

Writing a SUMMARY of an article

The purpose of a summary is to give the reader a clear, objective picture of the original text. Most importantly, the summary restates only the main points of a text or a lecture without giving examples or details, such as dates, numbers or statistics.

Guidelines for writing a summary of an article:

- State the main ideas of the article.
- Identify the most important details that support the main ideas.
- Write your summary in your own words; avoid copying phrases and sentences from the article unless they're direct quotations.
- Express the underlying meaning of the article, not just the superficial details.
- Your summary should be about one third of the length of the original article.

Your summary should include:

Introduction

- Start with a summary or overview of the article which includes the author's name and the title of the article.
- Finish with a thesis statement that states the main idea of the article.

Body Paragraphs

- The number of paragraphs in your summary depends on the length of the original article.
- Your summary should be about one third the length of the original article. For a **one-paragraph summary**, discuss each supporting point in a separate sentence. Give 1-2 explanations for each supporting point. For a **multi-paragraph summary**, discuss each supporting point in a separate paragraph.
- Start each body paragraph with a topic sentence.
- Each paragraph focuses on a separate main idea and just the most important details from the article.

- Put the ideas from the essay into your own words. Avoid copying phrases and sentences from the article.
- Use transitional words and phrases to connect ideas.

Concluding Paragraph

- Summarize the main idea and the underlying meaning of the article.

Adapted from "Guidelines for Writing a Summary" by Christine Bauer-Ramazani, Saint Michael's College.

<http://academics.smcvt.edu/cbauer-ramazani/AEP/EN104/summary.htm>