

# **MODULE 3**

## **SUMMARIZING**

### *Making a Long Story Short*



#### **WHY YOU NEED TO KNOW THE INFORMATION IN THIS MODULE**

At one time or another, a teacher has probably asked you to summarize information from a textbook or to write a summary of a story you read. The farther you go in school, the more important summarizing becomes.

Knowing how to summarize will help you

- understand what you read because you must process the information into summaries;
- remember the important information in material you have read;
- make higher grades on tests, especially essay tests.

**The supplemental modules are organized exactly like the chapters in the text, so the sections will seem very familiar.**

## Super Student Tips

Here are tips from other students who have learned the technique of summarizing. Here's what experience has taught them:



“Once you have the main ideas, you have the ingredients you need for the summary. Don’t put in details! They don’t belong there. If you include them, you’ll just end up writing everything that’s in the book.” –*René*

“At first I just wanted to copy one main idea sentence after another, straight from the book. Then I began including transition words in my summary paragraph, words like *first*, *next*, *finally*. It’s helped me write better, clearer summaries.” –*Gustavo*

“I try to summarize the information in each section of a textbook chapter. It takes me a lot of time to do, but I’m finally making Bs in my classes.” –*LeeAnn*

“The hardest part of summaries for me is putting the information in my own words. I wanted to copy stuff down even if I didn’t really get it. If I can put it in my own words, though, I know I understand it.” –*Kelly*

## Jumpstart Your Brain!



Ready to warm up your brain? Let's test your powers of observation. Do the following two items before you scroll down to see the answers.

- Read this silently to yourself or aloud to a classmate:

**I  
LOVE  
PARIS  
IN THE  
THE SPRING.**

Do you think you read it correctly? Yes No

- How many Fs are there in this sentence?

**FINISHED FILES ARE THE  
RESULT OF YEARS OF  
SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED  
WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.**

Write the number on notebook paper or tell it to a classmate.

- Did you read the first sentence as “I love Paris in the spring”? If so, look again: it actually says, “I love Paris in THE THE spring.”
- How many Fs did you find? Did you find all 6? Yes, there really are six:

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC  
STUDY COMBINED WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.

Very few people find all six because we tend not to see the Fs in the middle or ends of words.

## MODULE 3: SUMMARIZING

*Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow.* –Emerson, 19<sup>th</sup> century American writer

### The Big Picture for This Module

This module introduces another valuable skill: summarizing. It explains why summaries are useful and when you might use them. It tells what a summary is and how to write one. You'll also read a passage and a sample summary of it, and get a chance to do some summaries of your own.

### Looking at What You Already Know

On notebook paper, write what you already know about summarizing (writing summaries). What goes into a summary? Why is knowing how to write a summary valuable? You might know a little or a lot. Once you have completed the module, you can come back to this section and change or add information.

### Writing a Summary

**Summarizing** is a powerful technique in which you present an author's most important information in shortened form. You might condense an entire section of a textbook into a single paragraph. You might condense an entire story into a single paragraph. Summarizing helps you record and remember the most important information.

Summarizing is a technique that should be used much more than it is. When you summarize information, you actively process it. This results in significantly higher comprehension and recall of the information. Former college professor and author Robert Marzano declares that it is one of the nine most effective teaching strategies in the history of education.

Creating summaries is also a terrific way to prepare for essay tests. Writing a summary can help you recall the key events in a story. Most students find that when they read a textbook, it's helpful to stop at the end of each section and write a summary. This way, they don't feel overwhelmed by huge amounts of information.

Perhaps you've heard this joke:

*Professor:* Did you know that writing a summary can cut your study time in half?

*Student:* Great! If I write two of them, I won't have to study at all!

Okay. It doesn't work quite that way. Nevertheless, the ability to summarize is an extremely handy skill to have.

In fact, being able to summarize information is a critical skill in many jobs. News reporters, for example, must be able to take large amounts of information, decide what's most important, and present it in a clear, brief way. Managers write summaries about their department's sales or activities. High-tech employees often find it necessary to grasp the essence of information they read and to present it to others. Health care workers must often summarize a patient's activities, summarize their observations of a patient, or summarize the patient's medical treatment during their shift.

There are many ways to summarize information. In this module, though, we're going to concentrate on *traditional, written* summaries. That's the type of summary that helps most students. Even if you conclude that some other way of summarizing suits your

Elder, J. *Entryways into College Reading and Learning*. Copyright © 2008 The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

learning style better, you will at least know the rules of the game. Certain “ingredients” and rules apply to any type of summary, so that’s where we’re going to begin.

### Discovering the Rules for Summarizing

Read the selection below about methamphetamine, an illegal drug called “meth.” (The word seductive in the title means “tempting” or “attracting with the promise of pleasure.”) Then read the summary that follows.

