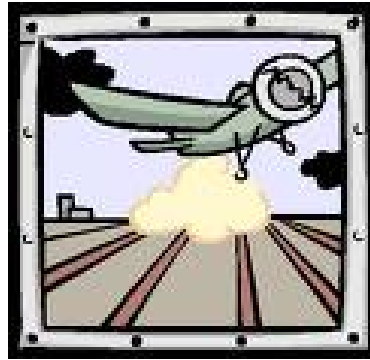


The Historian's Toolbox



Fact

- Something that **actually exists; reality; truth**
- Truth known by **actual experience or observation**

Example: WWII took place between 1939–1945

Opinion

- A belief or judgment that rests on grounds **insufficient** to produce complete certainty
- A personal **view** or **attitude**
- **Not** based on evidence or reality

Example: Canadians are the best!

Bias

- To cause **partiality, prejudice** or **favoritism**
- **Prevents** unprejudiced consideration of a question
- **One sided**; does not show all perspectives
- **Example:** The image of Obama that the press has presented to the public is not a fair approximation of the real man. They consciously have ignored whole years of his life which bespeaks a lack of journalistic instinct.
 - Thus, the public image of Obama is of a "man who never was."

Primary Sources

- **Original** materials on which other research is based
- They are from the **time period** involved and have **not** been **interpreted**

Examples include:

- Artifacts (e.g. coins, fossils, tools, clothing, all from the time under study), audio recordings (e.g. radio programs)
- Diaries; interviews (e.g., oral histories, telephone, e-mail);
- Journal articles; letters; newspaper articles written at the time; original documents (i.e. birth certificate, will, marriage license, trial transcript); photographs; speeches

Secondary Sources

- Accounts written **after the fact**
- They are **interpretations** of primary sources
- Secondary sources are **not** evidence, but rather commentary on/discussion of evidence

Examples include:

- Biographies ,dictionaries, encyclopedias, magazines, textbooks, websites

Tertiary Sources

- Tertiary sources consist of information which is a collection of **primary** and **secondary** sources

Examples include:

- Fact books, indexes, abstracts, manuals, textbooks (also secondary) and biographies (also secondary)

Thesis

- Makes a claim that **can be disputed**
- Directly answers the question asked
- Is a road map for the paper; tells the reader what to expect
- Is usually a **single sentence** that appears at the end of your introductory paragraph

Example

- **Question:** Should Holocaust memorials be abolished?
- **Thesis:** Holocaust memorials are crucial reminders of an important event in history and so, they should not be abolished. (this is then supported by **arguments**)

Plagiarism

- To use and pass off (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own.
- To appropriate for use as one's own passages or ideas from (another).
- To put forth as original to oneself the ideas or words of another.
- To steal from the writings of another; to appropriate without due acknowledgement.

Summarizing

- 1) The original text is cut to about **one third**.
- 2) Only the **main ideas** are mentioned; that means that no examples or repetitions are allowed.
- 3) Specific statements are combined to form general statements.
- 4) Direct or reported speech are changed into statements, with the exception of very important quotations.

Paraphrasing

- Reread the original passage until you understand its **full meaning**;
- Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information **in a new form**;
- Use quotation marks to identify any **unique term** or **phraseology** you have borrowed exactly from the source;
- Hints on how to paraphrase without plagiarizing:
 - **Look away from the source**—then write
 - While looking at the source, first **change the structure**, then the words
 - **Taking Notes**: Take abbreviated notes, set the notes aside, then paraphrase from the notes a day or so later (or when you draft)

Precis

- A summarized version of the main points of an argument or theory
- Only 1/3 the length of the original piece



- Procedure:
Read the passage to be summarized carefully, sentence by sentence. Try to grasp the writer's main points. Spotting the topic sentence will help. Use a dictionary, to find the meaning of any words that are not clear. As you read, take brief notes that can be used in your writing.

Precis

- 2) Summarize the information in your own words. Certain key words from the original source may be used to ensure that the important ideas are maintained. If you cannot summarize the ideas in your own words, read through the source again to ensure you have a good understanding of the content. Do not add any opinions or ideas of your own.
- 3) Revise your writing until you are confident that you have given an accurate summary.
- 4) If your precis is more than one-third the length of the original, continue your revision until you have reduced it to the proper length.

Annotated Bibliography

- An annotated bibliography gives an account of the research that has been done on a given topic.
- Like any bibliography, an annotated bibliography is an alphabetical list of research sources.
- In addition to bibliographic data, an annotated bibliography provides a concise summary of each source and some assessment of its value or relevance.
- Depending on your assignment, an annotated bibliography may be one stage in a larger research project, or it may be an independent project standing on its own.

Practice Activity - Summary

- Read p. 110-111 in your textbook, the section on "Enemy Aliens"
- Complete a summary, using the tips we've covered today, of no more than 75 words.