

TEXTBOOK NOTE-TAKING: SUMMARIZING

A summary is a brief statement in your own words of the main points in a reading selection. It briefly states the content of selection. A summary is less detailed than an outline, and is generally used to remember non-text reading material such as short stories and novels.

Use summaries to help you:

- Focus your attention on the main points
- Prepare for essay exams
- Remember short stories and novels
- Remember class demonstrations
- Record lab experiments
- Study later without rereading the selection

How to summarize:

1. Read the textbook selection.
2. Identify the main ideas or key words of the selection.
3. Jot them down using as few words as possible.
4. Write a summary of the selection using the words you jotted down as a guide.
5. Include examples only to help you remember main points later. Otherwise, include no details.
6. Keep the information in your summary in the same order as in the original selection.
7. Try to be accurate.

Summarizing is a learned skill. The more you do it, the better you become. When you watch a movie and tell a friend about it, you are summarizing. When you have a conversation with a relative and tell a friend about it, you are summarizing. Summarizing helps you collect your thoughts and put ideas into proper perspective.