



Checklist for Writing Summaries for Nursing Students

2013 Fall



Writing a Summary

A **summary** is a condensed version of a piece of writing, a conversation, or an event. It presents main ideas and key support points in a brief form and in your own words.

FOUR BASICS OF A GOOD SUMMARY

1. It clearly identifies what is being summarized and presents its main idea.
2. It concisely identifies the key support for the main idea.
3. It includes any final observations or recommendations made in the original.
4. It is written in your own words and is objective in tone, presenting information without opinions.

If you are summarizing a piece of writing, read it carefully to make sure you understand the main idea and key points. Then, try to write the first draft of the summary without looking at the original. When you're done, check the summary for accuracy against the original. *Note:* You must always cite and document the source, even if you do not use quotations from it.

These tips are from the *Real Essays With Readings: Writing for Success in College, Work, and Everyday Life, Chapter 20, Writing Summaries and Reports* which is used in the Intro to College Writing course taught at Gateway.

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WRITING ESSAYS

Part Three • Special College Writing Projects

WRITING GUIDE: SUMMARY

STEPS IN SUMMARIZING	HOW TO DO THE STEPS
Focus.	<input type="checkbox"/> As you read, think about how you will summarize the piece.
Read the selection you want to summarize.	<input type="checkbox"/> Highlight key points or put a check mark (✓) next to them. <input type="checkbox"/> Note the title and headings, words in boldface or <i>italics</i> , and boxed information or diagrams.
Review your highlighting and make notes. See Chapter 2 for advice on taking notes while reading.	<input type="checkbox"/> Note the author's main idea and the major events or support. <input type="checkbox"/> Jot down the details about the major events or support that will explain them to your readers. <input type="checkbox"/> Decide whether to quote specific parts of the original, and note any page references.
Make an outline. See Chapter 7 for more on outlining.	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange the major events and details in a logical order.
Draft the summary. See Chapter 8 for more on drafting.	<input type="checkbox"/> As you write, refer to the original, but use your own words. <input type="checkbox"/> Include a thesis statement that expresses the author's main idea, and present a condensed version of the support for the thesis.
Revise the draft. See Chapter 9 for more on revising.	<input type="checkbox"/> Read your draft. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure it includes the author's main idea and key points. <input type="checkbox"/> Add transitions to help your reader move smoothly from one key point to another. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you have given enough examples so that readers who haven't read the piece can understand the main idea. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you have cited the source of the piece, and if you have quoted from it, be sure to include the page reference (if it's a print work) and quotation marks. For more on using quotations, see page 363. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure the summary (apart from direct quotations) is in your own words. <input type="checkbox"/> Check to make sure it follows the four basics of a good summary.
Edit your work. See Parts Four through Seven for editing advice.	<input type="checkbox"/> Check for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself: Is this the best I can do?