

Instructions

1. You must enable 'Macro' to view this presentation;
2. For tasks, type your answers in the text boxes provided and click 'check answer' button;
3. Press **X** button top right or ESC button on keyboard to exit the programme;
4. Upon exit, you can choose to save your answers in the tasks by selecting 'yes';
5. Use arrows below to go to next or previous slide.

Bridging to Tertiary Study: A support resource for Māori students

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Unit 4

Summarizing, reviewing, quoting, referring and referencing

Introduction

One of the most important skills a writer can have is the ability to summarize. When you write college assignments that are more than a few paragraphs in length, you are usually expected to summarize their content. The ability to summarize is therefore very important. When we summarize what we have written and what other people have written, we need to be accurate, clear, concise¹, fair, honest and unbiased.

One type of writing that involves the ability to summarize is review writing. **When you review** a film, a book, an article, a web site, or anything else that has been created by others, **you generally need to be able not only to summarize it, but also to comment on it.**

Most academic articles and dissertations, as well as many college assignments, include a critical review of relevant work produced by others. A critical review of someone else's work may be largely positive, largely negative or a combination of the two. Whether you agree or disagree with what someone else has said or written, it is important that you should be fair. It is not enough simply to state that you agree or disagree with someone. **You need to justify your agreement or disagreement by providing reasons for it.** You should also always remember that being critical should never involve being impolite or disrespectful. When you review the work of others, you should always try to avoid emotional outbursts, exaggerated claims and intemperate language (language that is extreme, harsh or potentially offensive).

¹A summary is *concise* if it expresses everything that needs to be expressed in few words.

When we refer to, use or discuss other people's work in our own writing, we need to **acknowledge our sources**. We need to do this whether we quote from the work of others, summarize it, or make use of it as the source of information and ideas we include in our own texts. This is a simple matter of honesty and courtesy. In addition, you may be heavily penalized if you do not acknowledge your sources in academic writing. The use of other people's work without acknowledgment is referred to as 'plagiarism', and plagiarism is not only pointless, but also potentially dangerous. Even so, there *are* occasions when it is not necessary to refer to the work of others even though you have read it. This is when you make reference to things that are very widely known and agreed and are therefore included in many different pieces of writing. You may, for example, not have known the name of the current Prime Minister of New Zealand before you came across it in an article or in a newspaper. This does not mean that you need to refer to that article if you later write a text that includes the Prime Minister's name.

The ability to summarize the content of your own writing and that of others is important. It is also important to know how to quote from the work of others, how to refer to it in your text, and how to list references at the end of your text. In this unit, we will discuss each of these skills and provide examples.

Summarising your own writing

In earlier units, we introduced summary writing in the context of some short texts. The Conclusion section of texts often includes a summary. Many of the texts that we have examined so far are short. This inevitably means that where they include a summary, it will also be short.

Look at the argument text below, paying particular attention to the final sentence.

Should people be forced to turn off their cell phones in public places?

A letter in yesterday's national newspaper argued that people should be forced to turn off their cell phones in all public places. I completely disagree.

The great advantage of cell phones over land lines is that they make it possible to contact people wherever they are. If people have to turn off their cell phones in public places, much of this advantage will be lost and people could be put in danger as a result.

One example is a case where a teacher needs to contact a child's mother urgently to let her know that her child is sick but would be unable to do so because the child's mother is in a public place, such as a library.

Another example is a case where a child needs to contact its parents urgently to tell them that he or she has lost the money for the bus fare home but would be unable to do so because they are in a public place, such as a shopping mall.

The argument that people should have to turn off their cell phones in public places does not stand up to close examination.

In the text above, the summary - the final sentence of the text - rewords the *Topic* (title) and includes the most critical part of the *Focus* section of the text, that is, the writer's opinion about the issue. It omits the background information in the *Focus* section (that is, the information about the letter in the newspaper). It also omits the details of the writer's argument. This is a very common form of summary. We find it again in the following very short text, where the summary is again the final sentence of the text.

Have computers made our working lives easier?

When personal computers were first produced, many people believed that they would make our working lives easier. Has this turned out to be true?

On the one hand, computers have made it easier to contact others and to find information about a wide range of topics.

On the other hand, they have led to a massive increase in correspondence and, in many cases, to information overload.

I believe that the personal computer has not made our working lives easier.

In the case of a longer text, the summary section will often refer not only to the *Topic* and *Focus* sections of the text, but also to the main arguments in the *Detail* section. In the following text, the summary in the final paragraph focuses on the *Topic* (title) (i.e. the similarities and differences between influenza and the common cold), reinforces critical information in the *Focus* section (i.e. that the differences are important) and restates the major similarities (i.e. that they are both caused by viruses and have some similar symptoms) and differences (i.e. that influenza is more serious and requires bed rest and medical attention) that are included in the *Detail* section.

