

A summary is condensed version of a larger reading. A summary is not a rewrite of the original piece and does not have to be long nor should it be long. To write a summary, use your own words to express briefly the main idea and relevant details of the piece you have read.



Summary, like paraphrase, allows you to reproduce another writer's thoughts—but in shortened form. In writing a summary, you focus on the most important statements of the original statements of the original passage and eliminate the less important material.

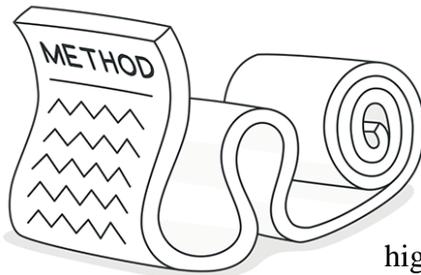
Three techniques for summarize :

1. selection and deletion
2. note taking
3. miniaturizing

As you become more adept at summarizing, you will devise your own combination of these techniques for each occasion. But in all cases the summary must be written in readable prose that reflects the essential meaning of the original text. Like paraphrase, summary can be used for many purposes: to help you understand the main points and structure of the author's argument, to convey understanding to others, to present background information quickly, or to refer to another writer's ideas in the course of making your own original statement.

METHODS OF CHOOSING MATERIAL FOR THE SUMMARY

Method 1: Selection and Deletion



Because a summary moves quickly through the main points of the original, you need to focus on the most important ideas and details and leave out less important material. In preparing to write your summary, you can identify important material by underlining, circling, or highlighting it and can eliminate less important material by deleting it—crossing it out. Look for key words to identify: those that express substantial information or make major statements. Ask yourself, “What is central here? What is the author’s specific point? What statements draw the whole piece together?” Cross out digressions, repetitions, nonessential background information, extended examples, interest-provoking anecdotes, and other minor supporting details. Thus by selection and deletion, you make the most important material emerge, while you push the less important to the background. This method of choosing material works best where there are direct statements of main ideas, accompanied by much detailed elaboration, wordy examples, digressions, or other clearly less important material.

Method 2: Note Taking

Taking notes on the key ideas for each of the sections of the original reveals the logic of ideas in the whole piece and the connections among them. As you write down the key idea for each paragraph or so of the original, you will be concerned more with large chunks of meaning than with specific details. As you look over your notes, you may notice that each paragraph has its own meaning, which is related to the meaning of the paragraph before or after it. You will become aware of the whole piece as a series of ideas, one following another.



Method 3: Miniaturizing



As you read through the original, pay attention to the various parts of the structure: the order of ideas, their relative lengths, and their relationships. Think of a large photograph reduced to wallet size. In a relative sense all the parts remain the same; only the scale has changed. Notice the shape, flow, and overall impression of the original passage so you can create a miniature version of it in your summary. As in the note-taking method, you should jot down the main ideas and key statements of the original, but you should also try to keep the size of your notes in rough proportion to the size of the original. Follow the logic of one idea flowing from another, and recreate the transitions and structure of the original. When the arrangement, logical development, and balance of parts of the original are important, miniaturizing will help you retain the overall meaning and impression. Generally this method is most appropriate for more complex and subtly argued originals, whose parts fit together in unusual ways or in ways that are difficult to follow.

STEPS TO WRITING A SUMMARY



1. Read and understand the prompt or writing directions.

What are you being asked to write about?

Example: Summary of an Article

Write a summary of the article. Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- ✓ state the main ideas of the article
- ✓ identify the most important details that support the main ideas
- ✓ Write your summary in your own words, except for quotations
- ✓ express the underlying meaning of the article, not just the superficial details.

2. Read, think about, and understand the text.

Review the material to make sure you know it well. Use a dictionary or context clues to figure out the meaning of any important words that you don't know.

3. Take notes.

Write down the main ideas and important details of the article.

4. Write a thesis statement.

In a single sentence, state the main idea of the article. The thesis statement should mention the underlying meaning of the article, not just the superficial details.

5. Organize and outline ideas.

Write down the important details you need to include in the summary.

6. Write your essay.

- ✓ Your summary should be about one third of the length of the original article.
- ✓ Focus on the main point of the article and the most important details.
- ✓ Use your own words; avoid copying phrases and sentences from the article unless they're direct quotations.

7. Revise

Have you indented all paragraphs? Have you captured the main point of the article? Have you included the most important details? Is there sentence variety? Have you avoided writing short, choppy sentences? Are there transitional words and phrases to connect ideas?

8. Proofread and edit.

Check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Is the verb tense consistent? Are all names spelled correctly and capitalized? Have you avoided writing run-on sentences and sentence fragments?

9. Write your draft.

Use blue or black ink. Skip lines. Write on one side of the paper only. Include a title on the top line.

10. Read your summary one last time before you turn it in.

Look for careless spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors, especially omitted words or letters. Cross out errors neatly with a single line and write the correction above.

