17. A Summary

1. Answer the following questions:

*What is a summary?*

*Why do people write summaries?*

<http://writing.phillipmartin.info/la_summary.htm>

2. Read the following summary based on the text called Floods presented in the National Geographic Magazine and think of its structure, language and length. Is it easy to read and understand?

*Floods*

*Floods are common in most places on Earth and can happen in a multitude of ways. Some floods take time but some are fast and dangerous. Hundred-years floods have become more common even though according to the classification of floods they should only happen once in a century. The power of water is extremely destructive. Despite advanced technologies the USA informs about huge damage and a large amount of dead people annually; a report from OECD presents an account of a large-scale damage on the coast worldwide and China reports that millions of people died in the Yellow River during the last century. The ill effects of floods are numerous including contamination and diseases connected with lack of drinking water. On the other hand, floods in some parts of the world have been helpful making the soil fertile. Advanced computer technology, anti-flood barriers and systems of dikes and dams are prepared to protect people. Many governments require people to be responsible and buy flood insurance or construct flood-resistant structures. The problem is people prefer living close to coast or rivers and what is more some areas which could be flooded naturally are used by developers for their building projects.*

*200 words*

<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/floods-profile>

3. Compare the summary with the original text from the link above; think of the structure, language and length.

**SUMMARY in Brief:**

**Work with the original text:**

1. Reading – *get the full meaning of the text; look up the unfamiliar words*
2. Main ideas – *highlight the key information; leave out the unnecessary details*

**Summary writing:**

1. Notes – *rewrite the key information in your own words*
2. The first draft – *edit; focus on the coherence; changes in the order of information in the text are possible*
3. Final version – *every essential information should be included; clearly stated information makes the text easy to read; correct grammar and spelling; word count( if required)*

**Useful tips:** *Read the text carefully; any information you are not*

*certain about should be included only if you have words left;*

*Condense the information; Rephrase; Combine sentences; Make sure*

*you do not give your opinion on the topic.*

4. Look at the text called “Late nights and laziness” on the following link. What is the text about?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/sleep.shtml>

5. Read the first 2 paragraphs again and look up any unknown words.

*Late nights and laziness*

*Sleep patterns go crazy during your teenage years. Many teens have the energy to play computer games until late at night but can't find the energy to get out of bed in time for school. This may be more than just laziness and bad behaviour.*

*New research suggests that the hormonal upheaval of puberty could be causing adolescents to love a lie-in, but loathe an early night. One thing is for certain - sleep is crucial for teenagers because it is while they are snoozing that they release a hormone that is essential for their* [***growth spurt***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/growth.shtml)*. They need more sleep than both children and adults, but they get less than either.*

6. Underline the main ideas and rewrite them in your own words.

7. Write a summary and use your notes.

8. Write the summary of the whole text (200 - 220 words).

**References and Bibliography:**

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<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/floods-profile>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/sleep.shtml>

<http://writing.phillipmartin.info/la_summary.htm>

**Answer key:**

1. A summary is a shortened version of a text. It contains only the key information from the original text. It is usually written to present readers with only a short and brief account of all the ideas in the text. It is useful in both business and academic context.

2. A summary of the text Floods includes the title and only the key information without much detail. The sentences are brief and the information included in the text is often condensed. There is just 1 paragraph.

3. The whole text is much shorter than the original. It is easier to read this text because it is shorter and simpler. The language of the summary is usually more condensed. It is common to use a passive voice.

4. Text “Late nights and laziness” discusses teenagers and their sleeping habits.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/sleep.shtml>

5. Students´ own answers; estimated words: pattern; behaviour; research; upheaval; loathe, crucial

6. Possible answers

Sleep patterns go crazy during your teenage years. Many teens have the energy to play computer games until late at night but can't find the energy to get out of bed in time for school. This may be more than just laziness and bad behaviour.

New research suggests that the hormonal upheaval of puberty could be causing adolescents to love a lie-in, but loathe an early night. One thing is for certain - sleep is crucial for teenagers because it is while they are snoozing that they release a hormone that is essential for their [growth spurt](http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/growth.shtml). They need more sleep than both children and adults, but they get less than either.

Notes:

Teenagers have strange sleeping habits.

Many of them stay up late and have no energy in the morning.

The imbalance of hormones may cause that teenagers need to lie down but cannot do it early at night and it has nothing to do with their behaviour.

Teenagers need to sleep in order to produce a hormone essential for their growth.

They need more sleep than both children and adults and they do not get it.

7. Write a summary and use your notes.

Teenagers need to sleep to have enough of an important growth hormone. The problem is that due to hormonal upheaval they may not be able to get enough sleep at night and may need to catch up in the morning when they should get up.

8. Write the summary of the full text (200 - 220 words). Students ‘own answers.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/articles/lifecycle/teenagers/sleep.shtml>