Influenza and the common cold: Similarities and differences

Influenza (flu) and the common cold are different in some important respects in terms of their causes, their effects, their treatment and the extent to which they can be prevented.

Both the common cold and influenza are illnesses caused by infection by a virus. The common cold is generally a minor infection of the nose and throat; influenza is generally a more serious infection involving the lungs as well as the nose and the throat.

Both the common cold and influenza are caused by viruses, that is, by microscopic particles that can infect the cells of living organisms. Both are contagious, that is, they spread from one person to another. The viruses that cause the common cold affect the upper respiratory system (the nose and throat); the viruses that cause influenza affect the whole respiratory system, including the lungs.

Both the common cold and influenza cause coughing, sore throat and congestion. In the case of the common cold, these symptoms are often accompanied by sneezing, a runny nose and a weakened sense of taste and smell. In the case of influenza, the symptoms generally include headache, muscle and joint pains, tiredness and fever. The symptoms of the common cold usually last from a few days to a week; the symptoms of flu usually last from one to two weeks or longer.

In the case of both the common cold and flu, it is important to drink eight glasses of water and/ or juice a day to keep the lining of the nose and throat from drying out. Drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine should be avoided. A decongestant or antihistamine (or a combination of the two) can provide relief from coughing, nasal discharge and congestion. In the case of some kinds of flu, there are some antiviral medications (available only from medical practitioners) that can be helpful and bed rest is generally recommended. If you believe you have influenza, you should visit your doctor.

You are less likely to catch a cold or influenza if you avoid people who already have them. Where this is not possible, avoid touching or using the things that they have touched or used (such as hand towels). If you cannot avoid touching the things that they have touched, wash your hands after you have touched them. To avoid passing your cold on to others, cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and place used tissues in a sealed plastic bag.

There is no vaccination available for the common cold but vaccination can help protect you against certain types of influenza. You should be vaccinated every year because the flu virus changes constantly and so new vaccines are developed each year to help protect people against new strains of the virus.

The common cold and influenza are both caused by viruses and some of their symptoms are similar. However, the symptoms of influenza always include aching muscles and joints as well as fever, and influenza is generally a much more serious illness than the common cold, requiring bed rest and medical attention.

Task 1

Look at the text below and explain how the summary section at the end relates to the other parts of the text. Complete this task on the next slide.

Title

Disposing of old computers

Topic

Millions of old computers need to be disposed of every year but disposing of them can be a problem because of the type of information they may contain, the type of materials from which they are made, and regulations governing their disposal.

Focus

Old computers may contain all sorts of personal and confidential information, such as health records or bank account numbers, that their owners do not want other people to access. Furthermore, some of the materials from which they are made, such as mercury, cadmium and chromium, can be very toxic (poisonous) to people or animals exposed to high quantities of them. For example, mercury can damage the central nervous system; cadmium can cause cancer and chromium can cause high blood pressure, liver disease and nerve and brain damage.

Detail

Simply deleting files does not prevent them from being recovered from the hard drive so it is important to remove hard drives before disposing of computers. It is also sensible to remove all indications of who computers belonged to, such as name tags.

It is important not to dump old computers in landfills along with biodegradable materials such as old clothes made from wool or cotton. This would expose people and animals to toxic materials which can cause serious illness and even death.

Conclusion

Because there are serious dangers associated with the disposal of old computers, it is important not simply to dump them where they can be found and the information on them retrieved and/or where they may endanger people or animals.

Task 1 continued...

Look back at the text on the previous slide if needed and explain how the summary section at the end relates to the other parts of the text in the box provided. When you have finished the task click button to check answer.

check answer

The summary section of this text refers to the **Topic**: *Disposing of old computers* - the disposal of old computers

It also reinforces two important pieces of information in the **Focus** section:

1. they may contain sensitive information;
2. some of the materials can be dangerous.

Finally, in using the phrase 'serious dangers', it summarizes a critical issue raised in the **Detail** section of the text - they should be disposed of carefully.

Reviewing the works of others

You may review the work of others (articles, books, films, Internet sites, etc.) simply to give your readers an overview of what they contain and to express your own opinion (supported by reasons) of their overall quality or of the quality of some aspects of them. You may, however, have a more specific reason for reviewing their work, such as clarifying the ways in which it has informed your own work or the ways in which your own work differs from it.

The critical literature review sections of academic articles, dissertations and some assignments provide an opportunity to indicate how your work relates to the work of others as well as to draw attention to any particular aspects of the work of others with which you agree or disagree or of which you approve or disapprove.

Printed below are two extracts from a thesis. The first extract refers to some of the information in a report called *Aotearoa: Speaking for ourselves* which was written by Jeffrey Waite and printed for the New Zealand Ministry of Education by *Learning Media* in Wellington (New Zealand) in 1992. The extract:

- indicates where the information that is summarized is to be found (by providing page numbers); and
- notes that most of the information in the report is useful;
- but it also observes that there is very little information of one particular type, giving a possible reason for this.

