

## Simplify & Summarize

### Why Simplify and Summarize?

Simplifying and summarizing helps your readers focus on your main ideas — without getting lost in details. Putting the key points first lets readers quickly understand your message, prepares their mind for what's next, and makes your communication clearer.

This benefits all learners, including people with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL), and emerging readers.

### How to Simplify Text

Follow these easy tips to make your writing clear and easy to understand:

#### **Sentence Structure:**

- ❖ Focus on one idea per paragraph
- ❖ Use simple sentences: Subject + Verb + Object
- ❖ Keep sentences short (25 words or less)
- ❖ Break long sentences into two or more
- ❖ Use active voice, not passive
- ❖ Keep verb tenses consistent

#### **Vocabulary:**

- ❖ Avoid jargon, slang, and technical terms
- ❖ Use common, everyday words
- ❖ Remove unnecessary words (like “very”)
- ❖ Replace complex words with simpler ones
- ❖ Keep names and labels consistent

#### **Structure:**

- ❖ Use lists to organize ideas
- ❖ Add headings and subheadings that explain content

## How to Summarize Text

Start your text with a clear, simple summary that a seventh grader could understand. This acts like a roadmap for your reader.

- ❖ Identify the most important points
- ❖ Rewrite them using common words
- ❖ Use a list if possible
- ❖ Check your summary with a readability tool for clarity

Try creating a concept map or graphic organizer to show ideas visually. Tools like Zoom Whiteboard can help with this.

## Helpful Tools

### Microsoft Copilot

An AI tool that simplifies text to a middle-school reading level.

Use this prompt in Copilot: “Convert the following text into controlled language used by Voice of America Learning English.” Make sure you’re logged in with your RCC account for data protection.

Clear, simple communication helps everyone learn better. Keep C.A.L.M. and simplify!

**We’re here to support your accessibility efforts!**

### Need Help?

Call 804-333-6789 or email  
rcchelp@rappahannock.edu