Here is the selection:

#### The Seductive, Destructive Power of Meth

Government health officials and doctors don’t like to talk about it. The major reason meth (methamphetamine) hooks people is that it increases their sex drive and performance—for a short while, anyway. It is even more powerful than cocaine in this respect. Dr. Mary Holley of Alabama interviewed meth addicts. Both men and women said the effect on sex was the number one reason they used the illegal drug.

After about six months, meth addicts can’t have sex unless they’re high, and after a while longer, they’re unable to have sex at all. At first, meth fires up the dopamine system in the brain. After a while, it burns it out. Once that happens, the person no longer functions sexually.

Besides causing brain damage, meth has other nasty effects. Paranoia is common. Some meth addicts hallucinate. Others become violent. Users who inject meth risk contracting HIV and hepatitis C, a life-threatening liver disease. Those who share needles are also at risk for other sexually transmitted diseases. Meth users’ hair and teeth eventually fall out. The nation’s prisons are filled with former meth users whose teeth are crumbling. The prisons cannot afford the dental treatment for them.

Meth use has reached epidemic proportions and affects every part of the country. Meth use is rampant in big cities and small towns, and even in rural areas. A 2002 survey by the National Institute on Drug Abuse revealed that about 5 percent of Americans at least 12 years old have tried meth at least once. This shocking statistic translates into more than 12 million people.

Here is the summary:

#### The Seductive, Destructive Power of Meth

The main reason people get hooked on meth (methamphetamine) is that it boosts their sex drive and performance, but only temporarily. After about half a year, meth users can only have sex when they’re high, and later on, they can’t have sex at all. In addition, meth causes brain damage and has other terrible effects. Meth use has become a nationwide epidemic.

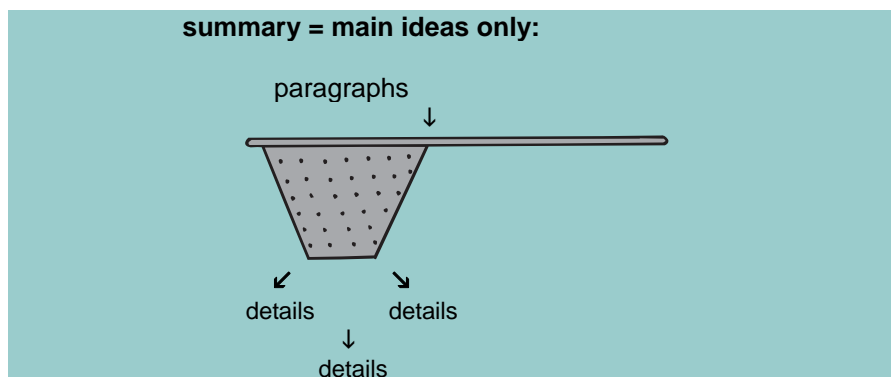
— **Stop and Process Exercise 3.1:** After you have read the selection and the summary, answer these questions to discover the rules for writing summaries. Write your answers on notebook paper.

1. Where does the title of a summary come from?
2. Does a summary typically consist only of the main ideas of the paragraphs, or does it contain details?
3. Does a summary consist of sentences taken directly from a selection, or should summary writers paraphrase (put the information in their own words)?
4. Does a summary include information beyond what is in the original selection? In other words, can you include other information you know or give your personal opinions on the subject?
5. Can you include transition words to make the summary read more smoothly?
6. Is the information in the summary presented in the same order as it appears in the original selection, or can it be rearranged?

Did you discover that summaries have the same title as the original material? That they consist of main ideas? That the main ideas should be paraphrased rather than copied from the original material? Did you notice that a summary should contain only information in the selection, and nothing else? Did you see that it includes transition words to make the ideas flow smoothly? A **summary** is a single-paragraph condensation of all the main ideas in a longer passage. **Transition words** are words and phrases that show relationships among ideas in sentences, paragraphs, and longer selections. Examples of transition words are *In addition*, *moreover*, *first*, *next*, *then*, *finally*, *however*, and *therefore*. The signal words you learned for authors' writing patterns (Chapter 11) are also transition words.

Details usually are *not* included in summaries. However, you may sometimes have to include a detail in order to make the meaning of the main idea clear. For example, the main idea might contain an important term, and you need to include an extra sentence in order to give its definition. In general, though, summaries do not include examples or other details. Students who try to copy sentences straight from the original selection write too much. Worse, they may not understand what they are writing. Summaries should be only 10 percent to 25 percent as long as the original selection. (If you are summarizing a long story or novel, it will be even less.) If your summary is more than a quarter of the length of the original selection, it means you have not pared the material down enough. It may also mean that you need more practice in *paraphrasing* (restating the author's material in your own words).

To understand the purpose of summaries, you may find it helpful to visualize a strainer or sieve. Visualize yourself "pouring" paragraphs into it. The less important information—the details, examples, and repeated information—flows right through and out, like water. All that's left is the important information, the main ideas. That's what you will use for the summary.



