

WRITING AN OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Summarizing 101

A *summary* is a short statement or paragraph that tells what an article is mainly about. An *objective summary* does not include your opinions. (Remember that *summarize* means to sum up. When writing a summary, you're summing up what an article says, not weighing in on it. An objective summary is different from a *review*, which includes your opinions.)

Writing an objective summary can help you comprehend what you've read and teach other people about a topic. After all, if you can accurately explain the gist of an article to someone else in just a few sentences, it's likely that you've understood what it's about.

How do you craft an objective summary? Choose any article in this issue of *Upfront*. Then follow the steps below to summarize it.

Step 1: Write the main idea of the article here.

Step 2: Find three key details from the article that support that main idea. Write them in your own words in two to three sentences here. (*Hint:* Avoid choosing minor details from just one section of the article. Instead, pick key details that support the article's *overall* main idea.)

Step 3: Combine your answers to steps 1 and 2 to form one cohesive paragraph. Make sure your sentences are free of opinions. Revise as necessary.

CHALLENGE: On a separate sheet of paper, turn your objective summary into a review of the article. How do an objective summary and a review differ in terms of purpose, tone, and content?