

Writing a Summary

Writing a summary is made easy with a template.

One has been provided by one of our viewers, Mrs. Sam Biggs, a 6th Grade teacher at Norquay Elementary School in Vancouver BC, Canada. She has taken our information about [How to Write a Summary](#) and created a template for her students.

This form can be adapted to suit your purposes, whether it be for an article, a short story, novel, business writing or other piece of prose.

With Sam Biggs's and my permission, please feel free to copy this page and use it, or copy and paste the portion you wish into your word processor.

How to Write a Summary

How to write a summary allows the writer to identify the elements of a story, the thesis of an article, or the topic in any piece of writing. It's about making a brief listing of the main points of, for our purposes here, an article.

Summarizing allows you to filter out all the unnecessary details and get to the core of what is being written. Follow the steps below and you should be able to dissect any writing, no matter the content.

Tips - How to Write a Summary

1 - Read the entire document through. This will give you a more complete understanding of its meaning. While reading, on a separate piece of paper, make a notation of the subject being written about.

Notice that the subject should be spoken of at least in the beginning and the ending of the piece. If you do not find this information in its proper place, note that also. It will determine if the writer has made their point in the end. Having read through once, ask yourself:

How does the story begin?

How does the middle support and move the idea along?

How does the ending fit?

2 – Assuming you have a working copy of the document, and not the original, go back through and highlight all points crucial to the theme or to the subject of the writing.

Pay no attention to trivial information. In writing a summary, critically analyze each paragraph and note when new topics are introduced to support the story. Make note of only the most important and they may be few.

3 - When you have finished the above steps, look only at your notes, and write a one or two-sentence statement that explains what the story is about.

This step is a lot easier to do with a shorter story or article. But learning how to write a summary using these steps applies to everything in writing, including book-length stories.

4 – Next, list the main points you’ve highlighted in order to show the flow of the plot or article topic and purpose.

5 – You’re almost to the bottom of the list of points in how to write a summary. Now write what you believe the story or article is about.

Use only the main points that you have highlighted. Write in your own voice or terminology. Do not write what is already in the material.

6 – The last step in writing a summary is writing the conclusion. State what you feel was the purpose of the story or article, or what the author accomplished in the writing.

Do not inject any of your own thoughts. In other words, do not state how you feel the story should have ended. Do not state how you might have written it. Only state how the author brought the writing to conclusion.

7 – As with anything written, once your summary is finished, proofread and edit.

Be certain that any strange spelling and terminology used by the original author of the piece are included in your summary.

For additional information, see our entire article. This template was adapted from: [How to Write a Summary](#)

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Title " _____ " _____
Author _____
Reviewer's Name _____ Date: _____

How does chapter _____ begin?

How does the middle of chapter ____ support and move the idea of _____ along?

How does the ending of chapter ____ fit?

How does chapter ____ begin?

How does the middle of chapter ____ support and move the idea of _____ along?

How does the ending of chapter ____ fit?

How does chapter ____ begin?

How does the middle of chapter _____ support and move the idea of _____ along?

How does the ending of chapter _____ fit?

State what you feel was the purpose of the story, or what the author accomplished in the writing from chapter _____ to _____.

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Remember: If you copy and paste this template into your word processor, you can adjust the line markings to suit your needs.

Writing a Summary is easy when you have a template to help you along. Using this template should prepare you in How to Write a Summary when you have no template handy to follow.