



1. Click printer icon (top right or center bottom).
2. Change "destination"/printer to "Save as PDF."
3. Click "Save."



## SW12. Academic Skills: Writing a Summary

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

### Section 1: The Summary

**What is a Summary?** A summary is when you take the information that was written or spoken in a larger work and shorten it to only its main points. Watch the [Section 1 Video](#) to understand exactly what you should and should not include in a summary.

**After you watch the video, complete the chart below with the Dos and Don'ts of summary writing.**

Copy full sentences from the original text

Include only the main ideas and important details

Use your own words

Keep it short

Use your own words

**Dos**

Include the title of the original in your topic sentence

Include small details

Include new ideas

Include your own opinion

**Don'ts**

### Section 2: Beginning, Middle, End

When you write a summary, you organize it into 3 parts: the beginning, the middle, and the end. Think of it like a train. The first or beginning car is the engine, and it is green for go. That is the start of your summary and helps to lead or guide your summary. The second car is the middle, the most interesting and exciting part. In the middle of your summary, only include the most important points, actions, or events that happened. The last car is the end and is red. This means stop and the end of your summary.





Read the following short story and then complete the chart below.

The Old Couple

A couple in their nineties is having problems remembering things. During a checkup, the doctor tells them that they're physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember.

Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair. "Want anything while I'm in the kitchen?" he asks. "Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?" she asks.

"Sure..."

"Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?" she asks. "No, I can remember it" he said.

"Well, I'd like some strawberries on top, too. Maybe you should write it down, so as not to forget it?"

He says, "I can remember that. You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries."

"I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that. Write it down." She says.

Irritated, he says, "I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream - I got it for goodness sake!"

Then he walks into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, the old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs. She stares at the plate for a moment and asks, "Where's my toast?"

Source: Sunny Skyz. (2014)

**What happened at the beginning of the story?**

**What happened in the middle of the story?**

**What happened at the end of the story?**

*The old couple can't remember things, so they have to write things down.*





### Section 3: Using Time Order Words

To help the reader follow the organization of your summary, it is important to use time order words. Below are some examples of time order words you can use in a summary.

#### Beginning

At first  
At the beginning  
Before  
From this point  
Starting with  
To begin  
Not long ago

#### Middle

After  
After a while  
After that  
Not long after  
Shortly after  
Later  
Then

#### End

Afterward  
At last  
Eventually  
At the end  
Thereafter  
To conclude  
Ultimately

**Step 1:** To help you become more familiar with time order words, watch the [Section 3 Video: Titanic Official Trailer](#).

**Step 2:** After you watch the trailer, listen to the [Section 2 summary of Titanic](#). Listen to how the speaker describes the beginning, middle, and end of the movie.

**Step 3:** The summary includes 5 time order words to organize the beginning, middle, and end of the movie. As you listen to the summary, note the 5 time order words from the list above that you hear. Copy them in the box below:





Section 4: Creating a Summary

Now it's your turn!

Step 1: Think about 1 book or movie you've read or seen recently to write a summary about. Write the title in the space provided below.

Step 2: Use the outline below to help you organize the most important points, actions, or events that happened in the book or movie. This is just for your notes. You don't have to write complete sentences, just your ideas.

Book/Movie Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened at the beginning?

Four horizontal lines for writing the beginning of the summary.

What happened in the middle?

Four horizontal lines for writing the middle of the summary.

What happened at the end?

Four horizontal lines for writing the end of the summary.

Step 3: Now you'll record yourself saying your summary. Don't forget to use some time order signals from Section 3.





To record your response: Use your cell phone to record yourself reading your summary. If you need assistance recording your summary, ask a tutor or LLC instructor.





Section 5: Student Self-Assessment

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can identify the dos and don'ts of writing a summary.				
I can identify what happens at the beginning, middle, and end of a story.				
I can use time order words to organize my summary.				
I can write a summary of a book/movie.				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

***Good Job!***

Now make an appointment

with a tutor on the LLC ESL Tutoring Website

([www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring](http://www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring)).








Section 6: Practice with a Tutor!

After completing the self-assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. The tutor will give you feedback.

Grading Rubric

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
<b>Content</b>	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
<b>Skill: Speaking</b>	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
<b>Oral Fluency</b>	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

\*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on

Possible Points: \_\_\_\_\_ / 15

Tutor Comments:

**Congratulations! Keep going.**

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

**Work on this more.**

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