SUMMARY



Examples :

Original Article: Bats

In the distant past, many people thought bats had magical powers, but times have changed. Today, many people believe that bats are rodents, that they cannot see, and that they are more likely than other animals to carry rabies. All of these beliefs are mistaken. Bats are not rodents, are not blind, and are no more likely than dogs and cats to transmit rabies. Bats, in fact, are among the least understood and least appreciated of animals.

Bats are not rodents with wings, contrary to popular belief. Like all rodents, bats are mammals, but they have a skeleton similar to the human skeleton. The bones in bat wings are much like those in arms and the human hand, with a thumb and four fingers. In bats, the bones of the arms and the four fingers of the hands are very long. This bone structure helps support the web of skin that stretches from the body to the ends of the fingers to form wings.

Although bats cannot see colors, they have good vision in both dim and bright light. Since most bats stay in darkness during the day and do their feeding at night, they do not use their vision to maneuver in the dark but use a process called echolocation. This process enables bats to emit sounds from their mouths that bounce off objects and allow them to avoid the objects when flying. They use this system to locate flying insects to feed on as well. Typically, insect-eating bats emerge at dusk and fly to streams or ponds where they feed. They catch the insects on their wingtip or tail membrane and fling them into their mouths while flying.

There are about 1,000 species of bat, ranging in size from the bumblebee bat, which is about an inch long, to the flying fox, which is sixteen inches long and has a wingspan of five feet. Each type of bat has a specialized diet. For seventy percent of bats, the diet is insects. Other types of bats feed on flowers, pollen, nectar, and fruit or on small animals such as birds, mice, lizards, and frogs.

One species of bat feeds on the blood of large mammals. This is the common vampire bat, which lives only in Latin America and is probably best known for feeding on the blood of cattle. Unfortunately, in an attempt to control vampire bat populations, farmers have unintentionally killed thousands of beneficial fruit-and insect-eating bats as well.

Bats, in fact, perform a number of valuable functions. Their greatest economic value is in eliminating insect pests. Insect-eating bats can catch six hundred mosquitoes in an hour and eat half their body weight in insects every night. In many tropical rain forests, fruit-eating bats are the main means of spreading the seeds of tropical fruits. Nectar-feeding bats pollinate a number of tropical plants. If it were not for bats, we might not have peaches, bananas, mangoes, guavas, figs, or dates.

Today, the survival of many bat species is uncertain. Sixty percent of bats do not survive past infancy. Some are killed by predators such as owls, hawks, snakes and other meat-eating creatures, but most are victims of pesticides and other human intrusions. In Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, where there were once eight million bats, there are now a quarter million.

At Eagle Creek, Arizona, the bat population dropped from thirty million to thirty thousand in six years. Bats often have been burdened with a bad reputation, perhaps because they are not the warm, cuddly sort of animal we love to love. However, their unusual physical features should not lead us to overestimate their harm or to underestimate their value.

SUMMARY

Introduction	Bats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Start with a summary or overview of the article which includes the author's name and the title of the article. <input type="checkbox"/> Finish with a thesis statement that states the main idea of the article. 	<p>In the article "Bats," by Debbie Dean, we learn that in contrast to some mistaken beliefs, bats are not blind rodents that usually have rabies. They have sight, are mammals, and are not especially likely to carry rabies. Bats are relatively misunderstood and unappreciated.</p>
<p>Body Paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The number of paragraphs in your summary depends on the length of the original article. <input type="checkbox"/> Your summary should be about one third the length of the original article. <input type="checkbox"/> Start each body paragraph with a topic sentence. <input type="checkbox"/> Each paragraph focuses on a separate main idea and just the most important details from the article. <input type="checkbox"/> Put the ideas from the essay into your own words. Avoid copying phrases and sentences from the article. <input type="checkbox"/> Use transitional words and phrases to connect ideas. 	<p>Bats have some interesting physical features. They have similar bone structure and skeletons to that of humans, so they are not winged rodents. They are color blind, so they use echolocation if there is not sufficient light. Otherwise, their sight is enough.</p> <p>Species of bats total about a thousand. The species come in a variety of sizes and have unique diets. Most eat insects, but some eat plant products and small animals. However, vampire bats drink blood, which can be harmful to livestock. Farmers have accidentally killed many innocent bats while trying to rid themselves of vampire bats.</p>
<p>Concluding Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Summarize the main idea and the underlying meaning of the article. 	<p>Bats can actually be helpful to humans. An important trait of bats is their ability to destroy many unwanted bugs. They also spread fruit seeds and pollinate plants. However, the survival of bats is not known because many are killed by human disruptions and predators. The bat population has dropped steadily and may continue to drop.</p> <p>Hopefully, we will realize that although bats look different than our favorite animals, we can learn to accept and admire their value and uniqueness.</p>

Do's and Don'ts of Summary Writing



Do's

- Keep your summary short.
- Use your own wording.
- Refer to the central and main ideas of the original piece.
- Read with who, what, when, where, why and how questions in mind.

Don'ts

- Do not put in your opinion of the issue or topic discussed in the original piece. Often, instructors ask students to put their opinions in a paragraph separate from the summary.
- Do not rewrite the original piece.



phillipmartin.info