Summary Notes

Name _____ Date _____

Topic _____ Period _____

BEFORE

1. Determine your purpose.
2. Preview the document.
3. Prepare to take notes.

DURING

4. Take notes to help you answer these questions:
   - Who is involved?
   - What events, ideas, or people does the author emphasize?
   - What are the causes?
   - What are the consequences or implications?
5. Establish criteria to determine what is important enough to include in the summary.
6. Evaluate information as you read to determine if it meets your criteria for importance.

AFTER

7. Write your summary, which should:
   - Identify the title, author, and topic in the first sentence
   - State the main idea in the second sentence
   - Be shorter than the original article
   - Begin with a sentence that states the topic (see sample)
   - Include a second sentence that states the author's main idea
   - Include 3–5 sentences in which you explain—*in your own words*—the author's point of view
   - Include one or two interesting quotations or details
   - Not alter the author's meaning
   - Organize the ideas in the order in which they appear in the article
   - Use transitions such as "According to" + the author's name to show that you are summarizing someone else's ideas
   - Include enough information so that someone who has not read the article will understand the ideas

Sample verbs: The author:

- argues
- asserts
- concludes
- considers
- discusses
- emphasizes
- examines
- explores
- focuses on
- implies
- mentions
- notes
- points out
- says
- states
- suggests

Sample summary written by Jackie Pirdon

In "Surviving a Year of Sleepless Nights," Jenny Hung discusses success and how it may not be so good. Hung points out that having fun is better than having success and glory. Jenny Hung survived a painful year because of having too many honors classes, getting straight A's, and having a GPA of 4.43. Why would any of this be bad? It's because she wasn't happy. She describes working so hard for something she didn't really want. At one point she says, "There was even a month in winter when I was so self-conscious of my raccoon eyes that I wore sunglasses to school." She says she often stayed up late doing work and studying for tests for her classes. After what she had been through, she decided that it was not her life, and chose her classes carefully once sophomore year came around.