

6.5 Writing

Writing summaries

Focus: *developing both writing and reading skills.*

1. This activity can be done for homework, or working individually in class. First, with your teacher select a reading text to work on from one of your textbooks. (Sample text: new Complete Geography, Earthquake, page 5). You might select the text because it is interesting, or because it is about a topic you have just studied, or will be studying soon.
2. Work out the length of the text. The summary of the text should be one quarter of the original text length. Decide what that number is. This is your aim - to rewrite the main ideas of the text in approximately that number of words!
3. If it is possible, photocopy the text so that you can write on it; if not, just use a pencil.
4. First *skim* the text: look through the text just to find out very quickly what it is about.
5. Read the text again - very often the text is divided into paragraphs. If it isn't divided into paragraphs, with your pencil, put marks to divide it into different parts.
6. With your pencil, underline the sentence in each paragraph that you think is important, and that gives the main idea.
7. On a separate sheet of piece write up list of the main points of the text.
8. Now, using your list of points, and not the original text, write out a summary of the text. The summary include all the ideas, it must be well linked together.
9. Do a word count, edit it, and check your spelling.
10. Bring your summaries into class. Let your teacher check them. Read one another's. Select one that you think was the best.
11. Discuss:
 - ★ What was difficult/easy about this activity?
 - ★ How did this help your English?
 - ★ How can I get better?
12. Select another text. Remember, sometimes you might wish to move away from your textbooks, you could find an interesting article in a newspaper. Write a summary, and read one another's work.

