Quoting, Summarizing, and Paraphrasing Sources

Writers incorporate sources' ideas into their writing using three main methods: quotation, summary, and paraphrase. To use each method ethically and effectively, you should—
- Choose the best method for your purpose
- Understand and accurately reflect the source's meaning
- Clearly distinguish the source's words and ideas from your own, and
- Accurately cite the source.

The following original passage will serve as a sample for comparison to the quotation, summary, and paraphrase below it:

Original passage
Studies about everyday experts ranging from doctors to pilots to loan officers suggest that it's actually automaticity that tends to separate the highly experienced expert from the novice, rather than the ability to eventually come to the right conclusion (Freedman, 2010, p. 35).

Quotation
When the exact words of a source matter—that is, when you want to analyze or distinguish them somehow—write them exactly the way you read or hear them in the source, using quotation marks (" "). Signal phrases and attribution tags, such as "Freedman argues" help readers distinguish between your words and those of the source. If you need to omit words within the quotation for clarity's sake, use ellipsis points (. . .). And if you need to add words, place them in brackets ([ ]).

Example quotation:
Freedman (2010) argues that studies about experts reveal "it's actually automaticity that tends to separate the highly experienced expert from the novice, rather than the ability to eventually come to the right conclusion" (p. 35).

Summary
When writers want to quickly sum up a source's point (in order to use it as an example or to comment on it), they read or listen to the source, understand its meaning, and then communicate that meaning in a more concise version of the original.

Example summary:
Freedman (2010) seems to agree that the main advantage experts have over novices is not capability but speed (p. 35).

Paraphrase
When writers want to restate a source's points to examine them more closely, they try to capture the ideas of the source in their own words, but not as concisely as in a summary. Whenever a paraphrase uses exact wording from the source, quotation marks are used.

Example paraphrase:
Freedman's (2010) argument is these studies reveal that both novices and experts are capable of finding the right solutions. Experts can just find them more quickly, he says, their main advantage being "automaticity" (p. 35).

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Reference

Freedman, D.H. (2010). Wrong: Why experts keep failing us—and how to know when not to trust them. New York: Little, Brown, and Company.

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