Directions for Writing a Summary for Your Response

1. Begin by telling what you read, who wrote it, and how many minutes or pages you read in that time.
2. Introduce your characters--tell who was in your story and something about them. Do not just list names of characters, that is not enough information for your audience. Include words that tell or infer their character traits. Only discuss characters that were an important part of what you read during your thirty minutes.
3. Retell the important parts of what you read during your 30 minutes in a sequential order. Include your setting in this part. Use transition words like *in the beginning, next, finally,* or *at the end of the chapter.* Do not just list details; they need to be connected to retell what you read.
4. When someone reads your summary they should have a good idea of **who** is in the story, **what** important events happened during the time you read and **where** those events took place. Only use pronouns after you have identified the noun being replaced. Do not leave your audience wondering what was happening.

**Examples of a Summary**

**Example One:** I just finished reading thirty minutes of The Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo. The characters in the part I read today included Despereaux, a lovelorn mouse, a clumsy serving maid named Miggery Sow, the kind and caring Princess Pea and an evil rat named Roscuro. The story began upstairs in the princess’s room of the castle. Miggery pointed a knife at Pea and told her she needed to follow her to the dungeon so they could switch places. Roscuro got upset that Mig gave away his plan. At the end of the chapter Roscuro took over and kidnapped Pea and took her to the dungeon.

**Example Two:** Today I read Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor for about 40 minutes. The main characters in the story were Marty Preston, a twelve year old boy who loves animals; Marty’s dad, Ray Preston who is a no-nonsense type of person and Judd Travers, a neighbor that Marty doesn’t like because he is unkind to animals. Where I first started reading, a stray beagle has followed Marty home while he was off walking up near the old Shiloh schoolhouse in the rural West Virginia town where his family lives. Marty believes that the dog has been abused by the way he acts when Marty tries to pet him. Even though his parents say they cannot afford any pets he really wished the dog could be his and he secretly names him Shiloh. When Marty’s dad comes home, he tells him the dog belongs to Judd Travers and they have to return him. At the end of the chapter Marty and his dad return the dog and Judd kicks it for running off. Marty knows he has to save Shiloh.