

Maybe you have watched a TV commercial and enjoyed the fast-moving pictures, music, and dialogue. Suppose that as you flip through a magazine, you come across the same ad. You see that the TV commercial has been stripped down to the most important details. The magazine ad is a summary of the TV commercial.

As you read social studies, you can use a summary to help you focus on and remember what you read. A summary is like the magazine ad. It is a short restatement, or stripped-down version, of the most important points of the text.

To create a summary, follow three basic steps.

1. **Underline the important details in the passage.** Look for ideas, names, places, and other facts that get right to the meat of the passage.
2. **Write one or two sentences that summarize the important details in the paragraph or passage.** As you summarize, you may realize that you need to delete or add information. Try to make your summary both short and complete.
3. **Combine these paragraph summaries into a short summary of the whole passage.** Try to be as concise as possible, but don't leave out important information. Your summary should jog your memory of the entire passage.

Historians and archaeologists have known about hieroglyphics for centuries, but for a long time they didn't know how to read it. In fact, it was not until 1799 when a lucky discovery by a French soldier gave historians the key they needed to read ancient Egyptian writing.

That key was the Rosetta Stone, a huge, stone slab inscribed with hieroglyphics. In addition to the hieroglyphics, the Rosetta Stone had text in Greek and a later form of Egyptian. Because the text in all three languages was the same, scholars who knew Greek were able to figure out what the hieroglyphics said.

From *World History*, Ancient Egypt and Kush

Summary of Paragraph 1

A lucky discovery in 1799 helped historians read hieroglyphics for the first time in centuries.

Summary of Paragraph 2

The Rosetta Stone had the same text written in both Greek and hieroglyphics that Greek scholars could read.

Combined Summary

Scholars were finally able to read hieroglyphics in 1799 when the Rosetta Stone was discovered. It had a passage written in both Greek and hieroglyphics.

Summarizing

Reading Skills

Reading Geography

As you read about geography you will come across a lot of new information. Summarizing can help you focus on and remember what you read.

YOU TRY IT!

Read the following passage and underline the important points. Then fill out the graphic organizer below to create a summary. The first box has been completed for you.

The Moscow Region

Moscow, with its huge Kremlin, has symbolized Russia for centuries. The city became the home of the Russian Orthodox Church in the 1300s and Russia's capital in the 1400s. Most Russians have looked to Moscow as their country's heart and soul. This was true even while St. Petersburg was the capital from 1712 to 1918.

Today Greater Moscow is Russia's most important economic region. It is the national center of communications, culture, education, finance, politics, and transportation. More than 70 institutions of higher learning are there. As a result, Moscow's economic advantages are many. Roads, rails, and air routes link the capital to all points in Russia. The city's location also gives its businesses access to raw materials and labor.

The economic region around Moscow stretches for many miles in all directions. Millions of Russians live and work within the area's network of transportation routes and job sites. Among the transportation links is the world's busiest subway. The area also has electrified railroads and a major beltway.

From *World Geography Today*, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus

Summary of Paragraph 1

Russians love Moscow, the country's capital and religious center.

Summary of Paragraph 2

Summary of Paragraph 3

Combined Summary
