

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SUMMARY

A good summary has the following characteristics:

Proper Citation: The summary begins by *citing* the title, author, source, and, in the case of a magazine or journal article, the *date* of publication and the text.

Thesis Statement: The overall thesis of the text selection is the author's central theme. There are several aspects to an effective thesis statement. It comprises of two parts:

1. The *topic* or general subject matter of the text, and
2. The author's *major assertion*, comment, or position on the topic.
 - This central theme is summarized clearly and accurately in a one sentence thesis statement
 - The thesis statement does not contain specific details discussed in the text.

The thesis statement is stated at the *beginning* of the summary.

Supporting Ideas: The author *supports* his/her thesis with supporting ideas. Use the following basic guidelines when summarising supporting ideas:

- Cover all of the author's major supporting ideas.

Show the relationships among these ideas.

- **Omit** specifics, such as illustrations, descriptions, and detailed explanations.
- **Indicate** the author's purpose in writing: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain. If the passage is a persuasive piece, report the author's bias or position on the issue.
- **Omit** all personal opinions, ideas, and inferences. Let the reader know that you are reporting the author's ideas.

Grammar and the Mechanics of Writing: Grammar and related concerns ensure that, as a writer, you communicate clearly to your reader. The following are particularly important:

- **Restate** the ideas in your own words as much as possible. Avoid direct quotations.
- **Use** transitional words for a smooth and logical flow of ideas.
- **Edit** and **re-write** your work.
- **Check** your grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Length: The length of a summary depends on how long the original document is.