



technique

Objectives

- to identify summary writing techniques
- to understand what explicit and implicit meanings
- know the characteristics of a good summary

A good summary is:

Written in your own words

Well structured

focused

brief

articulate

To summarize, you must read a passage closely, finding the main ideas and supporting ideas. Then you must briefly write down those ideas in a few sentences or a paragraph.

It is important to understand the difference between **a summary** and **a paraphrase**.

A paraphrase is simply a rewriting of a passage in your own words.

The skill of understanding implicit as well as explicit meanings and attitudes is an important one to be able to demonstrate when responding to a text.

Implicit

something is understood but not clearly stated.

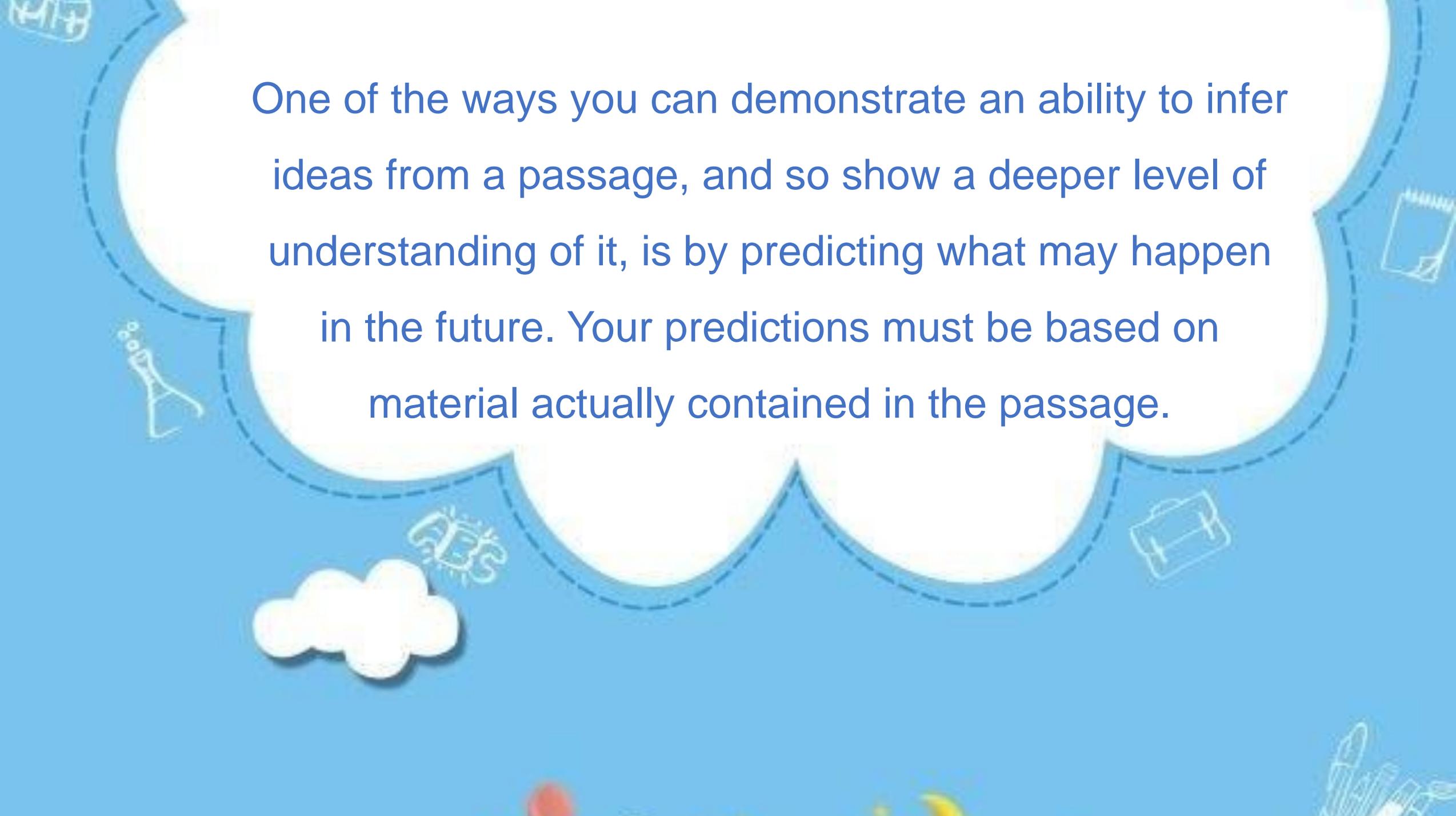
understands it through other clues in the text

