# **Summarizing Sources | QC Writing Center**

**Why Summarize?**

* To condense a passage into much shorter form
* To communicate only the essential facets of an original passage
* To rework a text for later reference, thereby enhancing your understanding and saving you time

**Tips for Writing a Summary**

* **Identify the main points.** Can you answer the questions of who, what, where, when, why, and how as presented by the original passage?
  + Bonus: You don’t need to include several specific facts or data in a summary unless you intend to cite them in your paper; rather, consider regrouping or otherwise generally representing relevant data.
* **Use your own words.** Not only is rewriting a passage by substituting words and phrases with synonyms not summary, it’s also plagiarism.
* **Keep it short.** In general, summaries should be shorter than their original counterparts, particularly when incorporated into a paper.
* **Write objectively.** Summaries should not report your opinion on the original passage but should accurately reflect the author’s ideas and note their style.
* **Make a citation.** Anytime you present specific ideas in your writing that are neither your own nor general knowledge, you should include a citation for them. Documenting as you write your summaries can save you a lot of time!