Paraphrasing vs. Summarizing

What a Paraphrase?
A paraphrase is putting a portion of a text such as ideas, statements, and facts and putting them in your own words. This is different from summarizing as you are taking ideas or borrowing words from the author.

What is a Summary?
A summary is processing and condensing information taken from a source without changing words or using the same amount of words as the original text.

Tips for Paraphrasing:
• Change first person pronouns to introduce the paraphrased idea
• Make sure to shift verb tenses (present to past or past to present)
• Avoid direct questions
• Remember to cite the page number and author after every paraphrased section

Tips for Summarizing:
• Put yourself in the author’s shoes (Your reader should not be able to tell if you agree or disagree with the author based on a summary)
• Balance what the author said with what you want to highlight in your writing
• Use “the author says” or “x says”
• Avoid using “I think” or “I believe”
• Focus on the main takeaway
• Explain the main ideas

Verbs for Introducing a Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argue</th>
<th>Insist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assert</td>
<td>Observe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
<td>Remind us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim</td>
<td>Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize</td>
<td>Suggest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing Paraphrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They say</th>
<th>She believes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She says</td>
<td>He believes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He says</td>
<td>X believes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X says</td>
<td>She argues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He argues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X argues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paraphrasing Examples:
“Smith says…”
“They write…”
“Sally believes…”

Summarizing Examples:
“Martin Luther King Jr. believed…”
“The author claims…”
“The report reminds us that…”

Paraphrasing in Context:
“He builds on this idea by stating that the natives actually aided the New World creation by constructing it through remnants of their old values while keeping their traditions” (Merrell 544).

Summarizing in Context:
“As eloquently described in the book Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies by FLI advisory board member and Oxford-based philosopher Nick Bostrom, the plot unfolds in three parts.”

Adapted by Lauren Wong, Winter, 2020