Nonfiction Writing

Writing a non-fiction piece means writing about real things, facts and information. Nonfiction pieces have many purposes. They can be used to:

1. **Inform/Share Knowledge** by providing information, describing, explaining, giving facts and summarizing. The topic should be very clear and information organized in a logical way including an introduction, body and conclusion. It could be about your favorite animal, a historical event or even how something works, like how a volcano erupts or how plants grow.

2. **Instruct** a reader how to do something or outline a process. The goal should be clear and the information organized into logical steps (first, second, then, finally, etc.). You can explain concepts and ideas to help others understand them better.

3. **Narrate/Record History** to draw a reader into an event or situation. This piece should have a well-developed setting with sensory imaging, a strong structure, the importance of the event/situation is well-established and a distinct ending. The writing should be factually accurate but include style and imagery elements from fictional writing. Nonfiction writing can be about important events, such as wars, inventions or even biographies of famous people. By writing about these things, we can learn from the past and remember the stories and achievements of people who came before us.

4. **Persuade** a reader to support an idea and/or take action. For this piece the topic should be introduced, arguments made based on facts/evidence, an appeal to the reader to support the idea, an ask of the reader to do something, and a conclusion. You might write about invasive species to raise awareness or about endangered animals to help protect them.

5. **Recall Personal Experiences** to share your own experiences and feelings. You might write about a family trip, a special moment or something you've learned. It allows you to express yourself and tell your own unique story.

6. **Respond** to a prompt, question, reading, etc. through analysis and critical thinking about the topic. The piece should address the topic and provide examples in the response.

Nonfiction Writing Process: Remember, non-fiction writing is about real things and facts, so it's important to do some research and gather accurate information. You can use books, articles, or trusted websites to find the information you need. And don't forget to have fun and be creative while writing your non-fiction piece!

1. **Choose a Topic.** Start by selecting a topic that you find interesting or one that you want to learn more about. It could be something you're passionate about or a subject you think others would like to know about.

2. **Plan and Research.** Think, observe, research. Once you have your topic, it's time to gather information. Visit the library, search online or interview experts to gather facts, statistics and other details related to your topic. Take

notes and keep track of your sources to make sure you give credit to the people whose work you use. See the section below on summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting from your sources.

3. **Organize Your Thoughts.** Think about your audience and why you are writing about your topic (is it to inform, instruct, narrate, persuade, respond?). Create an outline or a plan for your piece. Think about what information you want to include and how you want to present it – a report, a letter, a poem, etc. See the section below about summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting from your sources.

4. **Start a Draft.** Now it's time to put your thoughts into words. Determine the important facts and points you want to include. Start with an introduction that grabs the reader's attention and gives them an idea of what your piece will be about. Use an appropriate structure based on the format you are using (intro/facts/conclusion for a report, greeting/supporting evidence or information/closing in a letter, etc.). Make sure to include an interesting introduction and a satisfying conclusion. Make sure each paragraph focuses on one main idea and supports it with evidence or examples. Finally, write a conclusion that summarizes the main points and leaves the reader with something to think about.

5. **Revise.** After you finish writing the first draft, take some time to review and improve your work. Reread your piece and ask yourself if it makes sense, if similar facts/ideas are grouped together, if the facts are accurate, have I varied how my sentences start, have I used interesting words and action verbs, am I missing any important information that will help the reader understand the topic better?

6. **Edit.** Edit, edit and edit again! Check spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Have others read and give feedback for additional improvements.

7. **Celebrate and share.** The final step is to share your non-fiction piece with others. You can read it aloud in class, create a presentation, or even publish it online if you'd like. Sharing your work allows others to learn from your knowledge and enjoy your writing. Writing nonfiction can be an exciting and rewarding process. Remember to be patient with yourself, keep practicing, and have fun while you explore and share the fascinating world of nonfiction writing!

Summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting sources:

A **summary** is a brief explanation of the main ideas or key points of a text. When you summarize something, you try to capture the most important information in your own words, but you make it shorter than the original text. It's like giving a quick overview or a condensed version of what you read or heard.

A **paraphrase** is similar to a summary, but instead of making it shorter, you try to restate the information using your own words while keeping the same meaning. So when you paraphrase something, you're explaining the original text in a different way, but you're not adding or changing any new ideas.

A **direct quotation** is when you use the exact words from someone else's work or text. You put those words in quotation marks to show that they belong to someone else. Direct quotations are useful when you want to include someone's exact words to support your own ideas or to provide evidence for what you're saying.

For example:
- Original text: "Cats are playful animals that enjoy chasing after toys and exploring their surroundings."
- Summary: Cats love to play and explore their environment.
- Paraphrase: Cats are animals that like to have fun by chasing toys and discovering new things.

- Direct quotation: According to the article, "Cats are playful animals that enjoy chasing after toys and exploring their surroundings."

When you're researching a topic and using multiple sources of information, you might need to combine the information from those sources into one paragraph. This can help you provide a well-rounded and comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Here's how you can do it:

1. Read and understand each source: Start by reading and understanding each source individually. Take notes on the key points, important facts or quotes that you find in each source.
2. Identify common themes or ideas: Look for common themes or ideas across the sources. Find similarities or shared information that you can include in your paragraph.
3. Organize your thoughts: Organize your thoughts by deciding on the main points you want to include in your paragraph. Think about the logical order in which you want to present the information.
4. Write the paragraph: Begin writing your paragraph, making sure to integrate the information from the different sources. You can do this by paraphrasing or summarizing the information from each source and weaving them together smoothly. Make sure to use your own words and maintain a consistent writing style throughout the paragraph.
5. Cite your sources: As you include information from each source, remember to cite them properly. You can mention the author's name and the title of the source and include any necessary publication information or page numbers. This gives credit to the original authors and allows readers to find the sources if they want to learn more.

Here's an example of how you can combine information from multiple sources into one paragraph, while citing the sources: According to the book "Endangered Animals" by Lisa Johnson, the tiger is facing a significant decline in its population due to habitat loss and poaching. Similarly, in the article "Protecting Tigers: A Global Effort" by Michael Brown, it is noted that deforestation and illegal hunting pose serious threats to the tiger's survival. These sources emphasize the urgent need for conservation efforts to protect the tiger and its habitat. To address this issue, organizations like the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) have implemented projects to restore and protect tiger habitats, as mentioned in the article "WWF's Tiger Conservation Initiatives" by Sarah Adams.

By combining information from these sources, we can understand the challenges tigers face and the ongoing efforts to save them from extinction.