

Nutshelling

This could also be thought of as a form of summarizing and is sometimes called the “Elevator Pitch” (what you would say on a short elevator ride to convey an idea). A summary is always a shorter form of the larger information where only the main points are included and thoughts are condensed without losing the essence of the idea.

Examples of Phrasing

“Can you put in a nutshell – two or three sentences – what you’re trying to say in this composition?”

OR

“Can you summarize – two or three sentences – your main idea or argument in this essay? Don’t try to say one word-perfect thesis statement, but try to convey the essence of what you’re trying to say using no more than three sentences. You say it, and I’ll write it down for you.”

OR

“Sometimes when you’re revising your essay, it’s a good idea to try a technique called nutshelling. A short time after someone reads an essay, the person only remembers the gist or the key point or one striking example. So it’s a good idea to be very clear about the message you’re trying to convey, and put that message where it is most likely to be remembered: the introduction and the conclusion. So try nutshelling, or summarizing in two to three sentences, the main thing you want your reader to know and remember.”

OR

“Imaging that you are headed for a class and I’m dashing off somewhere when we meet. I say, I hear that you’re writing a paper on something very interesting. Neither of us has time to talk now. Can you tell me in thirty seconds – two or three sentences – what you say in your paper?”

Activity: Create Phrases to Invite Nutshelling

Write out several phrases that you would use:

Try them out with a partner.

Notes and Questions: