

Writing a Summary

In a summary, you reduce material in an original work to its main points and key supporting details. However, unlike an outline, a summary does not use symbols such as I, A, 1, and 2 to indicate the relations among parts of the original material. Most often, a summary may consist of one or more paragraphs. (In our class, a summary should consist of at least three paragraphs.)

Writing a summary brings together a number of important reading, study, and writing skills. To condense the original assigned material, you must preview, read, evaluate, organize, and perhaps outline it. Summarizing can be a real aid to understanding; you must “get inside” the material and realize fully what is being said before you can reduce its meaning to a few words.

How to Summarize an Article

Steps to follow:

1. Preview -- 快速浏览文章
2. Read the article -- 通读全文，理解大意，找出要点
3. Go back and reread. -- 重读重点部分
4. Take notes. -- 做好笔记，记录要点
5. Write the draft of your summary.

1. Preview -- 快速浏览文章

1) Title. -- 标题

A title often summarizes what an article is about. Think about the title for a minute and about how it may condense the meaning of the article.

2) Subtitle. -- 次标题

A subtitle, if given, is a short summary appearing under or next to the title.

3) First and last several paragraphs. -- 开头和结束段落

In the first several paragraphs, the author may introduce you to the subject and state the purpose of the article.

In the last several paragraphs, the writer may present conclusions or a summary.

The previews or summaries can give you a quick overview of what the entire article is about.

4) Other items. -- 其他内容（小标题，图表，斜体或粗体字等）

Note any heads or subheads that appear in the article. They often provide clues to the article's main points and give an immediate sense of what each section is about.

Look carefully at any pictures, charts, or diagrams that accompany the article. Page space in a magazine or journal is limited, and such visual aids are generally used only to illustrate important points in the article.

Note any words or phrases set off in italic type or boldface type; such words have probably been emphasized because they deal with important points in the article.

2. Read the article -- 通读全文，理解大意，找出要点

Read the article for all you can understand the first time through.

Do not slow down or turn back.

Check or otherwise mark main points or key supporting details.

Pay special attention to all the items noted in the preview.

Also, look for definitions, examples, and enumerations (list of items), which often indicate key ideas.

You can also identify important points by turning any headings into questions and reading to find the answers to the questions.

3. Reread -- 重读重点部分

Go back and reread more carefully the areas you have identified as most important.

Also, focus on other key points you may have missed in your first reading.

4. Take notes -- 做好笔记，记录要点

Take notes on the material.

Concentrate on getting down the main ideas and the key supporting points.

5. Write the draft of your summary.

- 1) In the summary, **identify the title and author of the work.** -- 标明文章标题和作者
- 2) The first sentence of your summary should also be written as a **topic sentence** and should contain the main idea or thesis of the original work in your own words. -- 首句为主题句
- 3) **Do not write an overly detailed summary.** Remember that the purpose of a summary is to reduce the original work to its main points and essential supporting details. -- 勿过于琐碎
- 4) Express the main points and key supporting details **in your own words.** Do not imitate the style of the original work. -- 使用自己的语言
- 5) Quote from the material only to illustrate key points. **Limit your quotations.** A one-paragraph summary should not contain more than one quoted sentence or phrase. -- 勿过量引用
- 6) **Preserve the balance and proportion of the original work.** If the original devoted 70 percent of its space to one idea and only 30 percent to another, your summary should reflect that emphasis. -- 保留原文的平衡和比例
- 7) **Revise your final draft,** paying attention to the four bases of effective writing (**unity, support, coherence, and sentence skills**).-- 修改润饰
- 8) Write the **final draft** of the paper. -- 撰写终稿