Explicit

Easy to understand

Stated directly in the text

The writer leaves no doubt to the intended meaning



One of the ways you can demonstrate an ability to infer ideas from a passage, and so show a deeper level of understanding of it, is by predicting what may happen in the future. Your predictions must be based on material actually contained in the passage.

Writers' effect

You may be asked to select and comment on words from a passage which give a particular impression to the reader. It tests the skills of close reading and sensitivity to language. Select and quote a range of short phrases (usually not more than two or three words each), and make clear that you understand both their meaning and their effect (which means how it makes you think or feel). In Further Practice Task c, your reasons for preferring a destination should be linked to the descriptive phrases which make it seem attractive, and the response each one evokes in you as a reader.

Rather than using one short simple sentence for each point, try to combine material into longer and more complex sentences to save words. Avoid beginning each sentence the same way or repeating the same structure (e.g. don't start every sentence with He) and avoid the overuse of and. Before you write each sentence, plan its structure in your head. Check your summary for omissions, repetitions and inaccuracies of fact.

Factual accuracy

When changing information into your own words and trying to reduce their number, there is a danger that you may express something in a way that is no longer strictly true; for example 'the majority of the island' is not the same as 'most of the island'. You need to be careful that you have not changed the meaning, of the passage or the information it gives.

I will summarize the movie Titanic. The movie was almost three hours long and had many beautiful details, but for a summary I need to be brief.

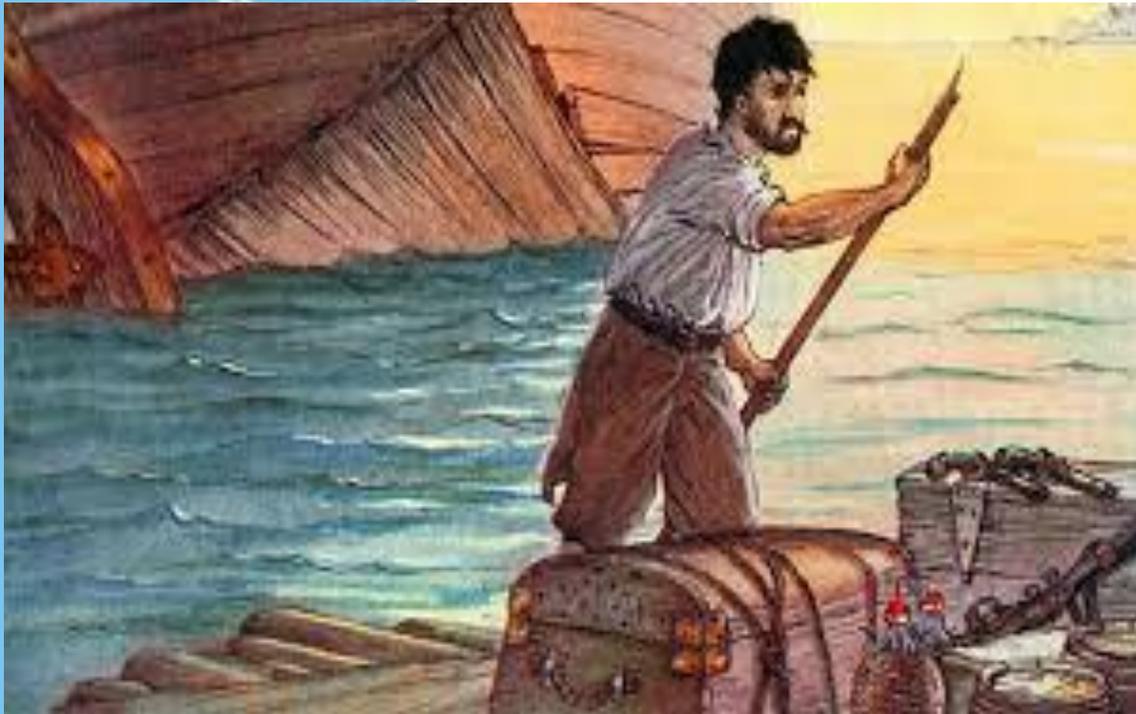
Model summarizing

The movie is about a young man and a young woman who met and fell in love on a ship while crossing the Atlantic Ocean. The ship hit an iceberg and sank and many people did not survive including the young man. In the end, the young woman lived to tell the story.”

