

THAKUR COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & COMMERCE

Autonomous

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SUMMARY WRITING

Introduction:

The word Summary's defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary as —a short statement that gives only the main points of something, not the details|. It means a short synopsis or outline of the important ideas and points of the passage. The summary should read like a piece of continuous writing, with a sequential arrangement of ideas expressed in it and a clear reflection of the main and sub-points. It should, however, be borne in mind that the comments, opinions and views of the summary writer must be avoided at all costs. The summary must deal with only the views of the writer of the passage that is being summarised.

Summarising text requires the ability to identify the main argument of the passage and to reproduce the points in one's own style of writing with a sound logical sequence. This skill is helpful in summarising excessive information, lengthy reports, articles and books, etc. to isolate the fundamental ideas which are of significance without missing any points. It is easy to pick out the main argument in passages that are argumentative, analytical or informative in nature. When the passages are lengthy and contain more than one paragraph, it would be a good idea to note down the topic sentence of each paragraph in one's own words. This will help in preparing the summary.

Generally, the main argument is in the form of a general statement that is supported by examples, data, numbers, figures, etc.

Points to keep in mind while writing a Summary:

- ✓ Read the passage carefully first and note down the main argument being made.
- ✓ Note down the topic sentence for each paragraph (if the passage consists of many paragraphs) or the sub-points being made.
- ✓ Write out the first draft based on the key points that have been jotted down.
- ✓ Compare the draft with the original passage to check for any omissions, deletions, additions, irrelevancies, etc.
- ✓ It would be a better idea to use one's own vocabulary as it will help in rephrasing the points in simpler terms.
- ✓ While preparing the second draft, rewrite the first draft to form a logical piece of writing. Be concise and eliminate repetition.
- ✓ Write out the summary neatly without any errors of spelling or grammar. Here are a few examples to help you understand the technique of summary writing:

Example 1

Peer pressure is probably the worst enemy of the parental purse. My friend Ravi and his wife Maya were having trouble with their 12 year-old son, Rohan. The boy seemed incapable of delaying his gratification: he had to have everything now. He lacked confidence, and because

of peer pressure, he wanted everything his friends got—not just toys, but also more expensive stuff, like clothes, mobile phones and other things. Rohan apparently thought his parents were very rich, with an unlimited reservoir of money. At a loss to deal with this, Ravi and Maya sought my help, and we ended up having a lengthy discussion on financial literacy for kids. Rohan is hardly a problem child where financial literacy is concerned; it is an issue with a lot of children who are exposed to affluence at a tender age. Perhaps the main reason for this is the lack of clear communication about money. Often, all a child has to do to get parents to part with money is to ask for it. Parents should talk to their kids about money as comfortably as they talk about cricket or a trip to the mall. Children need to understand what their parents do for a living, and not harbour the illusion that money grows on trees. Financial literacy basically means having a solid understanding of how to get money, spend it wisely, and handle credit. It means being able to distinguish between good, bad and ugly debt, and to live on a budget. It means protecting what you have, through insurance. It means understanding the kinds of risks you're exposed to, how best to mitigate them, and how to invest. And last but not the least, it means understanding how to use your money for the betterment of the world. [Excerpts from Amar Pandit's, (Director, My Financial Advisor. www.timesyourmoney.com) article in TOI, Sept 2008]

II. Analysis:

What is the paragraph about?

The paragraph is about Financial Literacy. It is about the need to make children financially literate.

What is the topic sentence?

Financial literacy basically means having a solid understanding of how to get money, spend it wisely, and handle credit.

What is the purpose of the first paragraph, where Maya's and Ravi's son's example is given?

The example is given to illustrate the key point why parents need to make their children financially literate.

The Key Idea: Financial literacy basically means having a solid understanding of how to get money, spend it wisely, and handle credit.

Supportive point 1: It means being able to distinguish between good, bad and ugly debts, and to live on a budget.

Sub-Point 2: It means protecting what you have, through insurance.

Sub-Point 3: It means understanding the kinds of risks one is exposed to, how best to mitigate them, and how to invest.

Sub-Point 4: And last but not the least, it means understanding how to use your money for the betterment of the world.

Illustration: Maya, Ravi, and Rohan's example illustrates the problem of — peer pressure, Lack of financial awareness in children and parents' helplessness in handling problems arising out of it.

Conclusion: There is need for clear communication between parents and children regarding money.

Let us summarise the paragraph now:

1. Main Point: Parents should make their children financially literate.

Problem: How to handle children's unreasonable demands?

Reasons: Children have no idea where the parents' money comes from. Peer group pressure impels children to make demands on parents which they feel parents are obliged to fulfil. Children are ignorant about matters relating to money.

Solution: Parents must talk money with their children.

Summary:

Educating children on the all aspects of the family's finance is the need of the hour. Parents are at a loss while dealing with their children, who under peer pressure, keep demanding things from them. Making children realise the value of money, helping them to prioritize their needs, teaching them to spend the money wisely is the responsibility of parents. There is, therefore, a need for clear communication between parents and children regarding money.