Writing Concisely

Task 1: Summarising
Step 1:
- **Read the following passage and underline what you consider is the essential information.**
- **Then rewrite the title in plainer, simpler English.**

Step 2:
- **Now try to write a summary of the passage using the information you have identified above.**
- **Your summary should be a third of the length of the original (298 words), ie. about 100-140 words.**

"Touch and go for mobile users."

Most people under 25 would rather eat their own heads than enter anything longer than a friend's name on their mobile. And yet if mobile commerce is to succeed, as many believe it will, we will need better ways of inputting text than fiddling with nine tiny keys.

So far, higher portability has meant a poorer input interface, but improvements are at hand. What is quickly becoming a global standard for mobile-phone input, T9, has removed some of the stress. But for truly simple access, quicker interfaces are a must. Pen-sized scanners that link to mobiles, phone digits linked to webpages and speech recognition devices are among the input devices that developers are currently experimenting with.

Meanwhile the next-generation wireless devices are now in development by Japanese electronic giants. Despite the fact that for various reasons, Japanese phones are useless outside the country, Japan's mobile technology has developed rapidly and will dominate the production of the much-hyped globally usable G3 mobile phones.

The country's biggest handset producer, Matsushita, trading abroad as Panasonic, is also largely behind the miniaturisation methods that have resulted in a phone the size of a woman's powder compact. The company's development lab in Yokohama is now busy perfecting alternative keying methods for these tiny devices.

The best way forward would be the reinvention of the human interface according to Toshiro Iizuka, chief product designer for Matsushita. In the meantime, Iizuka and his team have come up with a fusion of the Game Boy and a mobile handset. By holding the pad with both hands, and pressing buttons on the top with your thumbs and on the bottom with your fingers, all kinds of data can be entered. The inspiration behind this came from the designers watching a saxophonist play, and gamers at local arcades. (298 words)

(Adapted from: Michael Fitzpatrick, *The Age*, 6/3/2001).