There is, in Waite's report, a considerable volume of useful statistical information in several areas. There is statistical information about residence visas from 1987 – 1991 (p. 25), about the language backgrounds of migrants (p. 25), about speakers of Māori (p. 310), about Kohanga Reo (Māori-medium pre-schools) (p. 35), about Māori-medium and immersion schooling (p.35), about ethnic community languages (p. 55), about the languages of New Zealand's trade partners (pp. 63 & 64), about tourism (pp. 65 & 66), and about international subject enrolments in schools (pp. 68 - 70), There is, however, very little information about languages in universities with the exception of a section reporting on the completion of degrees involving a language major at five year intervals over a twenty year period (p. 71). This is, no doubt, because information about university language enrolments is, in common with some other types of information about tertiary education courses, difficult to find.

In the second extract (below), the writer refers to a report called the *Marshall Report*. That report written in 1976 by a working party whose members had been commissioned to make recommendations about the learning of second languages in New Zealand. As you can see, the writer believes that the report would have been more useful if it had included more statistical information to support the arguments and recommendations it makes. Its failure to supply adequate information as the basis for its arguments and recommendations is regarded by the writer as being a serious problem.

The commissioning of the Marshall Report provided an opportunity for the collection of relevant statistical information and the provision of additional statistical information. That opportunity was largely missed. The Marshall Report contains very little statistical data to support its arguments and recommendations.

Task 2

The following review section of a text written by a student would be regarded by most lecturers as unacceptable. Why do you think this is the case? Write your answer in the box provided. When you have finished the task click button to check answer.

This article reports the results of a study of fifteen children in three different age groups who were learning to type using a new technique. It is a really boring article and the technique the children were using seems pretty hopeless. The older children learned more slowly than the younger ones. The author found this surprising for some reason, but I thought it was probably because they were old enough to work out that the technique was rubbish. Anyway, I thought it was rubbish.

check answer

Task 2: Answer

The following is a possible response. The critical review on the previous slide would be regarded as unacceptable by most lecturers for a number of reasons. Here are some of them.

The review does not include an adequate summary of what the article is about. We are told that there were fifteen children in three different age groups but we are not told what the age groups were or how many of the fifteen children were in each of the three age groups. We are told that the children are learning to type using a new technique but we are not told what that technique is. We are told that the author of the article was surprised by the fact that the older children learned more slowly than the younger ones "for some reason" but we are not told whether the author actually gave a reason or, if so, why the reviewer does not appear to think that the reason was acceptable. The review includes emotive words, such as 'boring', 'hopeless' and 'rubbish'. Although the reviewer clearly indicates that he or she considers the article to be 'rubbish', there is no clear indication of why this is the case. In other words, the reviewer expresses opinions which are not supported by any clear and coherent arguments.

Quoting from and referring to the work of others in your own writing

You will often need to summarize, quote from, or refer to the work of others in your own writing. In each case, you need to provide *a reference to the work in your text (in-text referencing)* **and** in a *list of references at the end of your text*. You need to do this not only because it is important to acknowledge the works of others, but also because it is important to provide your readers with sufficient information about these works to enable them to find them and check them for themselves.

There are a number of different ways of referencing the works of others. One of the most popular approaches to referencing is the approach recommended by the *American Psychological Association* (APA) which produces guidelines to help writers. The complete guidelines are available in a manual published by the American Psychological Association: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The style of referencing referred to here is the style recommended in that manual. You need not follow this particular style of referencing. Indeed, it may not be the style that is recommended by your lecturers. For this reason, it is important to find out whether a particular style of referencing is required on a particular occasion.

Whatever style of referencing you follow, you need to be consistent in using it. Always avoid using more than one style of referencing in the same piece of writing.

When you quote directly from someone else's work in your own writing, you need to use quotation marks unless the quotation is a long one (approximately forty words or more) that starts on a new line and is indented.

Any words quoted directly from someone else's work should be copied exactly as they appear in the original (including the original spelling). If you omit some words from a single sentence in the original, you should indicate this omission by including three points (. . .). If the words you omit are from more than one sentence, you should include four points (. . . .).

To indicate the source of a quotation in your text, you should include the family name of the author or authors, the date of publication and the page number or page numbers.

Where quotations are indented and start and finish on different lines from the rest of the text (as they should always be if they are 40 words or longer), they should **not** be included within quotation marks.

There are some examples of in-text references on the next slide. Notice the use of brackets, commas and spacing in the examples. Notice too that where a quotation covers more than one page on the original source, this is indicated by the use of pp. (pages) rather than p. (page). Where reference is made to a paragraph rather than a page (as in the case, for example, of many documents available on the Internet that do not have page numbers), the symbol (§) is used for 'paragraph'.

