

Middle Georgia State University

Student Success Center

Proper Paraphrasing

The following is a direct quotation from *Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered* by Thomas Flanagan:

"However, the true importance of the Rebellion in our history is more symbolic than military. It will always be remembered because it expressed several of the fundamental tensions of Canada: the aspirations of western settlers to run their own affairs versus the desire of Ottawa to control the public domain according to its own conceptions of the national interest; the conviction of natives, both Indians and Metis, that this was 'their land' versus the belief of Canadians in British sovereignty; the conflicting sympathies of English and French Canadians towards the French-speaking, Catholic Metis; the desire of some in the west for union with the United States; and the quite realistic fear among Canadian statesmen that American annexation would follow if Canada did not have a strong presence on the prairies" (4).

Here is an example of **incorrect** paraphrasing:

The importance of the Red River Rebellion is not due to its military aspect but the symbolic one. The rebellion will be remembered because it revealed several things about Canada. First, the rebellion revealed the tension between the need for Ottawa to control the west and the western settlers' need to control themselves, or join the United States. Second, the conflict showed the division between the Natives and the other Canadians who believed in British sovereignty and the division between the English and French Canadians towards the French-speaking, Catholic Metis. Third, the rebellion revealed the fear of some politicians that the Americans would take over the west if Canada did not settle the prairies.

This example is considered plagiarized for two reasons:

- 1) Only the wording of a few phrases was changed and the sentences were only re-arranged.
- 2) The writer does not acknowledge the source of the information and ideas.

The following is an example **of correct** paraphrasing:

The Red River Rebellion will be remembered by what it revealed about the insecurities of a fledgling nation and the conflicts among her people. In the west, the settlers aspired to independence from a domineering government in Ottawa while some of the more radical settlers wished to join the United States. Further conflict existed between the Natives, who viewed the land as theirs, and the Canadians who perceived the land as an extension of British ownership and governance. Other sources of tension were found between the differing English and French perceptions of the plight of the French-speaking, Catholic Metis. Omnipresent during these conflicts was the fear that the United States could readily subsume the Prairies (Flanagan 4).

This paragraph is not plagiarism because:

- 1) Proper acknowledgement for the ideas presented in the passage is given.
- 2) The writer uses his or her own words.