

Writing Summaries

Summary-a brief restatement, in your own words, of the content of a passage; this restatement should focus on the central idea of the passage (thesis) and contain three central qualities: **brevity, completeness, and objectivity.**

Critical reading for **summaries**:

1. Examine content
2. Note the title and subtitle
3. Identify **main point (thesis)**
4. Identify **sub points (topic sentences)**
5. Distinguish between points, examples, counterarguments
6. Watch for transitions within and between paragraphs
7. Read actively (highlight, annotate, etc.).

Guidelines for writing **summaries**:

1. Read the passage carefully (see above)
2. Write a thesis
3. Write the first draft of summary by combining thesis with topic sentences in **OWN WORDS** plus significant details from the passage.
4. Check summary against original passage
5. Revise if necessary
6. Usually no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of the original passage (also depends on purpose)

Developing good judgment in comprehending and summarizing texts is largely a matter of reading skill and prior knowledge; therefore, it might be hard at times to know which details to include and which to exclude. **PRACTICE!**

"The author of the 'Hazards of Moviegoing' does not like going to the movies anymore for several reasons. His first issue involves the problem of getting to the theater. His second issue deals with the negatives of the theaters themselves. Finally, the other attendees of all ages cause him grief. These are the reasons he gives for why he would rather stay home and watch movies now".