

## **CPE (Certificate for Proficiency in English) Writing a summary**

**Aim:** To prepare students to write a 70 word summary (Use of English Part 5) and to learn how to keep to the word limit.

**Level:** Specifically prepared for CPE exam but also useful for general written work and keeping down word limits.

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** none

Students work in groups of 2 to 3

### **Procedure**

1. Ask students to have a discussion to find out about a subject they both have in common e.g. a film they both/all saw / a current affairs story they both/all heard about / a book they both/all read.
2. Once the subject has been established, ask students to discuss the subject and recall as much detail as possible about it.
3. Explain to students they have 10 minutes to write a summary of the chosen topic. Students should work as individuals.
4. Ask students to compare their summaries in their groups. Ask the following questions:
  - Which key points overlap within summaries?
  - How many words per summary were written, more or less?
  - Can you cross out any irrelevant information from the summaries, trying to narrow it down to 5 key points?
5. Explain to students they have 10 minutes to rewrite their summaries, individually. Explain they have five minutes to complete the task. They must focus on five key points only.
6. When students have finished, get them to compare their summaries again, and focus on the following questions:
  - Whose is the clearest? Why?

- What cohesive devices have been used?

7. After monitoring, teacher can give relevant input about:

- cohesive devices
- keeping the summary simple
- explaining the reading component of this part of CPE

8. Follow up: Write the subjects chosen by all the groups on board. Ask students to mingle and read each others' summaries, commenting on:

- key points chosen (for a reader who knows the subject)
- simplicity (for reader who does not know the subject)
- range of cohesive devices