

Chapter 4

Summary Writing



Objectives



1. Give an appropriate definition for a summary
2. Know the characteristics of a good summary
3. Learn the techniques in summary writing
4. Learn the steps in summary writing
5. Practice

I. What is a summary?



- A summary is a **shortened** passage, which retains the **essential information** of the original. It is a fairly brief restatement --- **in your own words** ---of the contents of a passage.
- Note: you simply **report** back what the writer has said, **without** making value judgments.

II. Characteristics of a good summary



- Can be understood **without** reference to the original;
- Is a **faithful reproduction** of, or contains only the ideas or information of, the original;
- Is **brief** without any unnecessary detail;
- Is a readable **unified** whole

III. Techniques in summary writing

1. Paraphrasing

To paraphrase means to completely and correctly express other people's ideas in one's own words.



Examples:



1. You've cooked us all a hot potato.
(a troublesome person or issue)
2. Prevention is better than cure.
(It is better to prevent something unpleasant from happening than try to put it right afterwards.)

The importance of paraphrasing



- ★ It helps us understand the original better.
- ★ It helps us grasp the central idea and the main points.
- ★ It helps us write summaries that are brief and to the point, and in our own words.

Steps of paraphrasing



- ★ Read the original carefully and comprehend its meaning wholly and correctly.
- ★ Consider the original article as a whole, not in isolated sentences.

III. Techniques in summary writing

1. Grasping the central ideas

III. Techniques in summary writing

1. Ways of condensation

■ Use synonyms or synonymous phrases

He had a good command of English.

(He knew English well.)

■ Change the structure of simple sentences

My brother has an appreciation of modern art.

(My brother appreciates modern art.)

- Turn complex sentences into simple sentences

He received a welcome that was as cold as ice.
(He received an icy welcome.)

- Combine the sentences

Hurry up. If you don't, you'll miss the train.
(Hurry up or you'll miss the train.)

1. Finding the topic sentence and making an outline

topic sentence / outline

IV. How to write a summary?

1. The importance of summary writing
2. Necessary elements for a good summary
 - **Proper citation**
title, author, source;
date of publication and the text
(journal articles)



- Thesis statement

the topic or general subject matter of the text;
the author's major assertion, comment, or
position on the topic



- **Supporting ideas**

major supporting ideas;

relationships among these ideas

no specifics

the author's purpose in writing

no personal opinions, ideas, and inferences.



- Grammar and the structure of writing

avoid direct quotation;

use transitional words

- Length

1/4 to 1/3 of the original



1. Steps in writing a summary



- **Read** the article

To understand the article and find the general theme.

- **Reread** the article

Divide into sections and label each section.

Understand the important parts.

- Write **one-sentence summaries**

Summarize each section of thought

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- Formulate the **thesis statement**

Weave the one-sentence section-summaries together.

- Write the **first draft**

- In the first sentence or two:

5. The author's name
6. The article's or chapter's name
7. The author's thesis statement

- H. Then the summary sentences for each paragraph or section.

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- Express in your own words, to avoid plagiarism.
 - Occasional supporting ideas if necessary.

Note:

4. Eliminate unnecessary words and repetitions.
5. Eliminate personal ideas and inferences.
6. Use transitions for a smooth and logical flow of ideas.
7. Conclude with a 'summing up' sentence.

➤ **Edit** the draft

- Is all the important information in the summary?
- Am I listing things out?
- Am I saying the same thing over and over again?
- Have I left out my personal views and ideas?
- Does my summary 'hang together'?
- Is my grammar, punctuation, and spelling correct?

➤ Write the **final draft**