


Summarize spoken text


This is a long-answer item type that integrates listening and writing skills, and requires you to understand, analyze and combine information from a spoken text, and then summarize the key points in writing.


You will hear a short report. Write a summary for a fellow student who was not present. You should write 50-70 words.



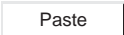
You have 10 minutes to finish this task. Your response will be judged on the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the key points presented in the report.

Status: Beginning in 12 seconds.

Volume 





Total Word Count: 0

The instructions for this item type have been modified for this lesson to include a report. In the actual test, the instructions will generally refer to a lecture.

Item Type Strategies

Strategy 1

Write down as much information as you can, and always note down any new terms, definitions, facts and statistics. Do not write names of speakers or people mentioned, but refer to their titles or jobs, e.g., psychologist, researcher, reporter, etc.

Strategy 2

Do not repeat all the information that you have noted down while listening. Shorten, simplify, paraphrase and synthesize the information into 50–70 words.

Strategy 3

Check and edit any grammatical and mechanical errors.

Explanation and Practice of Each Strategy

Strategy 1

You will hear the spoken text only once so you should try to note down as much key information as possible. You can use the Erasable Noteboard Booklet that you are provided with at the test center, or simply type your notes on screen. It is also important to note down any terms, especially academic ones, definitions, factual and statistical information.

You should also pay particular attention to words and phrases that indicate the structure of the spoken text (e.g., *features a series of studies*, *First*, *Then*, *Next*, *That brings us to*, *Let's consider*, *The problem is*), highlight

importance (e.g., *most significantly/importantly, very specific, especially*), signal contrasting ideas (e.g., *But, However*) and give examples or supporting details (e.g., *For example/instance*).

Instead of writing down the names of the people mentioned, you should note their jobs or titles, e.g., *professor, lecturer, researcher, psychologist*, etc. It is also important to organize notes in the order of importance, e.g., main idea, supporting ideas, supporting example(s) and detail(s).

Note that speakers may also return to some points or ideas they have mentioned. That is why it is important that you leave space around your notes in case you need to add new points closer to the relevant idea.

You should not write in complete sentences, but use keywords or your own abbreviated forms, and leave out unimportant details.

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Play the audio [L13_Summarize_spoken_text_1] and take notes.
- Review your notes and think about how you have organized them.

Strategy 2

You will have ten minutes to write your summary. This may seem like a long time, but you should stay focused and keep an eye on the timer in the top, right-hand corner of the screen when you take the test. You should use this time to carefully go through your notes and put the information into 3–4 sentences, starting with a topic sentence to introduce the main idea or ideas followed by 2–3 sentences providing supporting points or examples. You do not have to include all the examples from the recording. You can shorten some or leave out the less important details.

It is also important that you paraphrase the information using your own words or sentence structures. You can do this by changing word forms, using synonyms (words which mean the same), changing grammar structures and word order.

When writing a summary, you should include the key information and indicate any contrasting ideas or conflicting points of view. Remember to use linking words, adverbs or sentence patterns to indicate contrasts and opposites.

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Carefully read through your notes and think about the following:
 - topic sentence to introduce the summary
 - the main idea(s)
 - some supporting details/points/examples
- Now draft your summary.
- Read the model summary below and compare your summary to it:

Model summary:

It is believed that touch can communicate a wide range of specific emotions. Touch has been ignored by researchers in the past, and has not been focused on until recently. A person describes an experiment carried out into touch and emotion to prove that touch can communicate a range of specific feelings.

Strategy 3

Give yourself a couple of minutes to check your summary for grammatical errors (e.g., incomplete sentences, tense errors, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, singular and plural forms, word forms) and mechanical errors (e.g., misspelled words, wrong punctuation and capitalization).

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Read through the three sample summaries for Item 1.
- Try to identify and correct any grammatical and mechanical errors.
- Note that these are authentic responses from test takers. Analyze these responses and order them from the weakest to the strongest. Then read the explanations about the sample responses for Item 1.

Respond to a Summarize Spoken Text Item

You will now respond to a test item simulating the test conditions. You will have ten minutes to complete the task. Remind yourself of the three strategies for this item type and apply them.

Play the audio for Item 2 [L13_Summarize_spoken_text_2], and write your summary on a piece of paper.

Assess your Response

Were you able to use the strategies? Which one was the most difficult to apply? Which one was the most useful?

Read through the model summary for Item 2 and compare your summary to it.

Read through the three sample responses for Item 2 and order them from the weakest to the strongest. Then read the explanations about the sample responses for Item 2.

Item 1: Transcript

Scientists are discovering that when you touch someone, you communicate very specific emotions such as sympathy, disgust, gratitude, or even love. The current issue of the scientific journal *Emotion* features a series of studies about touch. Reporter Michelle Trudeau touched base with the lead researcher.

