



Summarising Skills

A summary can be defined as an overview of a longer piece of text. The key aim of a summary is to condense a piece of text without losing its most fundamental information or ideas. A summary should present a concise representation of main points, ideas, concepts, facts or text in your own words.

The process of summarising requires important reading, thinking and writing skills which are fundamental to success at any course level. This skill allows you to exhibit and present your understanding and interpretation of major concepts and ideas in your topic or subject rather than commit plagiarism by copying passages from books, article, web sites or journals.

<https://studyskillscitycollege.wordpress.com>

The Paper Industry Technical Association (PITA) is an independent organisation which operates for the general benefit of its members – both individual and corporate – dedicated to promoting and improving the technical and scientific knowledge of those working in the UK pulp and paper industry. Formed in 1960, it serves the Industry, both manufacturers and suppliers, by providing a forum for members to meet and network; it organises visits, conferences and training seminars that cover all aspects of papermaking science. It also publishes the prestigious journal *Paper Technology International* and the *PITA Annual Review*, both sent free to members, and a range of other technical publications which include conference proceedings and the acclaimed *Essential Guide to Aqueous Coating*.



Summarising is an important skill which is often used when researching, gathering or presenting information. Many assignments you produce will draw upon important ideas, writings and research of experts in your field. No doubt, you will include the work of various writers in your own assignments to support claims or provide evidence of your own writing; however, incorporation of such works must be done carefully in order to avoid plagiarism.

A summary should present a concise representation of main points, ideas, concepts, facts or text in your own words.

A summary – or précis – is a shorter version of a longer piece of writing. The summary captures all the most important parts of the original, but expresses them in a [much] shorter space.

Summarizing exercises are usually set to test your understanding of the original, and your ability to re-state its main purpose.

Summarizing is also a useful skill when gathering information or doing research.

The summary should be expressed – as far as possible – in your own words. It's not enough to merely copy out parts of the original.

How to summarise your text:

1. Read through the original text to understand its overall meaning.
2. Capture the main points of the text by highlighting them and ignoring any unnecessary facts, descriptions, opinions or examples which do not affect the core message.
3. Note down important details.
4. Without the original text, re-write your notes in your own words by linking together the key points using full sentences or paragraphs as appropriate.
5. If the original text is very long it may be useful to use headings or sub-headings.
6. It is important to re-read your summary to make sure that you have not lost the overall point of the original information.

[Depending upon the reason for summarising a piece of text, it may be necessary to reference the original source to prevent claims of plagiarism. Indeed, referencing sources is good practice anyway.]