

WRITING SUMMARIES

Instructions and Guidance

by E. Peterson

Reading for general understanding

- Read the article. Underline key terms/collocations. Circle important ideas.
- Re-read and understand the article.

Compiling a glossary

- Make a list of the main ideas. Find the important ideas - the important words/phrases. In some way mark them - write them down, underline or highlight them.
- Find alternative words/synonyms for these words/phrases - do not change specialised vocabulary and common words.
- Start writing the summary

Step 1: Writing the introduction

- The summary begins by citing the title, author, source, and, in the case of a magazine or journal article, the date of publication and the text.

The article is headlined

The headline of the article I have read is....

The author of theis.....

The article (story) is written by ...

The article is published in.....

Step 2: General information about the article

- This central theme is summarized clearly and accurately **in a one-sentence thesis statement**. The thesis statement does not contain specific details discussed in the text.

This article provides information on..... (the growing problem and causes of noise pollution)

The article is about

The article is devoted to

The article deals with (the problem) of

The article touches upon the problem...

Step 3: Identifying the main purpose

Indicate **the author's purpose** in writing: *to inform, to persuade, or to entertain,* Omit all personal opinions, ideas, and inferences. You are reporting the author's ideas **in your own words**.

The purpose of the article is to provide the reader with some material (data) on ...

The purpose of the article is to(inform/to persuade, to entertain, to show the advantages and disadvantages of, problems of, reasons for ..., explanations for

Step 4: Adding supporting ideas

The author supports his/her thesis with supporting ideas.

- Cover all of the author's major supporting ideas.
- -Show the relationships among these ideas.
- Omit specifics, such as illustrations, descriptions, and detailed explanations
- Use signalling words

The author starts by telling about that)

According to the author (of)...

*The author writes (states, stresses, thinks, points out)
that*

Further the author reports (says) that ...

The article goes on to say that ...

Signalling words

- **1. Time/order**
- at first, eventually, finally, first, firstly, in the end, in the first place, in the second place, lastly, later, next, second, secondly, to begin with
- **2. Comparison/similar ideas**
- in comparison, in the same way, similarly
- **3. Contrast/opposite ideas**
- but, despite, in spite of, even so, however, in contrast, in spite of this, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, whereas, yet
- **4. Cause and effect**
- accordingly, as a consequence, as a result, because, because of this, consequently, for this reason, hence, in consequence, in order to, owing to this, since, so, so that, therefore, thus
- **5. Examples**
- for example, for instance, such as, thus, as follows
- **6 Generalisation**
- as a rule, for the most part, generally, in general, normally, on the whole, in most cases, usually



- **7. Stating the obvious**

- after all, as one might expect, clearly, it goes without saying, naturally, obviously, of course, surely

- **8. Attitude**

- admittedly, certainly, fortunately, luckily, oddly enough, strangely enough, undoubtedly, unfortunately

- **9. Summary/conclusion**

- finally, in brief, in conclusion, in short, overall, so, then, to conclude, to sum up

- **10. Explanation/equivalence**

- in other words, namely, or rather, that is to say, this means, to be more precise, to put it another way

- **11. Addition**

- apart from this, as well as, besides, furthermore, in addition, moreover, nor, not only...but also, too, what is more



- **12. Condition**

- in that case, then

- **13. Support**

- actually, as a matter of fact, in fact, indeed

- **14. Contradiction**

- actually, as a matter of fact, in fact

- **15. Emphasis**

- chiefly, especially, in detail, in particular, mainly, notably, particularly

Step 5: Conclusion

- Summarize the author's ideas.

*The author concludes/
comes to the conclusion that.....*

In conclusion,...

To sum up.....

Checking and writing final version

Check your rough draft of the summary.

- Compare your version to the original
- Be concise. Eliminate needless words and repetitions
- Make sure the meaning is the same.
- Make sure the length is $\frac{1}{3}$ of the original text.
- Make sure the style is your own
- Check that purpose for accuracy by re-reading the article.