## How to Write a Summary

Now you know the basic idea of summarizing: You take a long selection, find the important information, make it shorter, and put it in your own words. You know *what* must be included in a summary, but *how* do you go about writing a summary of material you have read?

What summarizing really comes down to is knowing what to leave out, what to substitute, and what to keep. Here are the steps you need to follow in order to accomplish this:

1. Read a text passage at least twice. Read it the first time to get a general overview and to see how the information is organized.
2. Reread each paragraph to determine what is most important in it. You cannot decide whether something is more important or less important until you have read what comes before *and after* it. When you are reading material for the first time, you know about the sentence you are reading and what came before it, but you cannot know at that moment what comes after it. This is why you need a second reading once you have the general picture.
  - It may help you to start by identifying the information that is *unimportant* or that is *repeated*. Since you're going to leave it out of the summary, you may want to lightly pencil through this material.
  - Replace any lists of specific things with a *general* word that describes them all (such as using "childhood diseases" in place of "mumps, measles, and chicken pox").
  - Locate any stated main ideas and underline them. For any paragraph that does not have a stated main idea, formulate the main idea. Write its implied main idea in the margin of the textbook, on scratch paper, or on a sticky note. Remember that you may have to combine important information to create a main idea.
3. Rewrite the main ideas in your own words as briefly as possible. When you paraphrase or substitute synonyms for existing words, you use your brain to process the material. The original material might say "a ten-year period," but in your summary you might say "decade" instead. Although main ideas are typically written as single sentences, you may sometimes find it easier to break them into two or more sentences in your summary. Students usually write summaries as study tools, so make yours work for you.
4. Write the paraphrased main ideas in the same order the author presents the main ideas.



5. Use transition words as needed to show how the ideas are linked and to make your summary read more smoothly.
6. Give your summary the same title as the title of the material you are summarizing.

Here are the steps applied to the sample passage. (Notice that in the summary of the meth passage, the main points have been paraphrased.)

### The Seductive, Destructive Power of Meth

~~Government health officials and doctors don't like to talk about it. The major reason meth (methamphetamine) hooks people is that it increases their sex drive and performance—for a short while, anyway. It is even more powerful than cocaine in this respect. Dr. Mary Holley of Alabama interviewed meth addicts. Both men and women said the effect on sex was the number one reason they used the illegal drug.~~

~~After about six months, meth addicts can't have sex unless they're high, and after a while longer, they're unable to have sex at all. At first, meth fires up the dopamine system in the brain. After a while, it burns it out. Once that happens, the person no longer functions sexually.~~

~~Besides causing brain damage, meth has other nasty effects. Paranoia is common. Some meth addicts hallucinate. Others become violent. Users who inject meth risk contracting HIV and hepatitis C, a life-threatening liver disease. Those who share needles are also at risk for other sexually transmitted diseases. Meth users' hair and teeth eventually fall out. The nation's prisons are filled with former meth users whose teeth are crumbling. The prisons cannot afford the dental treatment for them.~~

~~Meth use has reached epidemic proportions and affects every part of the country. Meth use is rampant in big cities and small towns, and even in rural areas. A 2002 survey by the National Institute on Drug Abuse revealed that about 5 percent of Americans at least 12 years have tried meth at least once. This shocking statistic translates into more than 12 million people.~~

Here's an explanation:

Paragraph 1: Second sentence is the stated main idea. Other sentences contain the less important details.

Paragraph 2: First sentence is the stated main idea. The other sentences are details that explain the reason for meth's effects over time.

Paragraph 3: First sentence is the stated main idea. The rest of the sentences are details that tell some of the specific "nasty effects" of meth use.

Paragraph 4: First sentence is the stated main idea. The second sentence repeats the information in the first sentence. The rest of the sentences are details that give specific information about how widespread meth use is.

### Bonus Tip



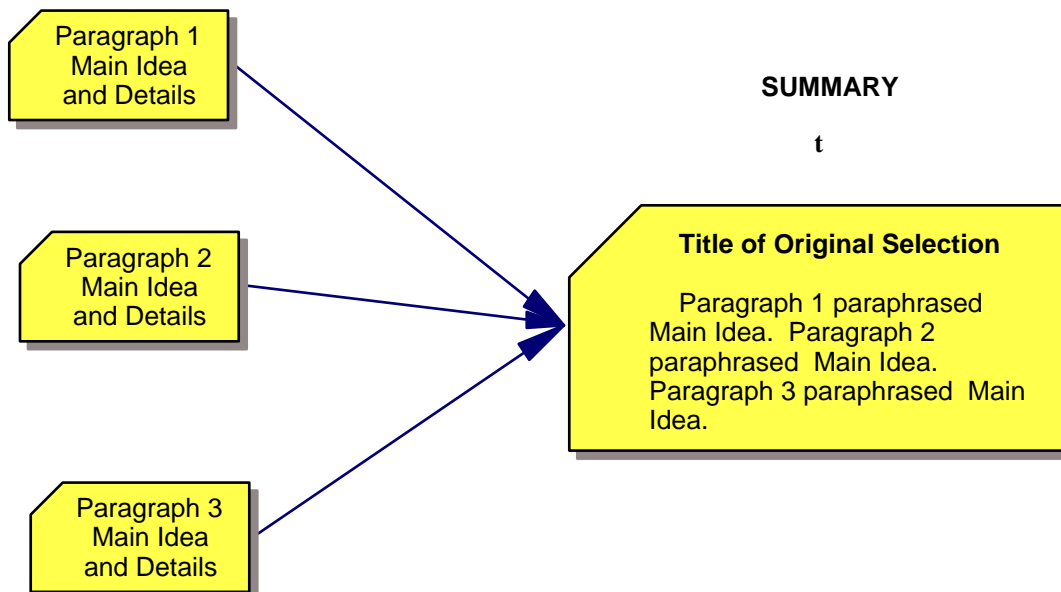
In *Summarization in Any Subject* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005), Rick Wormeli offers a great memory peg for the steps in summarizing a passage: “T-RG-TS” or TARGETS:

