Summarising

**What is summarising?**

It is a process of condensing or shortening a written text while preserving its overall meaning.

**A summary:**

* Is made up of a complete text
* involves extracting a key point from a source text then turning it into an abbreviated version of the original that is stated in your words
* includes references from the original source

**Reasons for summarising:**

* To demonstrate your understanding of your reading
* To establish ideas you will discuss in your writing
* To inform your readers who might not have read the original text you are summarising
* To support an idea you are discussing in your work

 **A good summary should:**

* offer a balanced coverage of **all** the main points in the original text
* make the key points of the original clear
* be written in your own words as far as possible and not rely on too many phrases lifted from the original
* generally avoid using exactly the same sentence structure as the original
* not overemphasise (or even underemphasise) any of the original points
* not include any extra information which is not in the text you are summarising
* not include details of secondary importance
* not include examples
* be shorter than the original text and must be referenced

**How to summarise effectively**

* Read the original text until you understand it fully
* Make notes of the main points in your own words
* Write your summary from your notes without reference to the original
* Check your version against the original to ensure that you have covered the content and meaning
* If you have included some of the original text in your summary, put quotation marks around it
* Include the citation. If you incorporate material from other sources into your own text, through summary, paraphrase or quotation, you must cite the source material. Failure to do this is to commit plagiarism.

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