**How to balance summary and analysis**

In an analytical essay, summary and analysis go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other. If there's too much summary, you're just retelling without adding anything new. If there's too much analysis, you'll leave your reader wondering what you're talking about. And finding the right balance between the two can be tricky.

Here's how you can make them work together in an analytical essay. Say you're writing about this public service ad from the World Wildlife Fund. Readers want to hear your ideas but they can't understand your ideas if they don't understand the details of the text or image you're analyzing. Summary helps your readers get their bearings so they can appreciate your analysis.

When you summarize, you use an objective, neutral tone. In this case, just describe the image without adding commentary. Start with a basic description. Then add details so your readers can really picture the ad. This summary provides context and foundation. You'll question these details to build your analysis. Now it's time to give your take and balance out the summary sentences with corresponding analytical ones.

For example, you might pair the detail about the graffiti with analytical sentences that show you working out its possible purpose. And you might pair the detail about the single line of copy with sentences in which you wrestle with how the ad focuses the viewer's attention. These sentences are all part of your analysis.

The analytical sentences respond to the summary sentences by offering insights about specific parts of the ad, and then the ad as a whole. By including details about what a text or image says or shows, then analyzing what each detail means and why it matters, you strike a good balance between summary and analysis. That'll really kick your essay into gear.