

WRITING A SUMMARY

1. Summary – Why and How

You need to use summaries of information, opinions and arguments of other people to support or provide evidence for your own ideas on academic topics. Writing good summaries also shows that you have read and understood the sources which you are supposed to study.

Key characteristics of a good summary

- It is shorter than the original text
- It does not change the main meaning of the original text
- It is written in your own words, otherwise you may plagiarize the text

What is your method of writing a summary?

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Discuss the features of an effective summary with a partner. Are the following statements true or false?

- A. identification of key points in the original
- B. some sentences/parts of sentences exactly the same
- C. different sentence structures from the original
- D. additional information which helps understand the topic
- E. simpler vocabulary than the original
- F. a personal comment on the subject

2. Summarizing a short paragraph

a) Work with a partner and try to say the same thing differently.

people	<i>individuals</i>	employment
target	employer
satisfy	pressure

b) Read the paragraph and the notes below. Underline the parts that the writer has noted down.

People working in all of these jobs have a range of targets to achieve and deadlines to meet in order to satisfy their employers. If you work in sales and marketing, you will almost certainly have to meet sales targets. If you are a teacher, you will have to meet deadlines for handling in students' grades. Or, if you are an engineer, you will have to meet project deadlines. A shortage of time seems to cause pressure in a wide range of professions.

Meet goals and deadlines = happy boss.

Stressful jobs = deadlines + limited time.

c) How different is the following summary from the original text? Is the student likely to be accused of plagiarizing?

Meeting goals and deadlines is the key to keeping your boss happy. All of these stressful jobs have a lot of deadlines and limited time to meet them.

3. To write a summary, follow these steps:

expand your notes *change the order* *the main idea*
a mind map *clearly and briefly* *have included all*

1. Read the text through.
2. Highlight ...
3. Reread the text making notes and / or ...
4. Put away the original and ... in your own words.
5. ... of the points if it makes the structure more logical.
6. Re-read your summary to see if you ... important information and expressed it

4. LANGUAGE FOR SUMMARIZING

A) To introduce the main idea you can use phrases

"According to the author"

"The author's opinion/view is that"

or reporting verbs in the present tense to indicate what the author says - the author...

explains *suggests* *analyses* *criticizes* *recommends*
compares *argues* *informs* *claims* *points out*

Reorder the words in brackets to make correct sentences. Add punctuation where necessary.

1. (Escher according to) It should be possible to stabilize this chemical reaction for commercial use.
2. (that Bostock's is view) Crime statistics are frequently manipulated to support political arguments.
3. (has out that Stevens pointed) Some plant species may die out before they have even been recorded.

B) The expression of your personal opinion

- is **not** a part of the summary itself
- but may follow when you evaluate information and make conclusions
- there is little need for using phrases such as *I think* or *In my opinion*

You can use, for example *It is likely that*
 The evidence suggests that
 It can be argued that

Complete the sentences with one suitable word.

1. It is more than that technological innovation is the key to manufacturing success.
2. The evidence that molecular water exists across the surface of the moon.
3. It could be that the internet is forcing us to think about copyright.

C) Paraphrasing: see Unit 5 Dalton's atomic theory to revise the strategies of

Use of synonyms (but not for technical terms)

Changing the forms of words

Changing the sentence structure ("transformations") - transform the two sentences below:

The spread of GM trials led to a series of protests. (use *result from*)

Despite their many advantages, lithium-ion batteries have some drawbacks. (use *although*)

Sources

Ex 1-3 Rogers, Wilkin: Skillful Reading and Writing, Macmillan, 2013, p.63

Ken Patterson: Oxford Grammar for EAP, OUP, 2013

5. PRACTICE: Read the text below and prepare the summary by doing the first 4 steps in ex.3.

Air pollutants: Particle size makes a difference

Air pollutant particles range in size from fly ash particles, which are big enough to see, down to individual molecules, **ions**, or atoms. Many pollutants are attracted into the water droplets of fog. Solids and liquid droplets suspended in the atmosphere are collectively known as **particulates**. The solids may be metal oxides, soil particles, sea salt, fly ash from electric generating plants and incinerators, elemental carbon, or even small metal particles. **Aerosol** particles range upward from a diameter of 1 nanometer (nm) to about 10,000 nm and may contain as many as a trillion atoms, ions, or small molecules. Particles in the 2000-nm range are largely responsible for the deterioration of visibility.

Aerosol particles are small enough to remain suspended in the atmosphere for long periods. Such particles are easily breathable and can cause lung diseases. They may also contain mutagenic or carcinogenic compounds. Because of their relatively large surface area, aerosol particles have great capacities to *adsorb* and concentrate chemicals on their surfaces. Liquid aerosols or particles covered with a thin coating of water may *absorb* air pollutants into the water, thereby concentrating them and providing a medium in which reactions may occur.

Millions of tons of soot, dust, and smoke particles are emitted into the atmosphere of the United States each year. The average suspended particulate concentrations in the United States vary from about 0.00001 g/m^3 of air in rural areas to about six times as much in urban locations. In heavily polluted areas, concentrations of particulates may increase to 0.002 g/m^3 .

Particulates in the atmosphere can cool Earth by scattering and partially reflecting light from the Sun. Large volcanic eruptions such as those from Mt. St. Helens in 1980 and Mt. Pinatubo in 1991 had measurable cooling effects on Earth.

Particulates and aerosols are removed naturally from the atmosphere by gravitational settling and by rain and snow. Industrial emissions of particulates can be prevented by treating the emissions with one or more of a variety of physical methods such as filtration, centrifugal separation, and scrubbing. Another method often used is electrostatic precipitation, which is more than 98% effective in removing aerosols and dust particulates even smaller than $1 \mu\text{m}$ from exhaust gases. The effects of an efficient electrostatic precipitator can be quite dramatic, as Figure 4.2 shows.

Joesten, Castellion & Hogg: The World of Chemistry, Thomson, 2007, p.77