

# PRECIS WRITING

Writing a precis means making an intelligent summary of a long passage. To write a precis one should have a clear understanding of the passage: only then will one be able to include all the essential points and tips and tricks of essay examples in the precis.

## Some general considerations :

Learn with shortening in your words, text of written work useful writing tips, essential thoughts, ideas or fact on how to write a precis writing format with [preciswritingexamples.wordpress.com](http://preciswritingexamples.wordpress.com).

It is generally accepted that a precis should be a third of the passage given. If the original passage has 300 words, the precis should not be more than 110 words in length.

- A precis should be in the language of the precis-writer. The original passage is not to be reduced in length by just removing unimportant or unnecessary sentences and by reproducing the rest as the precis. It should be a brief gist or summary of the passage expressed in the writer's own words.
- A precis should be full i.e. it should contain all the essential thoughts, ideas or fact in the original passage. It should not contain repetitions or observations that are not relevant to the main theme of the original.
- A precis is always written in Reported Speech. The passage given may be a speech made by a person in Direct Speech, but the precis is to be in Reported Speech and in the Third Person and in the Past tense.

## Techniques of Precis – Writing

There three kinds of work to be done in producing a clear and successful precis. They are (1) Reading, (2) Writing and (3) Revision.

### Reading

## **Read the passage carefully**

If one reading is not enough to give you a general idea of its meaning, then read it a second time. As you read, find out the subject or the theme of the passage and what is said about the subject.

It will be a good thing if you find out the lead or the topic sentence. The lead sentence will help you to see the subject clearly. It will also help you to think of a title for the **precis example**.

Further reading may be necessary at this stage to make sure that the details of the passage are also understood. Read the passage more slowly this time, even sentence by sentence, and make sure that everything in the passage is understood. If this is not done, it is likely that you will miss something important, especially if it is expressed by a short phrase or a single word.

Now comes the process of selection. The writer of the precis writing passages has to decide what facts or ideas in the passage are essential and what are of secondary or no importance. Taking the main ideas of the passages as your point of reference, it should not be too difficult to write out the important points in the original in a corner of your **writing** work sheet.

## **Writing**

You should first prepare a draft of the precis, keeping in mind, the need to reduce the original to one-third its length. The main thoughts expressed in the passage, the ideas it contains, the opinions presented and the conclusion arrived at should figure in the rough draft. Unimportant things like the names of people and places and dates should not figure in it.

It may so happen that your first draft is too long or that it sounds rather jerky. Shorten it if necessary and write out a careful second draft during college preparation. Sometimes you may need to work out three or even four drafts, but with reasonable care and concentration, you should normally succeed in producing a good precis writing by the second draft.

Remember that a precis or essay is a connected whole and that it should read smoothly and continuously, Get more advice and tips for more **study tips** for online education sites.

## **Revisioin**

When you have made your second (or final) draft, carefully revise it before writing out the fair copy. Look for many mistakes or slips in grammar or spelling and correct them. Don't forget to give your precis a title for **precis writing examples**.

## Features of a Good Precis

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### + A good Precis:

- » is marked by clarity, brevity and precision.
- » is not just lifting of the sentences from the original. It should be written in the precis writer's own words.
- » is a miniature version of the original passage.
- » must have a logical order and be well-knit and well connected.
- » must have coherence; must use linking devices such as so, therefore, and, because further etc. and must follow the order of ideas of the original.
- » must have a title.
- » is written in reported speech.
- » must not contain any details not found in the original.

### + Do's in a precis :

- » Start your précis by highlighting the main idea of the passage and you should create contextual environment where you can place the necessary points. Once the main idea is established in the précis, you can present the methods, points, facts etc. used by the author of the passage.
- » Compress and clarify a lengthy passage, article, or book, while retaining important concepts, key words, and important data.
- » Remove what is superfluous and retain the core essence of the work.

» Always remember that mentions about history/writing about history should be advisably done in the past tense.

» State the purpose of the research or piece of writing (why was it important to conduct this research or write on this topic?)

**+ Don'ts in a précis:**

» Do not express your own opinion, wish, remark or criticism.

» Do not insert any question in your précis. Its significance, if essential, may be expressed by a statement.

» Do not use abbreviations or contractions.

» Do not be jerky. This suggests that most probably, you have not understood the sense of the passage properly.

# Samples

## Sample 1

It is physically impossible for a well-educated, intellectual, or brave man to make money the chief object of his thoughts just as it is for him to make his dinner the principal object of them. All healthy people like their dinners, but their dinner is not the main object of their lives. So all healthy minded people like making money ought to like it and enjoy the sensation of winning it; it is something better than money.

A good soldier, for instance, mainly wishes to do his fighting well. He is glad of his pay—very properly so and justly grumbles when you keep him ten years without it—till, his main mission of life is to win battles, not to be paid for winning them. So of clergymen. The clergyman's object is essentially baptize and preach not to be paid for preaching. So of doctors. They like fees no doubt—ought to like them; yet if they are brave and well-educated the entire object to their lives is not fees. They on the whole, desire to cure the sick; and if they are good doctors and the choice were fairly to them, would rather cure their patient and lose their fee than kill him and get it. And so with all the other brave

and rightly trained men: their work is first, their fee second—very important always; but still second.

