

Summarizing vs. Analyzing

Composition – Literary Analysis

SUMMARIZING MEANS...

- Explaining the PLOT of a story
- Using chronological order
- Only describing the Who, What, Where and When of the piece, not WHY or HOW an author writes the piece.
- DO summarize the basics of the piece in the introduction.
- Summarize events from the story only as they are needed for analysis.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M SUMMARIZING?

• Are you stating something that would be obvious to the reader?

• Does your essay use the same chronological order that the author uses to tell the story?

• Are you simply describing WHAT happens, WHERE it happens, or WHOM it happens to?

ANALYSIS MEANS...

• Separating the text into parts to show how the parts unify to create a whole work.

• Answering the questions HOW? and WHY?

• Including evidence as support for your original idea or argument.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M ANALYZING?

• Are you making an original argument about the text?

• Have you arranged evidence around your points instead of following the author's or plot's order?

• Are you explaining WHY or HOW an aspect of the text is significant?

SUMMARY OR ANALYSIS?

The Great Gatsby is the story of a mysterious millionaire, Jay Gatsby, who lives alone on an island in New York. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the book, but the narrator is Nick Carraway. Nick is Gatsby's neighbor, and he chronicles the story of Gatsby and his circle of friends, beginning with his introduction to the strange man and ending with Gatsby's tragic death.

SUMMARY OR ANALYSIS?

In *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald provides readers with detailed descriptions of the area surrounding East Egg, New York. In fact, Nick Carraway's narration describes the setting with as much detail as the characters in the book. Nick's description of his environment presents the book's themes, symbolizing significant aspects of the post-World War I era. Whereas white and grey symbolize the false purity and decay of the 1920s, the color green offers a symbol of hope.

SUMMARY OR ANALYSIS?

- Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone is about a young boy who finds out he is a wizard. He then goes to a special school, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, to learn magic.

SUMMARY OR ANALYSIS?

- In Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry symbolizes the human desire for someplace to learn all the fanciful things that cannot exist.