

Writing a Summary Paper Tip Sheet

What is a summary?

“A summary is a reconstruction of the major points of development of a text, beginning with the thesis or main idea, followed by the points or details that support or elaborate on that idea” (“The Writing Process,” n.d.).

When to summarize?

- To include it in a response paper or critique.
- To give a brief overview of a study in a literature review.
- When a text is too long to quote or paraphrase.
- During note-taking or planning for a research paper.

How to summarize?

- Read and understand the text carefully and highlight the key points.
- Identify the thesis statement of the text.
- Avoid adding your opinion in a summary.
- Restate the main ideas from the original text in your own words.

Summary Elements

- **A summary should be complete:**

Write down all the major points of the original text.

- **A summary should be concise:**

A summary paper should be shorter than the original text.

- **A summary should be coherent:**

Ideas should be logically organized and clear to readers.

- **A summary should be independent:**

Use your own words when summarizing a text.

Reference

The Writing Process. Hunter College. <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/rwc/handouts/the-writing-process-1/invention/Guidelines-for-Writing-a-Summary>.