

### **How to Write a Summary:**

- 1) Read the material more than once. Be sure you understand it well. Look up unfamiliar words. Stop and think about the main ideas of the article and how they are related.
- 2) Identify the main points of the article and either underline them in the text or list them on a separate piece of paper.
- 3) Draft an opening sentence that mentions the author's name, the title of the piece you are summarizing, and whatever combination of the following is appropriate: the author's purpose, the author's point of view, the central claim of the article.
- 4) Following the opening statement, draft the summary by writing out the main points you selected; be sure to use your own style, wording and sentence structure. Fill in the blanks between main ideas with supporting details. You can use direct quotation or paraphrase as supporting ideas but don't go overboard—these may be the author's ideas, but be sure to use your own words.
- 5) Conclude with the main idea of the article.

### **Group Activity:**

Each group chooses one essay. The first step is to summarize the essay using the steps described above; someone acting as spokesperson for the group should write the summary. Don't take too long—perhaps assign each person a main idea to discuss. Once this is accomplished, the group should write a short discussion summarizing their opinions on the content —does the group agree or disagree? If opinions within the group differ, report who thinks what and why. As an end product, each group should have a one-page paper summarizing both the essay and the group's opinions of the essay's central claim(s).