

Summarizing

0:00	Owl: Welcome to Summarizing, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab.
0:13	A helpful way to improve your reading comprehension is by summarizing what you read.
0:19	Summarizing involves writing a brief statement about a longer text that reviews the main ideas in your own words.
0:28	Summarizing is helpful for checking your understanding of a longer text and remembering the author's main ideas.
0:37	Summarizing differs from quoting and paraphrasing in key ways.
0:43	Quoting is about citing an author's ideas exactly as they appear in the text without changing any words.
0:50	Paraphrasing is about putting an author's ideas into your own words.
0:54	Summarizing is about condensing the meaning of a longer text into a brief statement that reviews the main ideas in your own words.
1:03	Summarizing is useful for reading and writing.
1:06	Some specific applications of summarizing are:
1:10	reviewing a long text, speech, or video;
1:14	writing an abstract;
1:17	preparing notes for a study guide;
1:19	creating an annotated bibliography;
1:23	answering an essay question;
1:25	writing a research paper;
1:28	recording the results of an experiment;
1:31	and describing the plot of a fictional text or film.
1:36	Summarizing is easier if you follow these tips:
1:41	Highlight or underline the thesis, topic sentences, and key supporting details as you read
1:48	Construct an outline or concept map to help you identify the main ideas
1:54	Start by writing the main idea
1:57	Review the major supporting ideas
2:00	Paraphrase information by putting it in your own words
2:04	Be brief and succinct so that your summary is accurate, but significantly shorter than the original text by covering only the most important ideas in fewer words
2:15	Consider your purpose and audience: How detailed do you need to be? Do you need to define terms? Are you writing for yourself or for others? If you are writing for yourself, don't worry about sentence structure.



2:29	Present ideas in the same order that the author does
2:34	If the author has a point of view, explain what it is in your summary
2:39	Leave your personal opinion out of the summary unless you are required to include it
2:44	Provide a citation if the summary is included in a formal writing assignment or publication
2:51	Got that?
2:52	Let's practice!
2:54	We'll summarize the passage in this chapter that deals with the role of the media in American politics.
3:00	First, let's read the selection:
3:04	The media exist to fill a number of functions. Whether the medium is a newspaper, radio, or television newscast, a corporation behind the scenes must bring in revenue and pay for the cost of the product. Revenue comes from advertising and sponsors, like McDonald's, Ford Motor Company, and other large corporations. But corporations will not pay for advertising if there are no viewers or readers. So all programs and publications need to entertain, inform, or interest the public and maintain a steady stream of consumers. In the end, what attracts viewers and advertisers is what survives.
3:45	The media are also watchdogs of society and of public officials. Some refer to the media as the fourth estate, with the branches of government being the first three estates and the media equally participating as the fourth. This role helps maintain democracy and keeps the government accountable for its actions, even if a branch of the government is reluctant to open itself to public scrutiny. As much as social scientists would like citizens to be informed and involved in politics and events, the reality is that we are not. So the media, especially journalists, keep an eye on what is happening and sounds an alarm when the public needs to pay attention.
4:28	The media also engages in agenda setting, which is the act of choosing which issues or topics deserve public discussion. For example, in the early 1980s famine in Ethiopia drew worldwide attention, which resulted in increased charitable giving to the country. Yet the famine had been going on for a long time before it was discovered by western media. Even after the discovery, it took video footage to gain the attention of the British and U.S. populations and start the aid flowing. Today, numerous examples of agenda setting show how important the media are when trying to prevent further emergencies or humanitarian crises. In the spring of 2015, when the Dominican Republic was preparing to exile Haitians and undocumented (or under documented) residents, major U.S. news outlets remained silent. However, once the story had been covered several times by Al Jazeera, a state-funded broadcast



company based in Qatar, ABC, the *New York Times*, and other network outlets followed. With major network coverage came public pressure for the U.S. government to act on behalf of the Haitians.

5:42	Next, let's highlight the main idea and major supporting ideas.
5:47	The main idea, or thesis, can usually be found in the first paragraph.
5:51	The major supporting ideas are often found in the first sentence of each following paragraph.
5:57	We call these "topic sentences."
Displayed on screen	(Thesis) The media exist to fill a number of functions. Whether the medium is a newspaper, a radio, or a television newscast, a corporation behind the scenes must bring in revenue and pay for the cost of the product. Revenue comes from advertising and sponsors, like McDonald's, Ford Motor Company, and other large corporations.
Displayed on screen	(Topic sentences) The media are also watchdogs of society and of public officials. Some refer to the media as the fourth estate, with the branches of government being the first three estates and the media equally participating as the fourth.
Displayed on screen	(Supporting ideas) The media also engages in agenda setting , which is the act of choosing which issues or topics deserve public discussion.
6:00	We will use this information to help us construct our summary.
6:04	Let's apply the tips shared earlier to write the following summary:
6:09	The media have three functions. First, they bring in revenue from advertisers and sponsors. Second, they act as a public "watchdog" to keep government accountable. In this capacity, they are sometimes called the "fourth estate" or fourth branch of government. Finally, the media engage in "agenda setting"—the selection of topics for public scrutiny and debate.
6:36	This summary follows the tips shared earlier because it begins with the main idea, reviews the major supporting ideas, restates the information in our own words, is significantly shorter than the original text, follows the same order of ideas as the original text, and refrains from adding a personal opinion.
6:59	That's it!
7:00	Remember, summarizing what you read is an excellent way to check your understanding of long texts and help you remember the author's main ideas.
7:09	Visit the Online Writing Lab for more information about summarizing.
7:15	Thanks for listening to this instructional video on Summarizing!
7:20	Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills.

