



Writing an Objective Summary

A summary is a short, concise statement of the most important information in a text. In particular, a summary identifies the topic and most important textual details of a text. When you write a summary, you write the information in your own words.

An *objective summary* is a summary that does not include any opinions or judgments about what is written in the text. Instead, it only includes information that comes from the text. Writing objective summaries can help you understand texts that you read and identify the most important information in the text. Moreover, writing objective summaries can help you improve your writing skills!

To write an objective summary, follow the instructions below. You can summarize a whole text, like a book or news article, or just a portion of a text, like a book chapter. If you need any help, be sure to ask an adult.

1. As you are reading, jot down the most important details from the text in the “Details” column on the graphic organizer. Important details are those that are critical to understanding the text. If someone could understand the text without knowing about a certain detail, then it is **not** important! In addition, remember that **textual details must be written in your own words, and should not contain any opinions or judgments about the text!**

*Tip: Don’t “fall in love” with interesting details! Even if a detail is interesting, strange, or exciting, it is not necessarily an important detail.

Transition	Detail	Number
Topic sentence:		



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2. Write a topic sentence in the “Topic sentence” box. A topic sentence identifies the topic of the text, or what the whole text is about. It captures all of the textual details you identified in Step 1.

3. Number each sentence in the “Number” column to show the order in which you will write these details in your summary. Remember, the details will not always be written in the order in which they occurred in the passage. Instead, they should be written in a logical order that helps the reader of your summary understand what the text was about.

4. Add an appropriate transition word or phrase to the beginning of each detail in the “Transition” column. Options for transition words and phrases are listed below. An appropriate transition word or phrase accurately shows the relationship between details.

Time/Sequence	Addition	Cause/Effect	Compare/Contrast
First	In addition	As a result	Similarly
Initially	Additionally	Consequently	Likewise
Next	Furthermore	Hence	In the same way
Then	Moreover	Therefore	In contrast
Last	Also	Thus	Conversely
Finally		For this reason	However

5. Combine your topic sentence, transitions, and details to write your summary below.





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6. Evaluate your summary using the checklist below. If your summary does not meet all of the criteria, revise your summary accordingly.

___ Written in my own words

___ Includes a topic sentence

___ Only includes important textual details

___ Only includes information from the text (does not include opinions)

___ Includes appropriate transition words and phrases

7. Ask an adult to use the checklist to evaluate your summary. Revise the summary to address any feedback you receive.