often been a barrier rather than an aid to understanding among peoples. For many years, people have dreamed of setting up an international universal language which all people could speak and understand. The arguments in favor of a universal language are economic ties might be much closer, and good will might increase between countries (**Kispert**).

Paraphrase: _____

Summarize: _____