- T—*Trivia* (Remove trivial or unimportant material.)
- R—*Redundancies* (Remove redundant or repetitive material.)
- G—*Generalize* (Replace specifics of lists with general terms and phrases.)
- TS—*Topic Sentences* (Determine the main ideas—the topics plus the author’s most important point about each of them.)

The diagram below illustrates where material for a summary comes from. A summary for a three-paragraph selection would present the three paraphrased main ideas, although a summary can also include essential details.

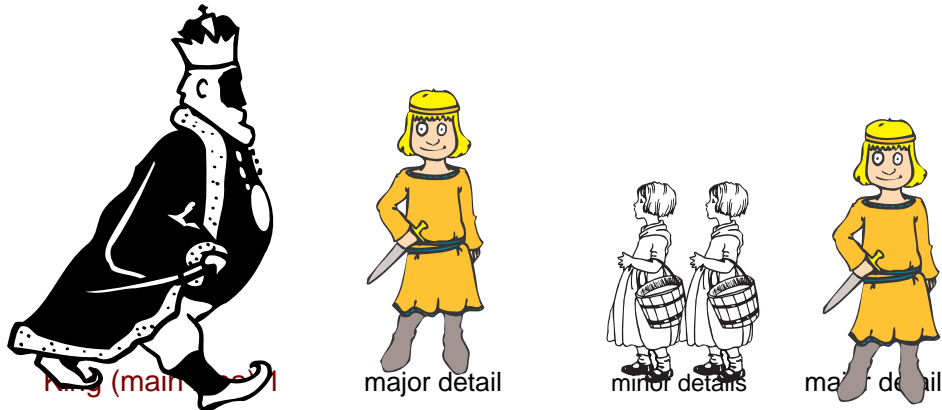
Original Selection

t

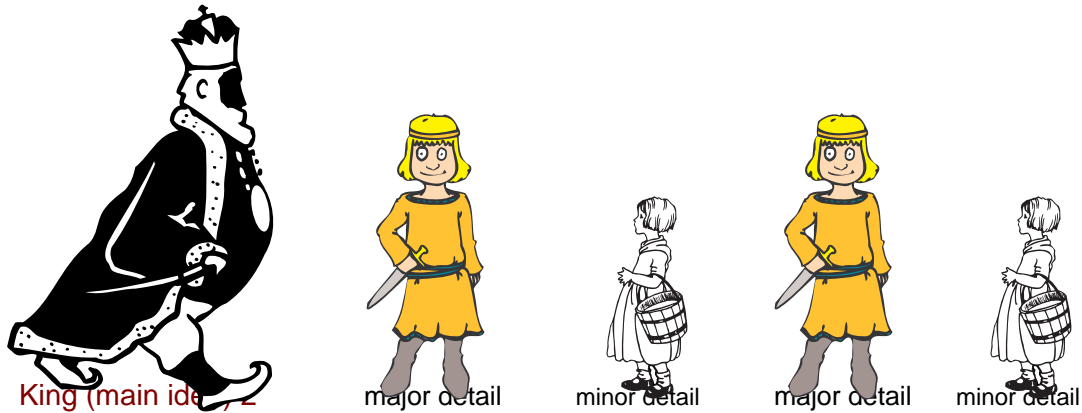


If you are a visual learner, the following “picture” may help you see where the information for a summary comes from. The kings represent main ideas, the adult subjects are the “loyal” supporting details, and the children represent minor details. An occasional “adult” (crucial detail) might show up in a summary, but no “children” (minor details) would ever appear in one.

