

Name (in Romaji):	→
Student Number:	→
Class Day + Period (examples: Monday 2, Friday 3):	→

Summarizing

What is summarizing?

Summarizing is the process of putting the important parts of a passage into a much shorter form. It is an important reading skill. When you can summarize a passage, you can be confident that you have understood it.

Summarizing is also a good study skill applicable for report writing. Often you must read, understand, and remember information from several books or other sources. When you are assigned to write a research report, you usually include information from several sources. By summarizing such information, you can make your report richer and clearer.

A good summary:

- includes the main ideas and the major supporting points of what you have read
- does not include minor details or repeated details
- does not include your own ideas or opinions
- is much shorter than the original



--- Exercise 1 ---

Write a summary word or phrase for each list.

- | | | |
|------------|----------|---------------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ | 3. _____ |
| baseball | Mars | malaria |
| basketball | Uranus | tuberculosis |
| football | Jupiter | scarlet fever |
| swimming | Saturn | diphtheria |
| tennis | Mercury | measles |

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4. _____ | 5. _____ |
| get a shovel | clean the house |
| dig a hole in the ground | buy some chips and salsa |
| put lots of water in the hole | make some pizza |
| unwrap the roots of the tree | bake a cake and decorate it |
| place the roots in the hole | wrap the presents |
| be sure the tree is straight | set the table |
| cover the roots with lots of soil | cool the drinks |
| stamp down the soil | |
| add more water | |

6. _____

Every body continues in a state of rest or motion at a constant speed in a straight line unless it is disturbed by a force acting on it.

A force is required to accelerate a body. The strength of the force is directly proportional to the mass of the body.

To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. The action is on one body, the reaction on the other.



7. _____

cathedral

church

temple

mosque

chapel

8. _____

verb

noun

adjective

pronoun

adverb

Summarizing a Sentence

When you summarize a sentence, you make it much shorter. You can use summary words or phrases to take the place of groups of words about the same topic. You should leave out descriptive words like adjectives or adverbs and keep only the words that tell the main part of the sentence. Use as few words as possible.

Example: The tall cowboy put the saddle on his horse, untied him from the fence, waved good-bye, and rode off into the sunset. Summary: **The cowboy left.**

--- Exercise 2 ---

Summarize the following sentences using summary words and phrases.

1. George put on his coat, picked up his briefcase from the table near the door, put the cat out, and got ready for his ten-minute walk to the bus stop.

Summary: _____



2. When the Chen family returned home from their vacation, they found the back door broken open, the television set missing, and all the food in their freezer gone.

Summary: _____

3. When the islanders heard the weather forecast, they closed the windows, put tape across the glass, moved all of their plants and chairs indoors, and bought many bottles of fresh water.

Summary: _____

4. Anna put her pens and pencils neatly in a row, turned on the radio, stacked her English books on the desk, got herself a soda, and sat down at her desk chair.

Summary: _____

5. As the bus rolled into her hometown, Liz looked around at the familiar streets and shops she had not seen for two years.

Summary: _____



Summarizing a Paragraph

A paragraph summary should be as short as possible and should express the main points in as few words as possible. Follow these steps:

Step 1: Read the paragraph all the way through to be sure you understand it.

Step 2: Check to see if the paragraph contains a topic sentence.

- If it contains a topic sentence, does it state the main idea of the paragraph? If so, you can use it as your summary. Just make the topic sentence shorter by using summary words and phrases and taking out descriptive words.
- If the topic sentence is not a good statement of the main idea, write a main idea statement and then make it shorter by using summary words and phrases and leaving out descriptive words.

Example:

Shopping malls have produced a revolution in shopping and living habits in many industrialized countries. Before 1950, there were no malls, but now almost every city or region in industrialized countries has at least one. In fact, shopping malls have become a part of daily life. Many people even think of them as social centers. In a way, malls have taken the place of main streets of a town or city. Shops and services that were once spread over several city blocks are now in one place at the mall. Everyone can save time by doing their shopping at the mall. People young and old, with time on their hands, often say, “Let’s go to the mall!”

Topic sentence: *Shopping malls have produced a revolution in shopping and living habits in many industrialized countries.*

Summary: *Shopping malls have changed the cultures of many industrialized countries.*



--- Exercise 3 ---

Read and summarize the following paragraphs, using as few words as possible.

1. Although every shopping mall is a bit different in design, shoppers often feel comfortable in a new mall. That is because malls share certain features. You can almost always find most of the following: a department store, a pharmacy, a toy store, a bookshop, clothing shops for all ages, shoe shops, a bank, and places to eat. These businesses are all under one roof. Most malls are enclosed, so that shoppers never have to go outdoors once they get to the mall. Some malls also have doors to shops on the outside of the mall. Usually a mall is surrounded by a large parking area.

Summary: _____

2. Malls are not all exactly alike, however. In a suburb of a large city, the local mall may be large and beautiful. It may be several stories high, housing as many as fifty businesses. These can range from small specialty shops to large luxury department stores. The roofs of these malls are sometimes made of glass and there may be a courtyard with plants and fountains. In a poor, rural town, however, the local mall may be plain and rather small. It may offer only essential shopping and services, such as a supermarket, a pizza parlor, a card and gift shop, a laundromat, and a bank. All the shops are generally on one level, and the interior of the mall is plain and undecorated.

Summary: _____



3. While shopping malls have changed life in the modern world, not all of their effects have been positive. Most of the shops and services found in malls are parts of large corporations. These businesses take away customers from smaller shops in nearby towns, forcing many of them to close. That has led to fewer individually owned businesses and less local control over jobs. In addition, malls are harmful to the environment. They are often built on land that is important to the survival of birds and wild animals.

Wherever they are built, they cover large areas with buildings and parking lots—instead of trees and grass. Thus, they contribute to the general loss of nature and rainwater to refill underground aquifers. Finally, malls are usually built far away from the city or town center. This means that people must drive their car to the mall, resulting in increased pollution and heavy traffic on nearby roads.

Summary: _____

Summarizing Short Passages

Step 1: Read the passage all the way through.

Step 2: Go back to the beginning; check to see if each paragraph has a topic sentence.

- If it contains a topic sentence, does it state the main idea of the paragraph? If so, you can use it as your summary. Just make the topic sentence shorter by using summary words and phrases and taking out descriptive words.
- If the topic sentence is not a good statement of the main idea, write a main idea statement and then make it shorter by using summary words and phrases and leaving out descriptive words.



