

Qualities of a Summary

A good summary should be

- comprehensive
- concise
- coherent
- independent

1) Comprehensive

- Include all the important points in the original passage
- Include facts/points that are indispensable to the development of the thesis

2) Concise

- A summary should be considerably shorter than the source.
- You are expected to create an overview to state the thesis of the original essay.

3) Coherent

- A summary is a piece of writing in its own.
- The ideas should be arranged in a logical way.
- Sentences need to be linked to each other.

4) Independent

- Maintain your own voice;
- Use your own words to express your understanding;
- Do not create misrepresentation or distortion by introducing comments or criticisms of your own.

Sample Summary Writing Directions

Directions: Read the following passage and write a summary. Your summary should:

- be written in your own words;
- be in the form of a paragraph (no more than 300 words);
- contain ONLY the ideas of the original text;
- begin with an introductory sentence that states the title and writing purpose of the passage;
- end with a concluding sentence that rephrases the main points;
- be comprehensive, concise, coherent and independent.

Tips for writing a summary

- 1) Read through the whole passage to understand the main idea and the structure.
- 2) Write 1 sentence to summarize the whole text.
- 3) Read each part/ paragraph and write a one-sentence summary for it.
- 4) Rearrange and rewrite the paragraph
 - to make it clear and concise
 - to eliminate repetition
 - to eliminate relatively minor points
 - to provide transitions