

## Steps to Writing a Story Summary

<b>1. Read and understand the prompt or writing directions.</b> What are you being asked to write about?
Example: <b>Summary of a Story</b>  Write a summary of the story. Your writing will be scored on how well you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify and discuss the characters, conflict, and setting;</li><li>• retell the important events of the plot (complications, climax, and resolution) in your own words, except for quotations; and</li><li>• express the underlying meaning (theme) of the story;</li></ul>
<b>2. Read, think about, and understand the text.</b> Review the story 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.
<b>3. Take notes.</b> Write down the important events as they occur in the story.
<b>4. Write an introduction.</b> State the title and author of the story. Briefly describe the setting, characters, and conflict.
<b>5. Write the body paragraphs.</b> Retell the story in your own words. Describe the most important events from the story including the climax and resolution. The number of body paragraphs you have will depend on the length of the piece.
<b>6. Write a conclusion.</b> Describe how the conflict is resolved. Explain the theme (underlying meaning of the story). What comment is the author making about humankind or society?
<b>7. Revise.</b> Have you indented all paragraphs? Have you captured the main idea of the story? 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?
<b>8. Proofread and edit.</b> 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?
<b>9. Write your draft.</b> Use blue or black ink. Skip lines. Write on one side of the paper only. Include a title on the top line.
<b>10. Read your summary one last time before you turn it in.</b> 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.

## Story Summary

<p><b>Introduction</b> .....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Start by giving the title of the work, the author’s name, the genre of the piece, and a brief description of the setting.</b></li><li>• <b>Briefly describe the main characters and how they’re related to one another.</b></li><li>• <b>Give an explanation of the conflict or problem in the story.</b></li></ul> <p><b>Body Paragraphs</b> .....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The number of paragraphs in your summary depends on the length of the original story.</b></li><li>• <b>Begin retelling the important events of the story in your own words.</b></li><li>• <b>Use transitional words and phrases to connect ideas.</b></li><li>• <b>Group the paragraphs into related events.</b></li><li>• <b>Describe the climax—the most suspenseful moment in the story.</b></li></ul> <p><b>Conclusion</b> .....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>State the resolution of the story.</b></li><li>• <b>Show your understanding of the story’s theme—the author’s underlying message.</b></li></ul>	<p>Story Summary for “Duffy’s Jacket”</p> <p>“Duffy’s Jacket,” by Bruce Coville, is a short story that takes place in a huge, dusty cabin in the woods. The main characters include the narrator, Andrew, and his cousin Duffy, their two moms, and Andrew’s little sister, Marie. The problem that they face is that Duffy keeps forgetting things. This leads to an even bigger problem involving a strange, mysterious creature.</p> <p>The two families leave for their camping trip, but have to return to get Duffy’s suitcase. Once at the cabin, they spend a lot of time cleaning it up. Afterwards, they find a message on the wall that says, “Beware the Sentinel.”</p> <p>Later in the day, the kids go hiking in the woods. Duffy loses his jacket, and Andrew has a strange feeling that they’re being followed.</p> <p>That evening, Andrew’s mom and aunt leave to get supplies, and the children are left alone, which makes Andrew nervous. Suddenly they hear a scratching at the door. Duffy looks out the window and sees something huge. The children run to the barn and back to the house while a big creature chases them. Eventually they find themselves cornered in the house. The Sentinel comes through the door, throws Duffy his jacket, and says, “You forgot your jacket, stupid.”</p> <p>The narrator tells us that this event had such an impact on Duffy that he hasn’t forgotten anything in over a year. We discover that sometimes bad habits can cause big problems.</p>
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