

Writing a Summary

How to write a summary

- Read the article to be summarised and be sure you understand it.
- Outline the article and note the major points
- Write a first draft of the summary without looking at the article.
- Always use paraphrase when writing a summary.
 - If you do copy a phrase from the original be sure it is a very important phrase that is necessary and cannot be paraphrased. In this case put "quotation marks" around the phrase.
- Target the summary for approximately 1/4 the length of the original.

The features of a summary

- 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.

The features of a summary

- Check with your outline and the original text to make sure you have covered the important points.
- 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.
- 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.
- 4. 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.

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Remember

- Do not re-write the original text
- Keep your summary short (75-100 words)
- Use your own words
- Refer to the main ideas of the original text.
- Read with who, what, when, where, why and how questions in mind
- Do not put in your opinion of the issue or topic discussed in the original text