

GUIDELINES for SUMMARIZING A TEXT

1. Reread the material, identifying (with a mark/highlighter) the main ideas and most important supporting points.
 - Skim the text, focusing on the title, intro, and conclusion.
 - Look for an explicit narrow the scope of your thesis statement (purpose of the document). If you see one, paraphrase t. If you don't, express it yourself in 1-2 sentences.

2. Highlight or number the major points that the author uses to support the main idea.
 - Look for topic sentences, for boldface or other design elements used for emphasis (like headings), and for illustrations.
 - Jot down these points in a list or outline – in your own words.
 - If you do find words that you think you might quote directly, put them in quotation marks NOW in your notes – but don't use them in the summary.

3. Identify the way that the major points related to the main ideas and to one another.
 - Form a mental picture of how the argument is structured.
 - Take a look at the intro and conclusion for clues. Consider how headings and lists signal the relative importance of ideas.

4. In your own words, state the main idea and major supporting points.
 - Set aside the original.
 - Leave out examples and quotes.
 - Be objective. YOU'RE TAKING A SNAPSHOT.