

SECTION 3: SUMMARIZE WRITTEN TEXT

Read the passage below and summarize it using one sentence. You have 10 minutes to finish this task. Your response will be judged on the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the key points in the passage.

How do we measure efficiency? To economists – or to a certain type of economist – it is simply a question of profitability, even when it concerns what most people consider a social provision such as public transport. What is lost when railway lines and bus routes to small, out-of-the-way communities are cut in the name of efficiency? After all, if a line or a route is only used occasionally by a few people, it would be much cheaper to rip up the lines and let everyone use their cars.

For many governments, the way to turn inefficient national services into profitable businesses has been to sell off these services – and their responsibilities – to private enterprises. Cost, in terms of profit and loss, is of course an important factor, but other factors need to be considered when dealing with the livelihoods of whole communities, however small. Among these are the social, environmental, human and cultural costs incurred by cutting off more remote communities from greater opportunities, including economic activities that benefit society as a whole.

Taking away such links – the usual result of privatization – may well lead to economic benefits in the short term, but, as the last twenty to thirty years have shown, also leads to long-term social and cultural damage. Of course, no business with its eye on profits is going to “waste” money supporting underused services. Only large collective bodies such as national and local governments can do that. These services are, after all, a social provision, not businesses.

.....
.....
.....
.....

SECTION 4: SUMMARIZE WRITTEN TEXT

Read the passage below and summarize it using one sentence. You have 10 minutes to finish this task. Your response will be judged on the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the key points in the passage.

Is the purpose of history to promote a strong national identity and support national myths? Certainly, it has been used in this way for centuries, and this is often reflected in the history curriculum. We can all remember history at school as being a matter of learning lots of facts and dates, and long lists of kings and queens – a grand narrative of how we got from a not so civilized past to the great nation we are today. Putting aside the fact that national identity is a complex and divisive question – especially in countries like the UK, which is comprised of several nationalities – this approach to history emphasizes a broad understanding, rather than a detailed understanding.

Yet history is, or should be, a critical, skeptical discipline: some historians see their work as disproving myths, demolishing orthodoxies and exposing politically-motivated narratives which claim to be objective. What students need to develop are more critical and analytical skills; in other words, to think for themselves. They can do this by studying certain historical problems in depth. This involves being critical of the narratives presented by historians and skeptical of the myths preserved in the national memory.

.....
.....
.....
.....