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HOW TO MAKE A SUMMARY

Before you read a text:

- a. Look at the **title**. Think what it may refer to.

Also, in a published article there is an **abstract** and **key-words** to be read, prior to the main article. These serve as a short summary before reading the article.

- b. When you read the text, try to understand what the text is about.
- c. If there are too many unknown words, you can look them up in a dictionary.
- d. **Target:** in a summary, whether a written or an oral one, you will attempt to describe what you as a reader or listener would like to know: what the main point of the text is, what the main issues are.

Reading a text:

1. Read the text once and try to understand the general meaning, the gist of it.

2. Re-read the text and summarize each paragraph in your own words.

* You could do that in the form of notes or in a few words or sentences, depending on the length of the paragraph and its specific content.

* Try *not* to repeat the text exactly as it is written.

A summary is an attempt to explain it *to yourself* and to *other readers/listeners*. Therefore, basically, what you do is "*recreate*" the text.

* You can make a more extensive, analytical summary, if it is necessary for some points to become clear to the prospective reader. Notice, however, that the summary should be comprehensive but shorter in length than the actual text.

* Another way of making a summary is to *find a title for each paragraph* and then combine them all, adding a short introduction and conclusion, so as to make it clear what the text is about. Usually, this kind of method could be used with short texts of one page or two.

After you have read the text:

1. Look at your summary and check whether it includes the main points of the text you read.

2. Revise and, if and where necessary, edit your text, correct your grammar

and vocabulary.

Aims and goals of making a summary:

1. Information is the compilation and combination of data that need to be memorized. For it is memory that leads to knowledge.

A summary may always help you remember what you have read. It may prove to be particularly useful, when you study, when you wish to present a project, or at work (e.g., journalism, writing a review, *et al*).

2. Making a summary helps you to organize your thoughts, while pinpointing the essence of a text and focusing on its main points - whether you read or listen to a text. In this way, you can enhance your thinking mechanisms, even in your daily life, because you learn how to focus on the gist of a script or of what you hear from your fellow human beings in your communication with them. It is almost like a way of deciphering, of decoding a text.

3. Making a summary helps you use, as well as develop, your critical thinking.

4. At the same time, it can help you practice your reading and writing skills and, in the case of an oral summary, your speaking skills, too.

5. In parallel, you are enabled to develop your usage of grammar, syntax, vocabulary.

Reference to unknown, as well as known, vocabulary enhances your usage of it, whether it is low-frequency or high-frequency.