

Summarizing Informational Texts

(specifically a chapter from *Start Something That Matters*)

Step One: Analyze the text

- Look at all the text features in the chapter (titles, pictures, sub headings, etc.)...
 - How do they support the main idea?
- Look at how the chapter begins...
 - Does Blake include an introductory story?
 - What is the purpose of that story?
- Look at how the text is organized...
 - Why did Blake choose this style as a writer?
- Look at keywords in body paragraphs, especially in topic sentences...
 - Are there any words that show up over and over again?
 - How are those words important to the main idea?
- Use all of these to think about what PURPOSE the author had in mind while writing this chapter...
 - What is the main reason for this chapter?
 - Why did Blake include it in his book about starting something that matters?

Step Two: Ask yourself, “What is the author’s main idea?” The main idea should only be one sentence.

1.

CHECK IN WITH MS. ISAACS/MS. TUCHFARBER

Step Three: What is a summary?

A **summary** is condensed version of a larger reading. A summary is not a rewrite of the original piece and does not have to be long nor should it be long. To write a summary, use your own words to express briefly the main ideas and relevant details of the piece you have read. Your purpose in writing the summary is to give the basic ideas of the original reading. What was it about and what did the author want to communicate?

Writing a Summary

Step Four: Criteria for writing a good summary of an informational text.

- Include:
 - Author's Name
 - Chapter Title
 - Overview of main ideas that the author writes about
 - Identify main idea
 - Explain one way the author portrays the idea to the reader
 - Give one major detail that the author uses to help explain/support the main idea
 - Explain one way the author portrays the idea to the reader
 - Give one major detail that the author uses to help explain/support the main idea
- A summary must be:
 - Objective... NONE of your own opinions
 - Include NO quoted DFTs... paraphrase instead.
 - Written in 3rd person... no I, me, you, we, our, you, your, us (personal pronouns)
 - Should be written in present tense