

SUMMARY

In summarizing, you want to capture the essence of what the author has said but in fewer words. Summary provides the gist – essential elements and arguments.

A. To summarize, follow these steps:

1. Quickly read through the text to gain an impression of the information, its content and its relevance to your work, underline/highlight the main points as you read.
2. Re-read the text, making a note of the main points and/or make a mind map.
3. Put away the original and rewrite your notes in your own words.
4. Begin your summary. Restate the main idea at the beginning of your summary, indicating where your information is from.
5. Mention other major points.
6. Change the order of the points if necessary to make the construction more logical.
7. Re-read the work to check that you have included all the important information clearly and expressed it as economically as possible.

B. In a short summary, you may follow these steps:

- a. Read the passage several times.
- b. Decide on the essential points; write down key words and expressions that remind you of these essential points.
- c. Expend your key words into a sentence or two.

To sum up, the original text can be shortened by means of several techniques

- **deleting**
- **selecting**
- **note taking**
- **miniaturizing**

C. Discuss the characteristics of an effective summary.

Are the following statements true or false?

- a. The same order of facts and ideas as the original
- b. Similar wording to the original with occasional phrases exactly the same
- c. Different sentence patterns from the original
- d. Additional information, which the original writer omitted but which helps an understanding of the subject
- e. A personal comment on the subject
- f. Simpler vocabulary than the original
- g. Identification of key points in the original

Summary – Vocabulary

When writing about something you have read, you will often want to refer to what the writer says. The word 'says', however, is a neutral one. Some other words can be used to indicate an author's writing or argument strategy. For example: If, instead of writing "the author says", you write "the author compares" or "the author defines", your reader will know something about how the author develops his or her ideas.

declares states asserts	explains analyzes considers	assumes implies indicates	ridicules laughs at makes fun of pokes fun at
notes writes	informs reviews		assures
mentions	compares contrasts	suggests recommends advocates	stresses
remarks comments claims	connects correlates	advises	emphasizes
approves of applauds agrees favours	argues criticizes complains disapproves of is shocked by	reasons recalls remembers	introduces concludes
		believes thinks decides	protests resolves

These words are all in the present tense. This is one of the conventions of academic writing. Even though the author wrote the book or article in the past, you are reading it now, and so, in a sense, the author is talking to you now.

Examples:

The author **criticizes** the President for failing to review this problem more thoroughly.

The author **recalls** an event that took place years ago.

Although the author **assures** the reader that he has researched his topic, he doesn't document his evidence.

According to the author, Albany is full of corrupt politicians. – This is the author's opinion an opinion that others might challenge.

The author **attempts to persuade** the reader to support his cause

Transition words

show how ideas are connected to each other, helping the reader follow the writer's train of thought.

although however while nevertheless but still	since because consequently thus	briefly in conclusion
on the one hand on the other hand in contrast comparing	then therefore as a result so that	certainly obviously of course
likewise similarly	moreover furthermore in addition first, second, third, etc.	for example for instance in other words
next later finally		before after
		above below