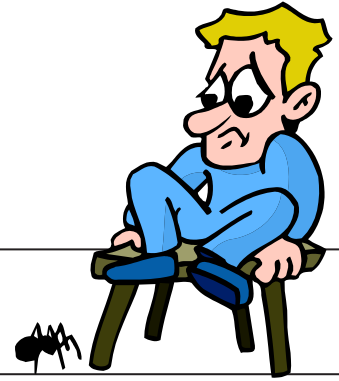


Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Section 13.2

Summarizing a Paragraph



Key Term

- **Summarize** – to give a short explanation of only the most important points

Summarizing is similar to finding the main idea. To **summarize** means to give a short description that captures the most important points or ideas of a piece of writing. Summaries have the following characteristics.

Chart 1: Characteristics of a Summary

- A summary, like a paraphrase, is written in your own words. It does not use the exact wording of the original author.
- A summary contains only the main points and leaves out minor details.
- A summary should not contain your own opinions or interpretations.

The summary of a paragraph may be only one sentence, and that sentence may be considered the main idea of that paragraph. Or a summary of a paragraph may be a few sentences that capture its main points.

Example 1: Read the following paragraph from a report on spiders and snakes.

Are snakes poisonous or venomous? Actually snakes (and some spiders or stinging insects) are venomous. A creature is poisonous if it secretes some kind of toxin, or poison, that has to be touched or swallowed to be effective, while venomous creatures deliver a toxin through some kind of injection system, such as a stinger or fangs. That distinction makes spiders, snakes, and stinging creatures venomous, not poisonous. Some amphibians and fish are poisonous because they secrete toxins that must be touched or eaten to cause harm.

Now read a summary of the paragraph.



Creatures, such as snakes, are considered venomous if they inject their poison; whereas, creatures that injure only when touched or eaten are considered poisonous.

The main point of this paragraph is to define what it means for a creature to be poisonous versus venomous. This summary captures this main point in one sentence.

Read the attempted summary below. Why is it not a good summary?



Snakes, spiders and stinging insects are venomous, while some water creatures are poisonous.

This summary leaves out the most important difference in the definitions of venomous and poisonous, which depend on how the toxin is actually delivered to the victim. It gives a detail from the paragraph, but it doesn't give the overall main message of the paragraph.

Section 13.2, continued
Summarizing a Paragraph

Now read a summary of the above paragraph.



Megan has a short story due in school the next day, but she keeps throwing away every attempted start. Finally she gets an idea that works, but it takes until after midnight for her to finish her paper.

This paragraph contains too many ideas to combine them all into one sentence. These two sentences summarize the important ideas in the narrative paragraph.

Now consider a statement that is not an accurate summary.



Megan is tired and frustrated over her teacher’s writing assignment. When she finally gets a good idea, she stays up past midnight to finish it but is concerned that she may fall asleep in class before she can turn it in.

This summary starts with a reader’s interpretation of Megan’s situation. The paragraph implies that Megan is tired and frustrated, but it doesn’t specifically state these details. Remember not to add your own interpretation and opinions in a summary.

Practice 1

Read each paragraph and write a summary of it in the space given. The summary should be one or two sentences.

1. I wouldn’t exactly call it a bribe. It was more like a mutually beneficial deal. When my son was choosing a college to attend after high school graduation, I offered him a little incentive to go to a smaller school closer to home. He’s a “band geek” and truly loves marching band more than anything. The small horn he played for high school just wasn’t good enough for college, so I made him a deal he couldn’t refuse. His mother and I offered to buy him a professional grade horn if he wouldn’t go to a mega college hours from home. We would have offered a car, but he already had one. Come to think of it, it would have been cheaper.

2. Although many people celebrate Valentine’s Day on February 14 every year, the origin of the holiday is still a topic for debate. No one really knows the reason for celebrating it. Legend links it to ancient Rome, and Valentine has been proclaimed a patron saint, a priest, and a martyr. Despite its origin, Valentine’s Day has been celebrated in America since the 1800s, and the tradition will most likely continue due to commercialization. Candy, flowers, lingerie, cards, stuffed animals, and jewelry are the order of the day on February 14, and people of all ages participate in the tradition. Some schools promote the holiday by allowing students to give and receive cards, flowers, and other Valentine gifts. Whatever its origin, Valentine’s Day is based on good will, and that is still its main representation today.

Persuasive Writing

Section 15.3

Tools of Persuasion, Part 1



Key Terms

- **Tools of Persuasion** – techniques that authors use to persuade readers
- **Bandwagon** – persuasive technique that urges the reader to join the crowd
- **Stereotyping** – persuasive technique that treats an entire group as having the same characteristic
- **Association** – persuasive technique that connects a positive thought or image to the object, idea, or person being advertised
- **Name Calling** – persuasive technique that uses negative titles to describe something or someone
- **Endorsement** – persuasive technique that uses the name of a famous person to promote something or someone
- **Plain Folks** – persuasive technique that is targeted to appeal to common, ordinary people
- **Tabloid Thinking** – persuasive technique that oversimplifies a complex issue
- **Shock Tactics** or **Fear Tactics** – persuasive techniques that are meant to motivate people to act out of disgust or fear

You have already seen how authors use their writings to accomplish specific purposes, such as to inform, to entertain, or to explain. Another reason authors write is to persuade. Remember that to persuade is to convince someone to do something or to influence his or her opinion about something. Advertisements for products, services, and political candidates are all meant to be persuasive.

Tools of persuasion are techniques that authors use to persuade their readers. There are many different ways authors try to persuade readers, but the same tactics are often used again and again. Understanding how these tactics work and how authors use them can help you make better decisions when reading persuasive writing. In many cases, authors who want to persuade readers do not provide facts or evidence for their ideas. Instead, they use carefully arranged words and phrases to convince readers. Advertisements of all kinds often use tools of persuasion, but these tools can also be found in other types of writing.

Bandwagon

One of the most common tools of persuasion is the **bandwagon** technique. Using this method, authors try to convince readers to do something because “everybody else is doing it.” To recognize the bandwagon technique, look for the mention of other people who are already convinced. For example, if a toothpaste commercial says “Smart moms insist on Brushee Toothpaste for their children,” the author is trying to convince mothers that they should use the toothpaste because *all the other moms* are already using it.

Example 1: The Walk-a-Lot running shoe provides better support for your feet and ankles than any other shoe on the market. Just ask the hundreds of marathon runners who have already switched to Walk-a-Lot running shoes!

This advertisement for running shoes uses the bandwagon technique to convince readers, especially runners, to buy these shoes. The author wants to convince the reader that hundreds of marathon runners are using this brand of shoe so the reader should also.