

1st Lecture

Précis Writing

Meaning of précis

Precision/To shorten/to summarize/To cut it short

Essentials of Précis-writing

- **Must be one-third of its length**
- **Should be in the own words of the précis-writer**
- **Avoid borrowing sentences of the original passage**
- **Original words of the given passage should also be avoided**

➤ Continuity from the first idea to next idea

'Poverty' is an economic condition of a person or the whole family. A person living in poverty becomes unable to meet basic needs. Poor people are depressed and deprived. It affects a person and his social life badly. It is very common to see poverty. Poverty is the root cause of most problems in society. ~~(Education is a process of learning through which we acquire knowledge. It enlightens, empowers, and creates a positive development.~~ Hunger, illness, and death are the primary outcomes of poverty. Poverty puts people away from their fundamental necessities

➤ Should be in proper sequence (Same Order)

I visited various cities of Pakistan last month. First, I went to Lahore then I moved to Karachi, later on, I proceeded to Peshawar and eventually I visited Islamabad.

~~I visited Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi and finally Peshawar last month.~~

- **Must be meaningful and self-contained (Giving Complete Message)**
- **Must be in simple words**
- **Must be in one paragraph**
- **No direct speech**

Original passage

Ahmad said, "My parents will be there at 9am."

Précis

~~Ahmad said, "My parents will be there at 9am."~~

Indirect: Ahmad said that his parents would be there at 9am

According to Ahmad his parents would be there at 9am

- **Remove the following figure of speeches**

a) Quotations

~~— "Only the dead have seen the end of war" Plato~~

b) Stories

c) Examples

d) Remarks

- **Use active voice sentences** (Not hard and fast rule)

Active Voice: She writes a letter.

Passive Voice: ~~A letter is written by her.~~

- **Should be no 1st and 2nd person pronouns**
- **Use the same tense**
- **Do not change key words**

- **Do not inculcate your own thoughts**
- **Do not use idioms, proverbs or sayings**
- **Do not borrow sentences of the passage**
- **Avoid exceeding the required length**
- **Count the words**
- **Do not make grammatical mistakes**

Attempting Précis

- **Reading the précis thrice and making three rough drafts**
- **Distinguishing the important thoughts from unimportant ones**
- **Underlining the relevant sentences**
- **1st Reading – Overview**
- **2nd Reading – Complete Operation**
- **3rd Reading – United Whole**
- **Find the main Idea (1st and last lines)**
- **Interpret difficult words or terms in the context of the passage**

Rules for Making Title of a Précis

- **Relate the title to the main idea**
- **Must be in form of “Phrase”**
- **Length: 5 to 7 words**
- **Title must not comprised of one word**
- **Make three titles but opt only one title**
- **Three Titles a) Major b) Minor**
- **Don't Cap the Caps**

Practicing Précises

1st Précis

Trees give shade for the benefit of others, and while they themselves stand in the sun and endure the scorching heat, they produce the fruit of which others profit. The character of good men is like that of trees. What is the use of this perishable body if no use is made of it for the benefit of mankind? Sandalwood, the more it is rubbed, the more scent does it yield. Sugarcane, the more it is peeled and cut up into pieces, the more juice does it produce. The men who are noble at heart do not lose their qualities even in losing their lives. What matters whether men praise them or not? What difference does it make whether they die at this moment or whether lives are prolonged? Happen what may, those who tread in the right path will not set foot in any other. Life itself is unprofitable to a man who does not live for others. To live for the mere sake of living one's life is to live the life of dog and crows. Those who lay down their lives for the sake of others will assuredly dwell forever in a world of bliss.

2nd Précis

Manto was a victim of some kind of social ambivalence that converged on self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and mental obtuseness. His detractors branded him as vulgar and obscene and implicated him into a long-drawn legal battle questioning the moral validity of his writings. Without being deterred by their negative tactics, he remained firm in his commitment to exploring the stark realities of life offensive to the conservative taste of some self-styled purists. In the line of Freud, he sought to unravel the mysteries of sex not in an abstract, non-earthly manner but in a palpable, fleshy permutation signifying his deep concern for the socially disabled and depressed classes of society, like petty wage-earners, pimps, and prostitutes.

For Manto, man is neither an angel nor a devil, but a mix of both. His middle and lower middle class characters think, feel and act like human beings. Without feigning virtuosity, he was able to strike a rapport with his readers on some of the most vital socio-moral issues concerning them. As a realist, he was fully conscious of the yawning gap between appearance and reality; in fact, nothing vexed him more than a demonstrable duality in human behaviour at different levels of the social hierarchy. He had an unjaundiced view of man's faults and follies. As a literary artist, he treated vulgarity discreetly --- without ever sounding vulgar in the process. Like Joyce, Lawrence, and Caldwell, in Manto's work too, men and women of the age find their own restlessness accurately mirrored. And like them, Manto was also 'raised above his own self by his sombre enthusiasm'.

- 3rd Precis

English education and English language have done immense goods to India, in spite 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 commerce 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.

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