- Barlow (1996, p. 8) describes 'aroha' as "a sacred power that emanates from the gods".
- The term 'aroha' is described as "a sacred power that emanates from the gods" (Barlow, 1996, p.8)
- Graddol (2006, p. 12) notes that "English is now redefining national and individual identities worldwide; shifting political fault lines; creating new global patterns of wealth and social exclusion; and suggesting new notions of human rights and responsibilities of citizenship".
- Xiaoshu and Dongming (2003, ¶18) observe that the translation of literary and artistic works is "not only a science with its own peculiar laws and methods, but also an art – an art of reproduction and re-creation".
- Xiaoshu and Dongming (2003, ¶18) observe that the translation of literary and artistic works is "not only a science . . . but also an art".
- As Johnson (2003, p. 22) observes:

The fact that children can understand, and make themselves understood with little difficulty in predictable, day-to-day contexts does not mean that their language is adequate to support their academic goals. It would appear to follow from this that we need to provide language learners, including those in immersion or semi-immersion contexts, with some form of instruction in the forms/ grammatical structures of the target language.

- As Johnson (2003, p. 22) observes: “The fact that children can . . . make themselves understood . . . does not mean that their language is . . . accurate It would appear to follow . . . that we need to provide language learners . . . with some form of instruction in the forms . . . of the target language”.

If you want to add something to a quotation to make the meaning clearer, the addition should be in square brackets:

- As Johnson (2003, p. 22) observes:

The fact that children can understand, and make themselves understood with little difficulty in predictable, day-to-day contexts does not mean that their language is adequate to support their academic goals. It would appear to follow from this that we need to provide [all] language learners with some form of instruction in the forms/grammatical structures of the target language.

So far, we have looked at some examples of in-text referencing. Now let’s look at how some of these references would be represented in the reference list at the end of the text in which they appear.

The first thing to note here is that the list of references at the end of a text should be arranged alphabetically. The second thing to note is that each item in the list should include the initials as well as the family names of the authors, the year the work was published (in brackets), the title of the work, the place of publication and the publisher. Where the original work appeared on the Internet, the URL address needs to be included as well as the date on which you consulted the site.

Here is a sample reference list made up of some of the works referred to above. Notice that the second and subsequent lines of references included in a reference list are usually indented.

References

Barlow, C. (1996). *Tikanga whakaaro: Key concepts in Māori culture*. Auckland: Oxford University Press.

Johnson, D. (2003). Teaching languages to young learners: Asian rim experiences. *Journal of Māori and Pacific Development*, 4(1), pp. 20 – 31.

Xiaoshu, S., Dongming, C. (2003). Translation of literary style. *Translation Journal*. Retrieved 02/07, 2003, from the World Wide Web: <http://accurapid.com/journal/23style.htm>.

Notice that book titles and the names of journals and periodicals are in italics, but the titles of articles that appear in books or journals and periodicals are not in italics.

Where you refer to a work with between three and five authors, all of the authors' family names should be included the first time you refer to their work in your text. In later references to the same work in the same text, you should refer directly only to the family name of the first author and follow that name by 'et al.' which stands for the Latin words 'and others'.

If you refer to the same work more than once *within the same paragraph*, you need to include **only** the page numbers you are referring to after the first reference.

Where you refer in your text to a work that has six or more authors, even the first in-text reference should include only the family name of the first author followed by a comma, a space and et al. (meaning 'and others').

Harmsworth, Barclay-Kerr and Reedy (2002, pp. 40 - 68) outline research on this area that was undertaken between 1998 and 2002.

Later in-text reference in the same paragraph:

Harmsworth, et al. focus on the importance of the issue of values.

Later in-text reference in a different paragraph:

Harmsworth, et al. (2002) introduce a range of significant questions.

In the reference list at the end of your text, the work referred to above would be listed as follows:

Harmsworth, G., Barclay-Kerr, K., & Reedy, T. (2002). Māori sustainable development in the 21st Century: The importance of Māori values, strategic planning and information systems. *Journal of Māori and Pacific Development*, 3(2), 40-68.

Where a work to which you wish to refer has no publication date, include n.d. (no date) in brackets after the family name of the author: Rangi (n.d.) studied primary students' behaviour.

If you want to learn more about referencing, you can find lots of useful sites on the Internet.

Conclusion

A final note

Summarizing, reviewing, quoting, referring and referencing are important skills that those who write in academic and professional contexts need to develop. These skills, like the other skills involved in planning, organizing and writing coherent texts, take time to acquire. However, they are well worth the effort. Good writers generally do well in their studies and are highly sought after by employers.

Ka pai!

**You have completed
Unit 4: Summarizing, reviewing, quoting,
referring and referencing**