Paraphrasing: What is it?

Paraphrasing means putting what you have read into your own words.

You paraphrase by reading something, thinking about what it means, and then restating it in your own words.

Paraphrasing is a useful strategy to check to be sure that you have understood when reading something difficult or something that is important to remember. It is needed in research so you don’t accidentally plagiarize. You still need to cite the source but you don’t need to use quotation marks.

If you cannot paraphrase after reading, it is important to go back and reread to clarify information.

Example:
Quote: 
“Although the okapi resembles a zebra, it is actually a close cousin to the giraffe. Discovered in 1900, it inhabits the rainforests of the Congo area in Africa. Okapis tend to be solitary animals, secretive in their habits.”

Paraphrase:
⇒ The okapi looks like a zebra, but it is kin to the giraffe. They found it in Africa in 1900, but that was hard because it lives alone and is hard to find.

Quote:
"Okapis eat mostly leaves, twigs, and fruit which they reach with their long tongues. They may eat as much as 65 pounds of food in one day, mostly during the afternoon and evening when they are most active."

Paraphrase:
⇒ Okapis have long tongues so they can reach leaves and fruit on trees. They eat a lot each day, usually in the afternoons and evenings.