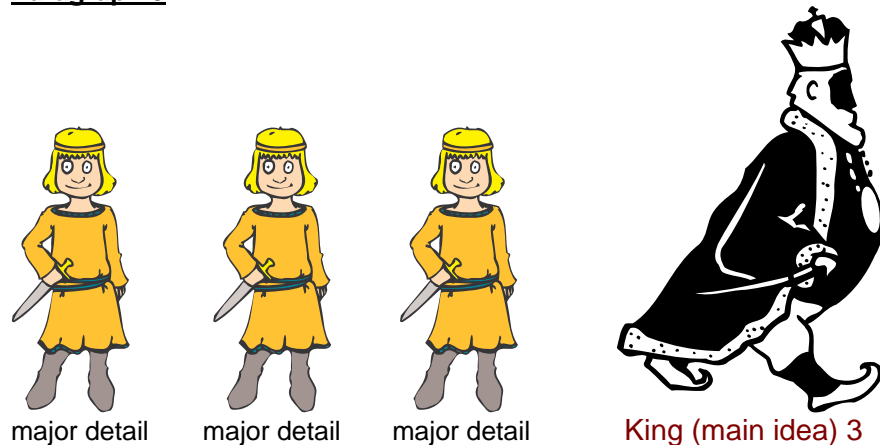
**Paragraph 1:**



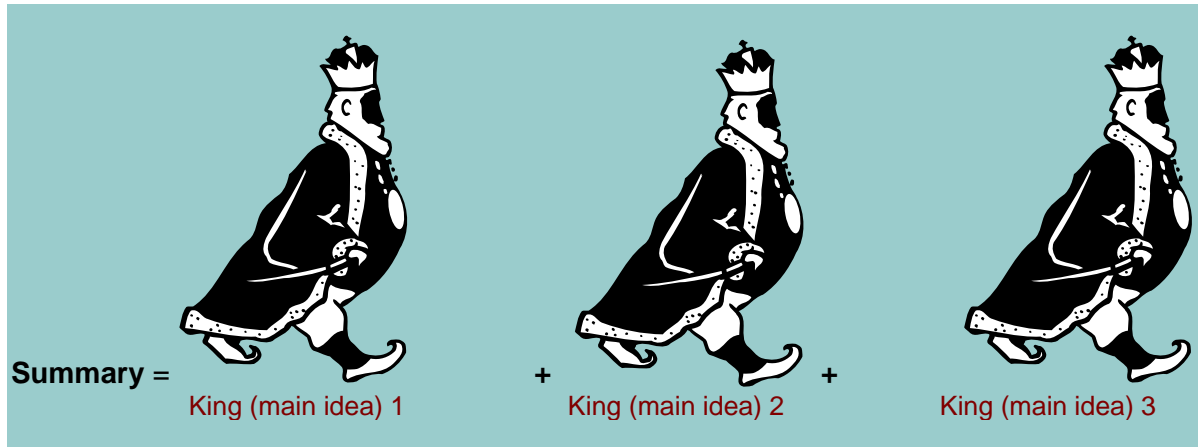
**Paragraph 2:**



**Paragraph 3:**



To create a summary, start by gathering the three “kings” (main ideas) in order:



Then put the main ideas into your own words. Think of this as similar to dressing the kings in less formal clothes. You still recognize them, but they seem more familiar, and you feel more comfortable with them. Once you've followed these steps, you've created a summary that's fit for a king!

### Cross-Chapter Connections



- Summarizing entails a variety of skills introduced previously in this book: vocabulary (synonyms) work, paraphrasing, sentence combining skills, generalizing, recognizing and formulating main ideas, and using transition words to show how ideas are organized. You can see from all the other skills summarizing involves, why it is such an important skill.
- In Module 2, you learned how to outline. If you have outlined material, you have already identified the key

## Evaluating Your Summary

Like most skills, learning to write useful summaries takes practice. That's why you should evaluate your summaries. After you have written a summary, take a few minutes to see if it meets the guidelines for a correct summary:

- Is it accurate and complete?
- Does it include all the author's main points?
- Are they in the right order?
- Did you remember not to include details, examples, your opinions, and information that isn't in the original selection?
- Did you write the summary in your own words?
- Did you use transitions so that it reads smoothly?
- If someone else read your summary, would they see and be able to understand all of the important points the author presented in the original selection?

— **Stop and Process Exercise 3.2:** Here is the passage about road rage you read in Module 2. It is three paragraphs long. The main ideas are underlined. Reread the passage, and then read the summary of it. *The summary contains some errors.* Use the guidelines above to decide what is wrong with the summary. List the errors on the blank lines that follow the summary.

Here is the selection:

### Road Rage: Danger Behind the Wheel

Mention road rage, and most people instantly think of irate 18-to-26-year-old male drivers. Road rage is more common in young adult men, but under certain circumstances, anyone can become an angry, even violent, driver.

According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), four specific behaviors account for most road rage. One trigger is gestures other drivers make, especially obscene gestures. A second behavior that infuriates drivers is being cut off by other drivers who crowd in front of them. A third

behavior that exasperates many drivers is someone who is driving too slowly in the left lane—even if the “slow” driver is going the speed limit! The fourth behavior that sparks road rage is tailgating, or following dangerously closely behind another car.

