

DAT315. Summarization Exercise

Choose a CS topic. This can be an article, or a subject from a technical talk (especially from the early weeks), or from a research seminar you may have attended, or any other subject of current interest. The scope can be broader or more specialized, but your summary must not be shallow.

For those who want to start from an article, we already provide a list of recommended articles. They are pioneering or influential articles, or introductions to major fields.

If you pick another article or theme, your choice must be approved by the examiners before you start. For instance, chosen articles must subject-wise be of major interest and also well written – we want you to learn from good examples!

Your task is to write a summary of the topic:

1. First imagine an interested and intelligent layman. Explain on a high level what the subject is, and why it is important for others and for society. (The subject may have immediate applications, or it may contribute to a larger field of science being relevant for society – in any case, where do you see the connection?) In the case of historical articles also take the publication years into account, argue why the subject is still relevant, and what has changed since then. – This part should be about one A4 page long.
2. Then, for the main part imagine a reader that has a general CS background and mathematical skills, but has no deep knowledge of the particular subject. Explain the main concepts and contents. Make clear what problems are raised and how they are approached. Help the imagined reader to get into the subject. Your summary must be self-contained and comprehensible, and relevant key literature must be cited. Add details if they are enlightening, and as far as space allows. – The recommended length of your summary is about five A4 pages (excluding the bibliography). If you need more space, clearly mark the material beyond the space limit as Appendix. We can read appendices only superficially.

Mention your name and personal number on the first page.

About the Deadlines

- Start as early as possible and work continuously, especially with literature investigation and structuring of your summary.
- It is highly recommended to submit early (perhaps incomplete) drafts at any time and to ask for writing advice. Also, reading each others' texts ("peer review") can be helpful.
- Only the final version will eventually be graded. It is allowed to change the subject before the final deadline, for instance, if you realize later that you like another subject better.
- The final deadline can be slightly extended upon request, *but only if you have a particular reason* (for instance, if you decided on a subject from the later talks and need a few more days).
- If the final version has major shortcomings, we will request improvements and clarifications before you can pass. Then re-submit at your earliest convenience. But make sure that you address all issues mentioned in the feedback.

Some Advice

- To fully understand the subject you may have to fetch more information or seek help.
- If you summarize an article, also take some closely related articles into account, e.g., by following the citations. If you summarize a subject from a talk, then seek and collect relevant key literature, too, and cite them.
- You can skip many technical details, but you should always figure out the main points.
- Provide coherent text, from your own perspective. (It would be totally pointless to merely cobble together passages taken from original articles.) In general, stick to all applicable rules of good scientific writing learned from the course material. Pay special attention to citing literature in a proper way. Clearly distinguish what is taken from the sources and what is added by yourself.
- Feel free to comment on everything: on the subject itself, on proposed concepts and methods, and also on the readability of the articles read (e.g., what was helpful, and what made the reading difficult).
- We will never evaluate personal opinions expressed in your submissions. But what we evaluate is: demonstrated depth of understanding, factual correctness, structure, clarity, coherence, scientific argumentation, proper citations.