

Summarising skills



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To make an oral or written summary you need to:

- ✓ **Skim-read** the whole text
- ✓ Identify **main ideas** -> you can highlight /circle them
- ✓ Look up in the **dictionary essential words** to help you clarify the sense of the text
- ✓ **Write notes on main points**
- ✓ From short notes you can develop a synthesized version of the original text



Use **synonyms** -> use your own words to express the ideas

Keep specific vocabulary

Double-check -> read again the original text to make sure you have not missed anything

Example. Read this lecture about home security and identify the main points

Good morning. I'm Police Constable Martin Wilkes and today I am going to talk to you about simple home security. How can we improve security in the home and how can we protect ourselves? In the first part of my talk I'm going to mention simple precautions that don't cost anything. In the second part, I'll talk about devices you can buy to help with home security.

You might think I'm stating the obvious, but in my experience failing to follow these simple steps leads to most security problems. First, always remember to close the doors and windows at the front of your house or apartment when you are at the back of the building or in the garden, especially in warm weather. Leaving your windows open creates a target and an opportunity for burglars. Second, don't leave signs that you are not at home, such as leaving a note on the front door saying you've just gone to the shops and you'll be back soon. Another simple precaution is to ask for identification from any visitors who claim they are from the gas, electricity or water companies.

Now for the second part of my advice. An easy way of improving security is to buy and fit locks for your windows. Window locks are cheap to buy and easy to fit. A further simple and cheap device is a safety chain. This allows you to open the front door just a little. You can then see who is calling and talk to them. The advantage of the safety chain is that no one can push the door open and come into the house. You mightn't believe it but many people who have safety chains forget to put them on when opening the door to strangers. A more expensive security method is to fit improved locks to all your doors. These locks are difficult to force open so they keep your property safe. An even more expensive method is to fit a burglar alarm for when you're away from home. Alarms are a very effective way of deterring burglars. If you use all these methods you'll find that you can make it very difficult for thieves to burgle your home.

Example. Read this lecture about home security and identify the main points

Good morning. I'm Police Constable Martin Wilkes and today I am going to talk to you about simple home security. How can we improve security in the home and how can we protect ourselves? In the first part of my talk I'm going to mention simple precautions that don't cost anything. In the second part, I'll talk about devices you can buy to help with home security.

Simple advice

You might think I'm stating the obvious, but in my experience failing to follow the simple advice leads to most security problems. First, always remember to close the doors and windows at the front of your house or apartment when you are at the back of the building or in the garden, especially in warm weather. Leaving your windows open creates a target and an opportunity for burglars. Second, don't leave signs that you are not at home, such as leaving a note on the front door saying you've just gone to the shops and you'll be back soon. Another simple precaution is to ask for identification from any visitors who claim they are from the gas, electricity or water companies.

Tools to improve security

Now for the second part of my advice. An easy way to improve security is to buy and fit locks for your windows. Window locks are cheap to buy and easy to fit. A further simple and cheap device is a safety chain. This allows you to open the front door just a little. You can then see who is calling and talk to them. The advantage of the safety chain is that no one can push the door open and come into the house. You mightn't believe it but many people who have safety chains forget to put them on when opening the door to strangers. A more expensive security method is to fit improved locks to all your doors. These locks are difficult to force open so they keep your property safe. An even more expensive method is to fit a burglar alarm for when you're away from home. Alarms are a very effective way of deterring burglars. If you use all these methods you'll find that you

Do you know the meaning of... to burgle your home.

Device

Target

Burglar

Lock

Safety chain

Improved lock

Example. Read this lecture about home security and identify the main points

Good morning. I'm Police Constable Martin Wilkes and today I am going to talk to you about simple home security. How can we improve security in the home and how can we protect ourselves? In the first part of my talk I'm going to mention simple precautions that don't cost anything. In the second part, I'll talk about devices you can buy to help with home security.

You might think I'm stating the obvious, but in my experience failing to follow these simple steps leads to most security problems. First, always remember to close the doors and windows at the front of your house or apartment when you are at the back of the building or in the garden, especially in warm weather. Leaving your windows open creates a target and an opportunity for burglars. Second, don't leave signs that you are not at home, such as leaving a note on the front door saying you've just gone to the shops and you'll be back soon. Another simple precaution is to ask for identification from any visitors who claim they are from the gas, electricity or water companies.

Another simple precaution is to buy and fit locks for your windows. Window locks device is a safety chain. This allows you to open the front door just in case of an emergency. One advantage of the safety chain is that no one can push the door open. Many people who have safety chains forget to put them on when they go out. Another method is to fit improved locks to all your doors. These locks are more expensive. A more expensive method is to fit a burglar alarm for when you go out. Burglar alarms are very effective in deterring burglars. If you use all these methods you'll find that you

MAIN POINTS

- Close windows and doors -> create a target for burglars;
- Don't leave signs you are not home;
- Ask unknown people to identify themselves;
- Tools to improve security: from the less expensive locks, to safety chains, improved locks and the most expensive burglar alarm.