Road rage is increasingly common, so how can you minimize your risk of becoming a road rage victim? Actually, there are five commonsense rules. One important rule is simply to be polite. Another rule is to give other drivers plenty of room; don't crowd them or tailgate. A third rule is not to be competitive over parking spaces or about going first. Another rule is to avoid eye contact with drivers who seem angry. A final rule is to get help if another driver is following you or trying to provoke a confrontation. Call 911 on your cell phone. Drive to a police station, shopping mall, or other place where there will be lots of people. Never, ever stop and get out of your car.

*[Implied main idea: Following five commonsense rules can minimize your risk of becoming a road rage victim.]*

Here is an *incorrect* summary:

#### Danger Behind the Wheel

Mention road rage, and most people instantly think of irate 18-to-26 years old male drivers. Following five common sense rules, however, can minimize your risk of becoming a road rage victim. According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), four specific behaviors account for most road rage. One rule is simply to be polite.

On notebook paper, list any errors you see in the way this summary was done.

If you needed to learn this material for a test, you would want to know the details, as well. You would want to learn the four major causes of road rage and the specific ways to avoid becoming a victim. For that reason, it might be more helpful to make an informal outline that includes the details. On the other hand, if all you needed is a general overview, a summary would be enough. It would tell you that any driver can experience road rage, that certain “enraging” behaviors have been identified, and that there *are* things people can do to avoid becoming the victim of an enraged driver.

— **Stop and Process Exercise 3.3:** Ready to try summarizing a passage? Read this short selection on body tissues, organs, and systems. Then reread it and complete the summary of it. The first main idea has been provided for you. Write your summary on notebook paper. Paraphrase the main ideas, and use transition words to help link the ideas in your summary.

#### Body Tissues, Organs, and Systems

*Tissue* consists of millions of cells that are grouped together to perform a specific function in the body. Muscle tissue, for example, is one particular type of tissue. It consists of millions of threadlike muscle cells. In addition to muscle

tissue, there are three other basic types of tissue: nerve, epidermal (skin), and connective tissue.

*Organs* are composed of different types of tissues that work together to carry out a specific body function. For instance, the heart is an organ that consists of muscle tissue, connective tissue, and nerve tissue. Because these tissues work together, the organ of the heart is able to pump and circulate blood throughout the body. Other examples of organs are the eyes, liver, and kidneys. The skin is the largest organ of the body.

*Systems* consist of organs that work together. The systems of the body include the digestive system, nervous system, skeletal system (bones), muscular system, respiratory system (breathing), endocrine system (glands), excretory system (waste removal), reproductive system, and circulatory system. The organs that work together as the digestive system are the mouth, gullet, stomach, and intestines. Together the brain, spinal cord, and nerves throughout the body function as the nervous system.

Here is for the summary that has been started for you. Write your summary on notebook paper.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

When millions of body cells work together to carry out a certain body function, they are called tissue, and there are four basic types of tissue.

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When you have completed your summary, evaluate it by using the guidelines presented earlier.

### Overall Main Idea Sentences in Summaries

When you write a summary, you may want to include an overall main idea along with the main ideas of the individual paragraphs. In Chapters 8 and 10, you learned about stated and implied main ideas of paragraphs. You also learned about the **overall main idea**, a very general sentence that sums up the main ideas of a selection. In a writing or English course, you might hear it called a *thesis sentence*.

An overall main idea is really an overall summary sentence, a single sentence that sums up the entire selection. Sometimes authors state their overall main idea. (If the author states it, remember to paraphrase it before you put it in your summary.) Sometimes authors imply the overall main idea, and you must put the idea into sentence form.

Textbook writers often state the overall main idea at the beginning or end of a textbook section. When they place it at the end of a section, they present it as a conclusion or simply as a summary of what has just been presented. Conclusions are introduced by *thus*, *therefore*, *in conclusion*, and similar words. Summary statements often begin *To sum up*, *To summarize*, or *In summary*.

When you write a summary, you may want to start it with the overall main idea. Then you can give the individual main points from the selection. (Remember, your brain likes it when it can see the big picture ahead of time. Whenever you pick up your summary to

reread, that overall main idea will let your brain know where you're headed.) For example, in the selection on body tissues, organs, and systems, you could formulate the overall main idea: *"In the body, cells work together as tissues, tissues work together as organs, and organs work together as systems."* You could place this overall main idea sentence at the beginning of the summary and then present the three main ideas that explain tissues, organs, and systems. The other way to do it would be to present the three main ideas that explain tissues, organs, and systems, and then place the overall main idea at the end of your summary.

### Brain-Friendly Tip



Once you understand the basic principles of summarizing, experiment to discover if one of these techniques suits your learning style:

- You can say the material, draw it, make diagrams (you learned about study maps in Module 2), act it out, or even sing it!
- Even if you write out main points, you can write them on large sticky notes and arrange them on the wall.
- You can produce a summary by yourself or with others.