**The Main Points:**

1. Money making is a common attraction in life.
2. But it cannot be the principal aim of well-educated, intellectual brave persons.

**Precis Summary:**

Money-making is a common attraction in life. But it cannot be the principal aim of well educated, cultured and brave man. A brave soldier prizes honour and victory more than his pay. A good clergyman is more interested in the moral welfare of his people than his returns. A doctor (good) values the care of his patient far more than his fees. Thus with all the well-educated, intellectual persons, their work is first, money next.

**Sample 2**

Home is the young, who know "nothing of the world and who would be forlorn and sad, if thrown upon it. It is providential, shelter of the weak and inexperienced, who have to learn as yet to cope with the temptations which lie outside of it. It is the place of training of those who are not only ignorant, but have not yet learnt how to learn, and who have to be taught by careful individual trial, how to set about profiting by the lessons of teacher. And it is the school of elementary studies—not of advances, for such studies alone can make master minds. Moreover, it is the shrine of our best affections, the bosom of our fondest recollections, at spell upon our after life, a stay for world weary mind and soul; wherever we are, till the end comes. Such are attributes or offices of home, and like to these, in one or other sense or measure, are the attributes and offices of a college in a university.

**Precis Summary**

Home shelters the young who are weak and inexperienced and unable to face the temptations in life. It is a centre of their elementary education and a nursery of sweet affections and pleasant memories. Its magic lasts for ever. A weary mind turns to it for rest. Such is the function of a home and in some measure of the university.

**Sample 3**

Teaching is the noblest of professions. A teacher has a sacred duty to perform. It is he on whom rests the responsibility of moulding the character of young children. Apart from developing their intellect, he can inculcate in them qualities of good citizenship, remaining neat and clean, talking decently and sitting properly. These virtues are not easy to be imbibed. Only he who himself leads a life of simplicity, purity and rigid discipline can successfully cultivate these habits in his pupils.

Besides a teacher always remain young. He may grow old in age, but not in spite. Perpetual contact with budding youths keeps him happy and cheerful. There are moments when domestic worries weigh heavily on his mind, but the delightful company of innocent children makes him overcome his transient moods of despair.

### **Precis Summary**

Teaching is the noblest profession. A teacher himself leading a simple, pure and disciplined life can mould the character of the young children and make them neat and good mannered citizens. Besides he remains every young forgetting his own domestic worries in the constant company of the young.

### **Sample 4**

English education and English language have done immense goods to India, inspite of their glaring drawbacks. The notions of democracy and self-government are the born of English education. Those who fought and died for mother India's freedom were nursed in the cradle of English thought and culture. The West has made contribution to the East. The history of Europe has fired the hearts of our leaders. Our struggle for freedom has been inspired by the struggles for freedom in England, America and France. If our leaders were ignorant of English and if they had not studied this language, how could they have been inspired by these heroic struggles for freedom in other lands? English, therefore, did us great good in the past and if properly studied will do immense good in future.

English is spoken throughout the world. For international contact our comrherce and trade, for the development of our practical ideas, for the scientific studies, English-is indispensable "English is very rich in literature," our own literature has been made richer by this foreign language. It will really be a fatal day if we altogether forget Shakespeare, Milton, Keats and Shaw.

## **Precis Summary**

Notwithstanding its various defects English education has done great good to India. The ideas of democracy and self-government are its gifts. Nursed on English education the Indian leaders were inspired by the Western thought, culture and freedom struggles. They fought for and won their motherland's freedom. Being spoken thought-out the world English is necessary for international contact, trade, commerce and science. English is rich in literature; its master mind cannot be neglected.

## **Sample 5**

When we survey our lives and efforts we soon observe that almost the whole of our actions and desires are bound up with the existence of other human beings. We notice that whole nature resembles that of the social animals. We eat food that others have produced, wear clothes that others have made, live in houses that others have built. The greater part of our knowledge and beliefs has been passed on to us by other people though the medium of a language which others have created. Without language and mental capacities, we would have been poor indeed comparable to higher animals.

We have, therefore, to admit that we owe our principal knowledge over the least to the fact of living in human society. The individual if left alone from birth would remain primitive and beast like in his thoughts and feelings to a degree that we can hardly imagine. The individual is what he is and has the significance that he has, not much in virtue of the individuality, but rather as a member of a great human community, which directs his material and spiritual existence from the cradle to grave.

## **Precis Summary**

Being social animals, human beings have their actions and desires bound up with society. In matter of food, clothes, knowledge and belief they are interdependent. They use language created by others. Without language their mental power would not grow. They are superior to beast, because they live in human society. An individual life left alone from birth would grow utterly beast like. So human society and not individuality guides man's material and spiritual existence.