



Composition I
ENGL 1013
Essay Assignment 1: Summary

For your first paper assignment, write a summary of [text's title] by [author's name].

In summarizing, you express the author's main ideas more briefly than they appeared in the original. Using your own words to express the ideas of others is called paraphrasing; expressing the ideas of others using their exact words is called quoting. To write an effective summary, consider following the guidelines found on pages 6-7 in the textbook *A Sequence for Academic Writing (ASAW)*.

Introduction

You should accomplish the following in your essay's introduction (preferably in as few as three sentences): Combine your paraphrase of the source text's thesis with the author's name and the text's title. Identify the central issue and supporting points of the source text. Establish the order (your "essay map") in which your summary will account for the supporting information found in the source text.

This type of introduction will orient the reader to the topic under consideration, the author's central idea in regard to that topic, and the evidence or reasoning used to support that idea.

Body

In keeping with the order outlined in your essay map, paraphrase the author's ideas as they relate to each supporting section of the original text. Be sure to use your own words to convey those ideas. If you use the author's actual words, you are required to place them within quotation marks. Enhance the readability of your prose by integrating quotations smoothly into your sentences (follow the advice on page 45 of *ASAW*).

Because the object of a summary is to present information concisely while remaining true to the original, be sure to concentrate on the major ideas instead of details, and avoid any repetition of ideas or evidence present in the original source. The major sections of the original argument ("the sections of thought") may be used to divide the body of your summary.

Unlike a more comprehensive essay, a summary does not need an overt conclusion. You may, however, choose to announce the end of your summary by indicating that you have reached the final section of the supporting information found in the source text. Each section of your summary should have conveyed the supporting ideas of the original text, and it should be apparent how these ideas contribute to its central argument or message.

Because you are summarizing only one source, which you will identify it at the outset of your summary, you need not include parenthetical citations in the body of your summary. You are, however, required to follow MLA documentation style to list the full bibliographic entry in a footnote or in a separate "Work Cited" page.