The summary of the three-hour movie can be done in three sentences leaving out the details.

What you already know or think about the following topics:

- a** Robinson Crusoe
- b** desert islands
- c** books, films or television series set on desert islands
- d** survival techniques.



2. Read the text below about Robinson Crusoe, which is an extract from a novel written in 1719 that includes journal entries.

Robinson Crusoe

September 30, 1659.

I, poor miserable Robinson Crusoe, being shipwrecked, during a dreadful storm, came on shore on this dismal unfortunate island, which I called the Island of Despair, all the rest of the ship's company being drowned, and myself almost dead.

All the rest of that day I spent in afflicting myself at the dismal circumstances I was brought to, viz. I had neither food, house, clothes, weapon, or place to fly to; and in despair of any relief, saw nothing but death before me; either that I should be devoured by wild beasts, murdered by savages, or starved to death for want of food. At the approach of night, I slept in a tree for fear of wild creatures, but slept soundly, though it rained all night.

From the 1st of October to the 24th.

All these days entirely spent in many several voyages to get all I could out of the ship, which I brought on shore, every tide of flood, upon rafts. Much rain also in these days, though with some intervals of fair weather; but, it seems, this was the rainy season.

October 26.

I walked about the shore almost all day to find out a place to fix my habitation, greatly concerned to secure myself from an attack in the night, either from wild beasts or men. Towards night I fixed upon a proper place under a rock, and marked out a semicircle for my encampment, which I resolved to strengthen with a work, wall, or fortification.

The 31st.

In the morning, I went out into the island with my gun to see for some food, and discover the country; when I killed a she-goat, and her kid followed me home, which I afterwards killed also, because it would not feed.

November 1.

I set up my tent under a rock and lay there for the first night, making it as large as I could, with stakes driven in to swing my hammock upon.

November 17.

This day I began to dig behind my tent into the rock. Note, three things I wanted exceedingly for this work, viz. a pick-axe, a shovel, and a wheelbarrow or basket; so I ceased my work, and began to consider how to supply that want and make me some tools. A spade was so absolutely necessary, that indeed I could do nothing effectually without it; but what kind of one to make, I knew not.

January 1.

Very hot still, but I went abroad early and late with my gun, and lay still in the middle of the day. This evening, going farther into the valleys which lay towards the centre of the island, I found there was plenty of goats, though exceeding shy, and hard to come at. However, I resolved to try if I could not bring my dog to hunt them down.

January 2.

Accordingly, the next day, I went out with my dog, and set him upon the goats; but I was mistaken, for they all faced about upon the dog; and he knew his danger too well, for he would not come near them.

January 3.

I began my fence or wall; which being still fearful of my being attacked by somebody, I resolved to make very thick and strong.

All this time I worked very hard, the rains hindering me many days, nay, sometimes weeks together; but I thought I should never be perfectly secure till this wall was finished. And it is scarce credible what inexpressible labour everything was done with, especially the bringing piles out of the woods, and driving them into the ground; for I made them much bigger than I need to have done.

In the next place, I was at a great loss for candle; so that as soon as ever it was dark, which was generally by seven o'clock, I was obliged to go to bed.

Adapted from Robinson Crusoe, by Daniel Defoe

1. In one sentence, describe the situation of Robinson Crusoe on the Island of Despair by answering these questions in any order:

Who is he?

Where is he?

What happened to him?

How did he get there?

When did it happen?

2. You are going to write a summary of Robinson Crusoe's situation which includes his:

needs

fears

Difficulties

disappointments

First, make brief notes under each heading.

Then, write a one-paragraph summary, in modern English, using all your notes.

3. List future incidents or problems which Robinson Crusoe may face later in the novel, based on evidence in the extract. Share and support your predictions with your class.

Be healthy
Be happy

