

Using Synonyms to Paraphrase

Example:

Some paleontologists speculate that feathers began as a kind of insulation

Some experts think that feathers developed as a way to keep warm.

One way to find synonyms is to use a **thesaurus**, a type of dictionary that has synonyms and antonyms (words with an opposite meaning). **Not all synonyms are an exact match for a word**, so it's important to understand the context in which you are using a word in order to choose the best synonym. For example, look at the following sentence:

The Stenocara beetle uses its shell to collect drinking water from the atmosphere.

Synonyms in a thesaurus for *atmosphere* might include: air, sky, feeling, and mood.
Only air is correct in this context.

SUMMARY 1

Title of original text: **Toucan Bills and Car Safety**

Topic sentence (main idea of text in your own words): _____

Summarize the main ideas of the article using synonyms (replace the **highlighted** words with synonyms):

Biologists **aren't sure** why toucans have such **large**, **colorful** bills.

One thing **scientists** are **certain** of is that the toucan's beak is **designed** to be both **strong** and **light**.

Marc André Meyers **thinks** the **automotive** and **aviation** industries can use the **design** of the toucan bill to make **cars** and planes **safer**.

Car body panels that **mimic** toucan bills **may offer** **better** protection to **motorists** involved in **crashes**.

SUMMARY 2

Title of original text: **Shark Scales and Swimsuits**

Topic sentence (main idea of text in your own words): _____

Summarize the main ideas of the article using synonyms (replace the highlighted words with synonyms):

A shark's scales protect it and help to keep it clean.

The scales also reduce the water's drag on the shark and help it to swim quickly.

Engineer Amy Lang believes that shark scales can inspire designs for machines that experience drag, such as airplanes.

Coating airplanes with a material that mimics shark skin would probably help increase their speed.