A summary is a brief recollection or account of the main points of a piece of writing, action or event. It typically excludes needless details, remaining short and to the point. There are a number of techniques to use for summarising which can help children retain important parts of a passage of text. Having this skill is ideal for assignment or examination preparation.

Here is an example of **un-summarised** text:

“500 years ago, the world was a very different place. European people had only just made contact with the Americans. England and Scotland were separate kingdoms, each with their own royal family. During this time, the Tudor family ruled England and Wales from 1485 to 1603. They encouraged new religious ideas, exploration and colonisation. There were six different monarchs during the 118 years of the Tudor reign.”

This is an example of the same text **summarised**:

"The Tudors reigned England and Wales from 1485 to 1603.

England and Scotland were separate kingdoms.

There were six different monarchs during their reign."

What is the purpose of summarising?

The purpose of summarising allows the reader to digest small snippets of information in a simple structure so that they’re able to understand the basics of the text without needing to read it all.  
Summarising helps students to sort the important information from the irrelevant. As a result, it can improve their memory for the topic and enforce positive habits during reading.

There are many technique variations for summarising information, such as mind maps, bullet points, story retelling and writing frames. These are used to discern the who, what, where and when from a piece of text.

For example:

* Who/What - The Tudor family reign.
* When - 1485 to 1603.
* Where - England and Wales.  
    
  The example above addresses the main points within the text and gives the reader something to expand on.