

# Writing a Summary

## Step 1: Before you begin to write

Go to the “Rough Notes” section on the page. In this section, write the titles *Important Words*, *Main Idea*, *Point 1*, *Concluding Sentence* to assist you in organizing your information.

Use the **Guided Reading** approach below to read the original text. As you read each paragraph, write down any important words under the *Important Words* heading in your “Rough Notes”.

## GUIDED READING

### Pre-reading:

#### Step 1:

To activate prior knowledge, draw lines or spokes around the title or illustration, and write what you think the passage is going to be about. **There are no wrong ideas.**

### During reading:

#### Step 2:

Read the first three sentences and ask yourself what this section is about. Circle or highlight key words and/or write your thoughts in the margins around the article.

Read the next three or four sentences and ask yourself what this section is about. Circle or highlight key words and/or write your thoughts in the margins around the article.

Continue with this process until reading is complete.

### Post-reading:

#### Step 3:

After reading the entire passage, ask yourself what is the most important idea in the selection. Write this in the Rough Notes section and draw a circle around it.

## Step 2: Planning the summary

Write down the main idea under the *Main Idea* heading in your “Rough Notes”. The main idea can usually be identified by reading the title, opening paragraph and concluding paragraph.

Review the article one paragraph at a time. When you find a detail that supports the main idea, write it down in the *Detail* area in your “Rough Notes”. If you find a third supporting detail, make an additional heading in the “Rough Notes”.

## Step 3: Writing the summary

- Write the summary in complete sentences.
- Begin with the main idea, followed by the supporting details.
- Use transition/connecting words and phrases such as *finally*, *however*, *for example*, *afterwards*, *anyway*, *because of*, *conversely*, *as a result*, to link the supporting details to the main idea.
- Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation so that your ideas are clearly communicated.
- When your summary is finished, read it over carefully to ensure that you have captured the main idea and the details you have selected connect easily to the main idea.
- You have 6 lines in which to write your summary of the article. Do not exceed that space.

## Rough Notes

Use the space below for rough notes. Nothing you write in this space will be scored.

**Important Words:** What key words are used in the first sentence?  
What words are repeated in the article?  
What examples are given?  
What key words are used in the last sentence?

This is an area for you to insert **Graphic Organizers** to help make more sense of the reading selection. Depending on the type of selection (informational, graphical, narrative), organizers such as the following can be used to visualize text information:

- ✓ **Word Web**
- ✓ **Venn Diagram**
- ✓ **Sequence of Events timeline**
- ✓ **Cause and Effect chart**
- ✓ **Problem – Solution flow chart**
- ✓ **Plot Graph**

**Write down the main idea in this circle.**

**TOPIC SENTENCE:**

This should be a sentence about the main idea in the passage.

**POINT 1:**

This should be a sentence (or sentences) that supports or illustrates the main idea with examples.

**CONCLUDING SENTENCE:**

This should be your final sentence that further illustrates the main idea and wraps up your paragraph.

## ***READ THIS PASSAGE***

Wolves love company and live in family groups called packs. The wolf pack always has a leader. How can you tell which wolf is the pack leader? It is usually the biggest male. He stands proud and tall with his tail and head held high. He is the king, and he knows it. When he approaches another wolf in his pack, that wolf will hang its head down and put its tail between its legs. Then it will roll over on its back as if to say, “I give up. You are too strong for me!” That is why wolves seldom fight among themselves. The weaker ones almost always give in before a real fight begins.

## ***NOW READ IT AGAIN AND NOTICE THE PARTS THAT ARE UNDERLINED AND IN BOLD***

Wolves love company and live in **family groups called packs**. The wolf pack **always has a leader**. How can you tell which wolf is the pack leader? It is usually the **biggest male**. He stands proud and tall with his tail and head held high. He is the king, and he knows it. When he approaches another wolf in his pack, that wolf will hang its head down and put its tail between its legs. Then it will roll over on its back as if to say, “I give up. You are too strong for me!” That is **why wolves seldom fight among themselves**. The weaker ones almost always give in before a real fight begins.

**At this point we can determine the main idea of the passage.**

### ***THINK:***

- ✓ It's about wolves living in packs
- ✓ There's a pack leader
- ✓ Lots of info about the leader—no information about hunting, sleeping, raising pups, etc.
- ✓ This is really about the fact that all packs have a leader—the author is describing who the leader is and why he is important

### ***DECIDE ON A MAIN IDEA:***

- ✓ Every pack of wolves has a leader

# Sample EQAO Summary Rubric

Code	Descriptor
Blank	<u>Blank</u> : nothing written or drawn in the lined space provided.
Illegible	An <u>illegible</u> response cannot be read. An <u>inappropriate</u> response comments on the task (e.g., I don't know how to write a summary.).
Off topic/ Incorrect	A typical <u>off-topic</u> and <u>incorrect</u> response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides <u>an incorrect answer based on a misunderstanding of</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the question</li> </ul> </li> <li>OR</li> <li>➤ the ideas in the reading selection.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides <u>information not in the reading selection</u>.</li> </ul>
Code 10	Response answers <u>only part of the question</u> . The response provides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>only a main idea</u> (e.g., The Canadian Museum of Civilization tells a lot about Canadian history.)</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• one or more <u>supporting details only</u> (e.g., The museum contains aboriginal artifacts.)</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• a main idea with an <u>irrelevant or unconnected supporting detail</u>.</li> </ul>
Code 20	Response provides <u>a correct main idea</u> , and one or more <u>vague details</u> from the reading selection to support it.  The response usually requires the reader to make the connection between the supporting detail and the main idea.
Code 30	Response provides <u>a correct main idea</u> and one or more <u>specific and relevant details</u> from the reading selection as support for it.

Please note that this particular rubric was taken from the Released 2009 OSSLT Item-Specific Rubric and Sample Student Responses for Section V: Information Paragraph. While it is contextualized to that selection, the Codes and Descriptors can be adapted for use as general observations.