Decide which one of the two summaries is better and why

a On the topic of home security, the expert mentioned a number of methods to protect you and your home, ranging from methods that cost nothing to some that are quite expensive. The methods, from the cheapest to the most expensive, were: keeping front doors and windows closed; not leaving signs that you are not at home; asking for identification; fitting window locks; installing and using a safety chain on the front door; fitting more secure locks to all doors; and installing a burglar alarm. Using these methods will prevent most burglaries. [91 words]

b There are a number of methods you can use to prevent security problems in your house. You can do simple things like closing your windows and putting a security chain on the front and back door or you can put plenty of locks on the windows and install a burglar alarm that makes a lot of noise if someone is trying to break into the house. Never let anyone into the house unless you know them well. [76 words]

Now let's prepare a summary and some comments for an exam text

Charisma: a kind of magic?

IN FOCUS | CHARISMA

Charisma:

A KIND OF MAGIC?

A photograph of Michelle Obama, the first lady of the United States, smiling and interacting with a group of diverse children. She is wearing an orange top and is surrounded by children who are reaching out to her. The setting appears to be an indoor event, possibly at the White House.

¹ _____ She is Michelle Obama, the wife of Barack Obama. In the photo, she is greeting children of her employees who have come to the White House for a 'Bring your children to work day'. Michelle Obama regularly gives talks all over the world to young people. She tells them that anything can happen if they work hard and never give up on their dream. She is currently working on a project which encourages young people to eat more healthily. She inspires young people because she has a special quality - charisma.

² _____ They point out that people often misunderstand what charisma is and think of it as a kind of fame, but it is not the same as the celebrity of overrated pop stars. Charisma is a kind of magic and is relatively rare. Charismatic personalities are able to draw people to them, and they succeed in getting others to see them as a leader.

³ _____ We want them to inspire us and offer us a vision of a better future. But is charisma a good or bad thing? There are

many examples of people who use charisma in a positive way. Martin Luther King was one of the leaders of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. He was a charismatic speaker who used non-violent methods to bring about equality between black and white people. Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi are two other examples of charismatic political leaders who share the qualities of self-sacrifice and personal courage.

⁴ _____ In the business world, many top business executives have misused their charisma and acted in a way that greatly damaged their companies.

Some, like the Canadian ex-tycoon Conrad Black, have served prison sentences. Far more seriously, we can all think of famous military and political leaders who have destroyed their countries and caused great harm to their people.

⁵ _____ It certainly is when it causes us to lose our critical judgement, and this is frequently the case. When we choose our leaders, it is vital to consider whether they have the knowledge, wisdom and experience to do a good job. That is what really matters.

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MAIN POINT:
Michelle Obama
as an example of a
charismatic
person

Elaborate more:
What does she do
to inspire people?

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MAIN POINT:

Charismatic people can guide and inspire others

Elaborate more:

What is the difference between charisma and fame?

Charisma:

A KIND OF MAGIC?



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MAIN POINT:
Positive examples of charismatic leaders

Elaborate more:
What qualities make MLK, NM and ASSK charismatic leaders?

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MAIN POINT:
Negative examples of charismatic people.

Elaborate more:
Business executives, military and political leaders who damaged their companies or harmed people.

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MAIN POINT:
Carefully consider the flaws of charisma.

Elaborate more:
What are the main characteristics that we need to critically consider when choosing our leaders?

Let's recap

You need to incorporate the **main points** on your oral summary and **elaborate** them:

1. Michelle Obama as an example of a charismatic person;
2. Getting right what is charisma: capacity to inspire and guide others;
3. Charismatic leaders who embodied positive and inspiring values (e.g., self-sacrifice, courage);
4. Charismatic leaders who damaged companies or harmed people;
5. Critical thinking when choosing our charismatic and inspiring person.

Further elements for discussion:

- ❖ After reading the text, what do you think is charisma?
- ❖ Do you consider yourself a charismatic person? Why? Why not?
- ❖ Do you know a charismatic person in your private life? Can you describe her/him? How do you think is this person charismatic? Can you make me some examples of her/his attitude?
- ❖ Do you think that charisma is an important quality in a business career?
- ❖ Do you think that charisma is an innate quality or do you think it can be taught?
- ❖ Can you make an example of a negative effect of dangerous charismatic people?
- ❖ Do you think that dangerous charismatic people can manipulate public opinion? If yes, how can we prevent this?

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These are further questions that your teacher can ask you AFTER you summarized the text



**KEEP
CALM
AND
SUMMARISE
IT ALL**