Q&A

1. What is a summary?

A "stand-alone" summary is a summary produced to show a teacher that you have read and understood something. It is common in many 100 and 200 level classes to get assignments that ask you to read a certain number of articles and summarize them. This is also a very common type of writing assignment in graduate school.

1. Features of a summary.

1.Start your summary with a clear identification of the type of work, title, author, and main point in the present tense.

Example: In the feature article "Four Kinds of Reading," the author, Donald Hall, explains his opinion about different types of reading.

2.Check with your outline and your original to make sure you have covered the important points.

3.Never put any of your own ideas, opinions, or interpretations into the summary. This means you have to be very careful of your word choice.

4. Write using "summarizing language." Periodically remind your reader that this is a summary by using phrases such as the article claims, the author suggests, etc.

5. Write a complete bibliographic citation at the beginning of your summary. A complete bibliographic citation includes as a minimum, the title of the work, the author, the source. Use APA format.

1. Purpose of a summary.

The purpose of a summary is to give the reader, in a about 1/3 of the original length of an article/lecture, a clear, objective picture of the original lecture or text.