

Writing a Summary

Assignment

Choose a myth, fairytale, or Bible story and summarize it in **50 to 60 words**.

Prewriting

Let's consider the example of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." The important parts of this story are

1. Bears make breakfast and leave
2. Goldilocks visits and tries out their porridge, chairs, and beds
3. Baby Bear's stuff is "just right"
4. The bears return and discover that their stuff has been tampered with
5. Goldilocks runs away when the bears discover her

Those are the main facts. Now all I need to do is add a few introductory words and connecting words between the sentences. Like this:

A family of bears goes for a walk while breakfast cools. Meanwhile, a girl named Goldilocks, visits their cabin and samples their porridge, chairs, and beds. She thinks Baby Bear's belongings are "just right." While she is napping in Baby Bear's bed, the bears return to find their house disturbed. When Goldilocks is discovered, she flees.

My summary has 56 words.

Now it's your turn.

Make a list of at least 10 fairytales, myths, or Bible stories:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Circle the story you will summarize.

Next, list the essential parts of the story.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Drafting

Use the essential facts to write a paragraph that is between 50 and 60 words.

How many words did you use? _____

Revising

If time permits, allow at least a day to pass before you look at your draft to make revisions.

As you read through your draft, look for ways to improve it. Have at least one other person read through it and offer suggestions for improvement. Here are some points to consider as you revise:

- Did you capture the main points of the story?
- Was your summary too long or too short?
- Did you use concise words? Is there any fluff you can cut?
- Did you give enough essential facts? Do you need to add more detail?

You should mark up your rough draft with margin notes, arrows, crossed out words, and so on.

Editing—

After you are satisfied with the revision, you should create a final version suitable for publishing. Be sure to read your paper out loud because this will help you catch mistakes.

Big 5 Checklist

1. Capital letters—for the beginning of sentences and for proper nouns, such as someone's name.
2. Correct punctuation marks at the end of every sentence.
3. Every paragraph indented.
4. Complete sentences—not fragments or run-ons.
5. Consistent verb tense throughout the summary.

Publishing—

Share your summary with others.