## **My Toolbox of Summarizing Techniques**

Here is your chance to summarize information about summarizing! This time, you won't have a set of options. Instead, you're going to apply what you learned in the module. Here's what you need to do: review the module, and then on notebook paper write a summary of the important points in the module. Think of it this way: if someone asked you the essential points about summarizing, what would you tell them? Remember to give your summary a title and to write your summary in your own words. For this activity, write a traditional summary rather than a concept map.

## Module Check

### Module 3: Summarizing

Answer the following questions about the information in the module. On notebook paper, number 1-15. Then write the word or words that belong in the blank in each sentence. Some answers require more than one word. These are indicated.

1. When you write a summary, you must present the \_\_\_\_\_ (whose?) most important points (main ideas).
2. Summarizing is a powerful technique because when you summarize information, you actively \_\_\_\_\_ it with your brain.
3. Creating summaries is an excellent way to prepare for \_\_\_\_\_ tests. (What type of tests?)
4. When you read a textbook, you may find it helpful to stop at the end of each \_\_\_\_\_ and write a summary.
5. The title of a summary is the same as the title of the \_\_\_\_\_ selection.
6. When you write a summary, instead of taking sentences directly from a passage, you should \_\_\_\_\_ them.
7. When you write a summary, you can add your own opinions and other information that you know. True or false?
8. To make your summary read more smoothly and to show how the ideas are linked, you should use \_\_\_\_\_ words.
9. When you write a summary, you can present the author's ideas in any order you like. True or false?
10. Summaries should be only \_\_\_\_\_ percent as long as the original selection.
11. Effective summarizers read text passages at least \_\_\_\_\_ (how many times)?
12. When you are preparing information for a summary, you should replace lists of specific things with a \_\_\_\_\_ word that describes them all.
13. Learning to write useful summaries takes lots of \_\_\_\_\_.
14. After you have written a summary, you should take a few minutes to \_\_\_\_\_ it to see if it meets the guidelines for a correct summary.
15. To help readers get the "big picture," it is sometimes helpful to include an \_\_\_\_\_ main idea sentence in a summary before you present the main ideas of the individual paragraphs.

## Module 3 Review Exercises: Summarizing

### Set 1

Read each passage below to get the general idea and to see how it is organized. Then, reread it paragraph by paragraph, and determine the main idea of each paragraph. Finally, write a complete a summary of the passage on notebook paper. (You will probably have to rework it to get it just the way you want it, so writing your summary on notebook paper is helpful.) An overall main idea has been provided to start you off. Remember to paraphrase the main idea of each paragraph as you write it in the summary and to use transition words so that your paragraph reads smoothly. Since this is an informal summary, it's okay if you want to present some of the main ideas as a couple of sentences instead of as single sentences.

#### Selection 1

##### **Checkups That Make a Difference**

Do you see your doctor at least once a year for a checkup? An annual basic medical exam allows you to monitor your health and to catch any problems early. Your physician will check your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, and so forth), heart, and lungs, and perform a few other diagnostic screening tests. If any problems or significant changes occur, your doctor will already be familiar with your medical history. If necessary, your doctor can refer you to a specialist, such as those who deal with skin problems, allergies, or diabetes. When you see your doctor, speak up and don't be shy! Take a list of questions, health concerns, or symptoms you want to discuss. Tell your doctor if you are feeling bad emotionally, even if you feel all right physically.

It is also a good idea to see your dentist at least once a year. Having your teeth cleaned, examined, and periodically x-rayed can prevent painful, expensive problems later on. In addition to checking your teeth for cavities, your dentist will also examine your mouth and gums for signs of disease, such as mouth cancer or gingivitis (inflammation of the gums). Dental exams are particularly important for those who use tobacco in any form.

A periodic eye exam is another wise preventive measure. An optometrist can check your vision to determine whether you need corrective lenses. An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who can test your vision, but who also specializes in eye diseases and surgery. If you are a student who must read a lot or if you use the computer a great deal, pay particular attention to your eyes. These activities can lead to eyestrain. This is even more likely if you are not getting enough sleep.

Your emotional health is every bit as important as your physical health, and the two are related, in fact. Many schools, companies, and local agencies offer free screening for depression. Perhaps you are going through a difficult time in your life. Perhaps you feel chronically anxious or depressed. In either case, you should consult a professional who is trained to deal with these problems. Schools and colleges have health centers and counseling staffs. Many companies refer employees to appropriate resources, and treatment may be covered by the employee's insurance. Also, there are many local and state agencies provide services that are low-cost or free and are confidential.

To start you off on your summary, here is the overall main idea, which you can use as your first sentence: *Having certain types of checkups can help you stay healthy.*

### Selection 2

This passage can be summarized without an overall main idea. Be sure to paraphrase the important point for each of the five paragraphs, however.

