

COMMUNICATION

# Summarising a text

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_2124X

**LANGUAGE**

English

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and a man with a beard, both looking intently at a small object, likely a smartphone, which the man is holding. The woman is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The background is a solid blue color with a white comma-like graphic in the top left corner.

## Learning outcomes

- I can identify and explain some key strategies to understand the main points of a text.
- I can summarise the information included in a text and include the main points using these strategies.



## Warm-up

**Do you read texts in English? If so, what kind of texts?**

**Share your answer with the rest of the class!**





# Brainstorm

1. What are the **qualities of a good summary**?
2. Take **1-2** minutes to think of as many qualities as you can.





# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Do you read book or movie summaries?**



**Do you ever have to summarise texts at school or work?**



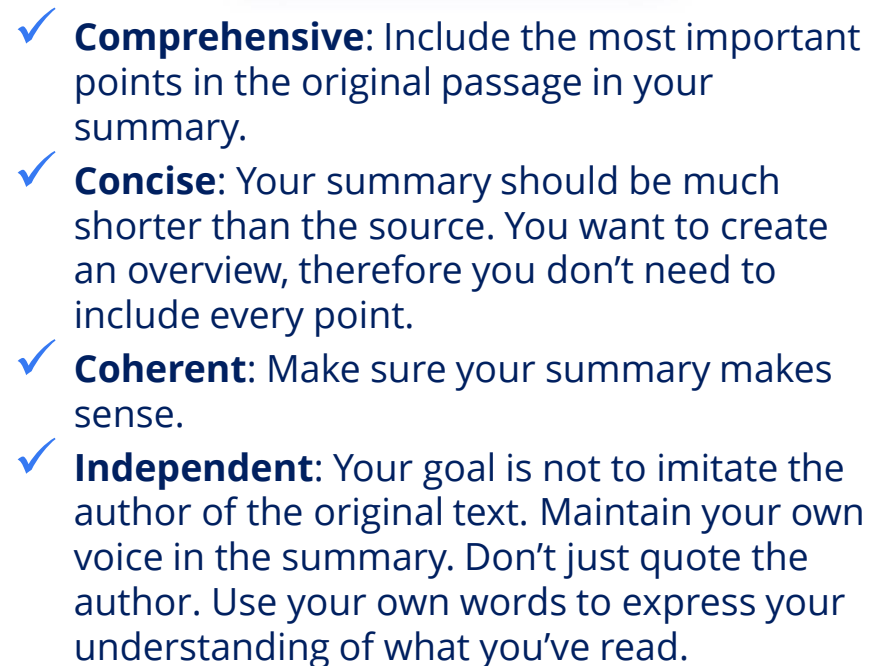
# What makes a good summary?

1. **Read** about the qualities of a good summary.
2. Then **answer** the questions.

Did you come up with any of these qualities during the brainstorm activity on slide 4?

Which quality do you think is most important? Why?

Why is it important to be able to successfully summarise a text?

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- ✓ **Comprehensive:** Include the most important points in the original passage in your summary.
  - ✓ **Concise:** Your summary should be much shorter than the source. You want to create an overview, therefore you don't need to include every point.
  - ✓ **Coherent:** Make sure your summary makes sense.
  - ✓ **Independent:** Your goal is not to imitate the author of the original text. Maintain your own voice in the summary. Don't just quote the author. Use your own words to express your understanding of what you've read.

# The truth about air pockets (1/2)

1. Take **2-3** minutes to **read** the text. 2. **Note** down the words you are unfamiliar with. **Ask** your teacher to clarify them. 3. Then **answer** the questions below.

Have you ever been on an airplane that suddenly jolted in the air, even when weather conditions appeared calm? Sometimes, these unexpected shakes and jerks are attributed to the plane encountering an 'air pocket' – but air pockets don't actually exist. This is an example of certain types of turbulence or windshear being described in incorrect layman's terms.

According to the National Weather Service, turbulence is 'one of the most unpredictable of all the weather phenomena that are of significance to pilots.' When planes come into contact with a rising or descending column of air, they experience turbulence.

The term 'windshear' is used to describe a 'sudden change' in wind velocity. This happens over a short distance in the atmosphere, and can occur at both high and low altitude.



Identify the most important points in this passage.

Can you summarise the definitions of 'turbulence' and 'windshear'?

How is turbulence different from windshear?



**Turbulence is often described in incorrect **layman's terms**.**

To put something in **layman's terms** is to describe something complex using words and terms that someone not specialised in that field can understand.



# The truth about air pockets (2/2)

1. Take **2-3** minutes to **read** the text. 2. **Note** down the words you are unfamiliar with. **Ask** your teacher to clarify them. 3. Then **answer** the questions below.

A plane is most likely to encounter turbulence or windshear in two main places—around a cumulonimbus cloud, or around the edges of one of the jet streams, which are basically rivers of wind high above in the atmosphere.

Cumulonimbus clouds are often called ‘thunderclouds’ because they can produce hail, thunder, and lightning. It is not uncommon for a plane to experience turbulence around these clouds because of the convergence of rising and falling air. Though such turbulence can be a scary experience, it is very unlikely for turbulence and windshear to cause a plane to crash. Airports and aircraft have windshear detection systems, and pilots know to slow the aircraft if severe turbulence is predicted or experienced.



Can you  
summarise what  
jet streams are?

Can you  
summarise what  
cumulonimbus  
clouds are?

Can you  
summarise this  
part of the text in  
2-3 sentences?



## Discuss

Answer the question below.

**What do you think the most important point of the entire text is?**

**Share your answer with the rest of the class!**





# Discuss

In breakout rooms or together as a class, **answer** the questions below.

**What things made the text easy or hard to summarise?**



**Did you find the structure of the text logical or confusing? How could it have been improved?**



# Discuss

**Answer** the questions below.



What type of texts do you find the most difficult to summarise? Why?

What type of texts do you find the easiest to summarise? Why?

What other mediums can you summarise?

Has someone's summary of a text or film ever given you the wrong impression?





# End of the lesson

Idiom

***not mince words***

**Meaning:** to speak honestly and directly, especially when criticising someone or something

**Example:** She does not mince words when it comes to giving feedback.



# Additional practice



# Summarise



**What's the last TV show or movie that you watched? Or the last book you read?**

**Try to summarise it to your classmates!**





# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Are English texts written in a different way to those in your language?**



**Have our decreased attention spans made long texts a thing of the past?**





# What's your opinion?

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*I want to become more knowledgeable, but don't have the time to read all the books I want to. Instead, I read their summaries to get the gist of their main ideas.*

What do you think of this tactic?

What might you lose by reading just a summary of a long text?

Is it better to focus your reading time on longer reads, or on summaries covering many different topics?







## Answer key

**P.4:** *possible answers:* clear, concise, precise, accurate, comprehensive, coherent, original



# Summary

## Tips for summarising a text

- **Be comprehensive:** Include the most **important** points in the original passage in your summary.
- **Be concise:** Your summary should be much **shorter than** the source. You want to create an **overview**, therefore you don't need to include every point.

## More tips for summarising a text

- **Be coherent:** Make sure your summary **makes sense**.
- **Be independent:** Don't try to imitate the original text's author. Maintain **your own voice** in the summary. Don't just quote! Use **your own words** to show your understanding of what you've read.



# Vocabulary

to jolt

to jerk

windshear

velocity

layman's terms