Michelle Trudeau: *Psychologist Matt Hertenstein from DePaul University in Green Castle, Indiana decided to study touch while he was watching parents interacting with their babies - making faces and cooing sounds, squeezing, stroking, nuzzling them.*

Mr. Matt Hertenstein: *And all of a sudden it struck me one day and I thought, you know, I wonder if touch can communicate distinct emotions, much like the face and the voice.*
(DePaul University)

Michelle Trudeau: *Decades of research has been done on the face and the voice and the distinct emotions that they communicate. But touch has been relatively neglected by researchers until Hertenstein stepped in and began his experiments.*

Mr. Matt Hertenstein: *We invited two participants into the lab. And we put a curtain up between those two people.*

Michelle Trudeau: *So they couldn't see or hear each other. One participant, the sender, was told to try and communicate twelve different emotions, one-by one, to the other participant, the receiver.*

Mr. Matt Hertenstein: *The receiver would put his or her arm underneath the curtain, on to the sender's side.*

Michelle Trudeau: *The sender would then touch the receiver's forearm, trying to communicate the specific emotion, such as envy, fear, love, embarrassment, anger, gratitude, pride, disgust. The receiver had to then decide which emotion was being communicated.*

Item 1: Sample Responses

1)

Scientists have researched that touch has more emotional signals to human's feeling, even stronger than hear and see, for we see or hear people, we may not feel much. Scientists have done an experiment involved in two participants, one can see and hear each other, while the other one can only touch the other one, they found that through touch people feel more about human's feeling, like envy, love.

2)

Research shows emperical evidence on the role of touch in communicating emotion like gratitude, love,,etc. It can be observed through parents making face, cuddling their children. One experiment was made with 2 participants, one the sender and the other the reciever of touch. The 2 are separated by a curtain and the sender is asked to touch the reciever to communicate 12 types of emotions like anger and disgusting.

3)

Touch has been neglected as an avenue of communicating distinct emotions, relative to studies involving facial and vocal communication. The journal Emotion featured studies involving touch. One researcher was motivated to study after seeing how parents and babies use physical contact in addition to facial and vocal expressions to communicate with one another. In one study, the sender was asked to communicate twelve distinct emotion, e.g. fear and love.

Item 1: Explanations of Sample Responses

1)

B1 Response

While the response contains relevant information, the test taker misrepresents the main point, leading the reader to believe the report is about an experiment which proved the importance of touch over sight and sound. This response shows poor grammar control; verbs and nouns are not properly formed and several prepositions are left out. The vocabulary is basic and imprecise. The spelling is fine. This response is 69 words.

2)

B2 Response

The main point has been discussed and supporting points are included. This response shows weak grammar control, which makes the meaning a little unclear. The vocabulary used is appropriate, but there are several spelling errors. This response is 69 words.

3)

C1 Response

The response is an accurate and detailed summary of the main point and several supporting details discussed in the report. The grammar follows standard conventions. The vocabulary used is appropriate, but there is one spelling error. This response is 69 words.

Item 2: Transcript

About 20 years ago Kent Anger and Barry Johnson came up with 750 chemicals that could harm the brain during development. Nobody has since then dared to update that number, it's just a guess today, there has to be more than a thousand if there was 750 twenty years ago. But the problem is also that we have put too little emphasis on this type of, uh, research.

For example, it has taken so far the OECD 10 years to devise a battery of tests that they could recommend for systematic testing of chemicals for developmental neurotoxicity. That panel, that battery, has not yet been completed and authorised by OECD so it's taking way, way, way too long because it is complicated. But there is so much at stake.

Children are just losing IQ points and losing their concentration span, memory or motor functions. But in the present world where there's so much emphasis on knowledge and brain functions this can also translate into dollars. The EPA has calculated that every time a child loses one IQ point because of chemical pollution it costs society something like \$8,000 or \$10,000.

Item 2: Model Summary

About twenty years ago, it was estimated that there are 750 chemicals that can affect the developing human brain, and today there may be over 1000. There is little emphasis on the possible damage caused to developing children from these chemicals. It has taken the OECD ten years to develop an index to test for developmental neurotoxicity. Economically, each IQ point lost to chemical poisoning has an impact of \$8,000-\$10,000.

Item 2: Sample Responses

1)

The lecture mentions chemical test for brain development. There are 2 level of chemical test. The first one is conducted by OECD on the systematic test chemical. They found that it takes a long time and too complicated for this test. The second is carried out by EPA which tried to find out some chemical solution.

2)

About 20 years ago, scientists came up with 750 chemicals that could harm the brain. It might be more than that nowadays. Research on the harmful chemicals is complicated and could take too long. Chemical pollution has various effects on children, for example loss of concentration span, memory and IQ points.

3)

20 years ago, the list of chemicals which affected brain development was numbered at 750. Today, this number has increased to about 1000. There is insufficient research on the testing of such chemicals by OECD. These chemicals cause harmful effects like the loss of IQ, concentration, memory and motor functions. It is estimated that for every lost IQ point of a child, society stands to lose 8,000 to 10,000 dollars.

Item 2: Explanations of Sample Responses

1)

B1 Response

While the response contains several keywords, it does not summarize the main issues described by the speaker. It shows weak grammar control which makes the meaning a little unclear. The vocabulary used is appropriate and there is one spelling mistake. This response is 56 words.

2)

B2 Response

While the response includes some main points, other key information from the passage is left out. It shows good control of grammar. The use of vocabulary is appropriate and there are no spelling mistakes. This response is 51 words.

3)

C1 Response

The response is an accurate and detailed summary of the main point and several supporting points discussed in the lecture. The grammar follows standard English conventions. The vocabulary used is appropriate and there are no spelling mistakes. This response is 70 words.