#### **Saving Paper by Printing Less**

Every year, millions of tons of office paper are discarded. Despite the promise of improved computer systems and networking technologies, the paperless society has yet to materialize, and most experts now believe it never will. Even so, there are ways to minimize the trillions of documents that are printed each year.

Computer users should be responsible about using paper and energy. This requires thought and discipline but can make your work life easier and less expensive, saving you time, storage space, and money. There are three simple steps you can take.

First, think before you print. Do you really need a hard copy (printed copy)? Are people asking for a hard copy when an email attachment would work just as well? If you plan to stick the printout in a file cabinet, add it to a stack of papers, or throw it out; you may not need to print it.

Second, archive on disk. If you are concerned that your electronic documents will be lost or altered, back them up and store them on removable media such as a floppy disk. Kept in a safe place, the electronic copy will not change and will always be accessible.

Third, encourage others to print wisely. When someone brings you a printed document, ask him or her to send it by email or give it to you on disk next time. These practices can actually be faster than waiting for a printout.

Source: Adapted from Peter Norton, *Computer Fundamentals*, 4th ed., New York: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2001, p. 93.

Now write your summary on notebook paper.

### **Set 2**

#### Selection 1

The next passage is one you read in Module 2. You prepared an outline of it. This time you will create a summary. If you correctly identified all of the main ideas in your outline, you will have all the “ingredients” you need for the summary. You will probably have to rework it to get it just the way you want it, so write your summary on notebook paper. Be sure to give it the correct title.

#### **Tips for Exploring Your Career**

If you are like most students, you probably could use some help you as you prepare for choosing a career. There are several guidelines that will help you.

**Talk with professionals.** Try to obtain a realistic view of their various occupations. Find out what they like and dislike about their work.

**Get work experience.** This is a great way to learn about working conditions in the field you want to pursue. A part-time job, volunteer work, or an internship can provide valuable experience and help you determine if a specific career path is right for you.

**Explore careers in depth.** Many people do not have traditional titles. Focus on your interests and skills and incorporate them into possible careers.

**Network.** Personal contacts are excellent ways to explore careers and to find a job. Networking provides access to people who can serve as mentors and help connect you to jobs and opportunities. Personal and professional contacts must be created, cultivated, and expanded. Here are some tips that can help you network:

- Brainstorm a list of contacts.
- Talk with instructors, advisors, and counselors.
- Talk with other students.
- Collect business cards.
- Join professional organizations.

Now write your summary on notebook paper.

## Selection 2

### **The Functions of Emotions**

Imagine what it would be like if we didn't experience emotion—no depths of despair, no depression, no remorse, but at the same time no happiness, joy, or love. Obviously, life would be considerably less satisfying, and even dull, if we lacked the capacity to sense and express emotion.

But do emotions serve any purpose beyond making life interesting? Indeed they do. Psychologists have identified several important functions that emotions play in our daily lives.

*Emotions prepare us for action.* Emotions act as a link between events in our environment and our responses. For example, if we saw an angry dog charging toward us, the emotional reaction (fear) would be associated with the activation of the “fight-or-flight” response. This prepares us for emergency action, which presumably would get us out of the dog's way—quickly.

*Emotions shape our future behavior.* Emotions promote learning that will help us make appropriate responses in the future. For example, the emotional response that occurs when we experience something unpleasant—such as a threatening dog—teaches us to avoid similar circumstances in the future. In the same way, pleasant emotions act as positive reinforcement for prior behavior and therefore may lead an individual to seek similar situations in the future.

*Emotions help us interact more effectively with others.* We often communicate the emotions we experience through our verbal and nonverbal behaviors, making our emotions obvious to observers. These behaviors can act as a signal to observers, allowing them to understand better what we are experiencing and predict our future behavior. In turn, this promotes more effective and appropriate social interaction.

Source: Adapted from Robert Feldman, *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*, 6th ed. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2005, p. 324.

Now write your summary on notebook paper.

## ASSESS YOUR UNDERSTANDING

On notebook paper, write your answers to the questions below. Take a few minutes to reflect on how well you understood this module. How did you do on the Module Check and the exercises? Could you tell another college student how to prepare a summary? Choose a number on the scale below to indicate how well you understand the procedure and guidelines for *creating a summary*.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10  
I'm bewildered! I need to brush up. Ask me anything!

1. Now identify anything you still don't understand about summarizing. What do you still need to learn or need clarification on? Write your response on the lines below.
2. For anything you don't understand or can't remember, what steps can you take to solve the problem? Do you need to reread? Ask a classmate or your instructor questions? Write the information down or review it some other way?

If there is anything you need to fix, continue to work on it. Even if there are things you don't yet understand perfectly, even if there are skills you need more practice on, you should feel very proud of the progress you have made and how much you have learned.

The most successful people are those who view themselves as life-long learners. As someone once said, "When you're not learning, someone else is. When you meet, guess who has the advantage?" Make yourself the one who has the advantage.