

HOW TO BE GOOD AT SUMMARIZING

BEFORE READING or LISTENING

1. Determine your purpose.
2. If written, preview the material.
3. Be equipped and ready to take notes.

DURING READING or LISTENING

4. Take notes to help you answer these questions:

- Who/what is involved?
- What events, ideas, or people does the author emphasize?
- What are the causes?
- What are the consequences or implications?

5. Establish criteria to decide what is important enough to include in the summary.

6. Evaluate information as you read or listen to determine if it meets your established criteria.

AFTER READING or LISTENING

7. Write your summary. It should:

- identify the title, author, and topic in the first sentence.
- state the main idea in the second sentence.
- be significantly shorter than the original material.
- begin with a sentence that states the topic.

- include a second sentence that states the author's main idea.
- include 3-5 sentences, *in your own words*, which explain the author's point of view.
- include one or two interesting quotations or details, integrating quoted passages.
- not change the author's meaning
- organize ideas in their original order.
- use transitions (e.g. *according to*) to show that you are summarizing someone else's information/ideas.
- include enough information so that someone unfamiliar with the material will understand.
- be written, except for accurately quoted passages, entirely in *your own words*, not copied.

SOME VERBS for SUMMARIES

The speaker/author [verb] [info/idea].

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • alludes to | • implies |
| • argues | • infers |
| • asserts | • mentions |
| • concludes | • notes |
| • considers | • points out |
| • discusses | • predicts |
| • emphasize | • says |
| • examines | • states |
| • explores | • suggests |
| • focuses on | • etc. |