**WRITING A SUMMARY (thx to Prof. Chajet for this lesson)**

A **summary** is a condensed version of a larger reading. It is not a rewrite. To write a summary, use ***your own*** ***words*** to express briefly the ***main point and supporting ideas*** of the piece you have read. Your purpose in writing the summary is to give the basic ideas of the original reading. Ask yourself: “What was it about, and what did the author want to communicate?”

**STEPS TO WRITE A SUMMARY**

1. Read the passage as many times as necessary. Make sure you understand the main point.
2. Underline the main idea and look at the structure of the essay.
3. In the first sentence write the **1title, 2author, and a 3rhetorical verb** followed by a ***that-clause*** that introduces the 4main idea of the passage.

*E.g.* In the passage “1 ***Needing and Wanting Are Different”,*** 2**Jimmy Carrasquillo** 3tells us 4 that he learned the lesson that needing and wanting are different the hard way.

You can also start mentioning the topic first followed by a sentence that introduces the main idea.

*Eg. The passage* ***Needing and Wanting are Different, by Jimmy Carrasquillo is about*** *the problems he had with balancing work, school and athletics.*

1. Briefly mention what the passage is about or how the writer develops the ideas, without details (only MAIN POINTS)

*E.g.* ***According to the writer****, he has become more organized in school and has gotten better grades.*

*The writer* ***gives the example*** *of having a shoe with holes and desiring a new pair of sneakers to show the difference between “needing and wanting”*

*The writer* ***mentions****…………………….*

1. Follow the same order of ideas as they appear in the passage.
2. Use your own words. Paraphrase.
3. Do not make any comments.
4. Avoid wordiness and repetition.
5. Do not give your opinion.
6. Do not write a conclusion of your own. You can refer to the conclusion of the passage by saying:

*The writer* ***concludes that*** *he has learned that part of growing up is limiting yourself/*

1. Proofread. Correct mistakes and omit unnecessary words.

**Some commonly used rhetorical verbs:**

*Argues –Asserts- Compares- Contrasts- Connects- Defines- Debates- Clarifies – Claims-Concludes- Discusses- Develops- Explains- Illustrates- Introduces- Lists- Offers- Proves- States- Suggests- Summarizes- Questions.*

**Summary checklist**

**If you answered NO to any of the following questions, revise your summary**

1. Did I start with the name of the **author and the title** of the passage?................
2. Did I mention what the **main point** of the passage is?............
3. Did I **refer** to the author and what the author said?..............
4. Does the summary accurately **reflect the ideas in the passage**? (Remember: my opinion should not be stated.)………
5. Did I follow the **same order of ideas** as they appear in the passage?...............
6. Did I use **my own words**?.......................
7. Did I include **only important points**? (unnecessary details should be omitted)……………
8. Is my summary **shorter than the original passage** ? (No longer than one-third the original size of the passage)
9. Did I make sure that I **didn’t make comments or didn’t add ideas not mentioned in the** *passage*?..........................