

Helpful Hints for Essay 1

Please read through these slides to get a feel for and examples of what I am expecting for Essay 1

Reminders about the Summary Section of Essay 1

- Remember the summary is without opinion. You should be summarizing the piece, which means it is free from any opinions.
- You must have attributive tags throughout the summary. What are attributive tags? “According to...” “As Joseph states...” “Joseph continues...” You need to be sure to have these attributive tags so your reader knows that you are not stating your opinion but you’re referencing the text directly.

More on the Summary Section

- Your summary should be in chronological order, so summarize from start to finish.
- Your summary should have the author's name and title of their piece in the first part of the summary. It is wise to also include the date of publication and where/what it was published in at the start of summary.
- If you decide to include exact phrases from the text or sentences, be sure to enclose the quoted material in quotation marks and include an in-text citation. For more information about quoting and including citations, check pp. 221–227 in the textbook.

An Example of a Summary Paragraph

In the 2002 *Newsweek* essay “Our Youth Should Serve,” Steven Muller proposes a voluntary youth corps that would address America’s need for social services and benefit our nation’s youth. Muller, a former university president, believes the talent of too many bright, idealistic, but inexperienced high school graduates are wasted because the students must choose too soon between a low-paying job or more education with an undefined goal. Muller argues that a voluntary, nonpartisan civilian youth corps would provide cheap labor for short-term public service projects while offering young people job training, work experience, assistance toward post-secondary education, and a sense of self-esteem.

The Thesis Statement

- You should have a very clear thesis for your analysis. Either at the end of the summary or beginning of the analysis, your thesis statement should serve as a signal to your reader what the analysis will prove.
- The thesis should be a wide-view rendering of the accomplishments and/or shortcomings of the essay.
- This thesis should note the strengths and weaknesses of the argument and how it's constructed, but, in the end, you should have a definitive assessment of the argument's overall success.

Reminders about the Analysis Section of Essay 1

- While the summary is the cut and dry, objective section of your essay, the analysis section is a showing of your ability to take apart a text and find the strengths and weaknesses of it.
- When you find something well argued and carefully researched, point this out. Quote the material, summarize it, agree with it, argue against it. BUT, before you begin writing your analysis, you should have a very clear idea of your feeling on the essay itself.
- Do you think the author's thesis is proven? Do you think the author thought of all sides to the issue?

More on the Analysis Section

- If you find something being oversimplified, overgeneralized, aggressive, or anything else, point this out. It is your job to be the investigator and find the weaknesses of the essay.
- However, it is also important that you find the powerful sections of the essay; for example, are there strong words or images that create a persuasiveness somehow?
- Are *pathos*, *ethos*, and/or *logos* used to some effect so as to create a response in the reader that strengthens the writer's point?

An Example of a Analysis Paragraph

Takaki states that the media portrays Asian Americans in an “excessively, even provocative” manner (117), but he fails to cite a specific media source leading me to believe that this is only his personal opinion. Without offering evidence of media’s portrayal of Asian Americans, Takaki’s statements lose believability. By failing to provide iron-clad proof, his statements lose credibility. The same strategy is used when Takaki points out that many politicians ask that if Asian Americans can be successful, why African Americans can’t do the same (117). Takaki neglects to mention which politicians made these statements; it could have been a small town mayor for all I know. To prove his points, Takaki should have mentioned a few quotes from political heavy-hitters, maybe some revered and well-respected figures who people relate to and trust. While it is understandable that the author is trying to portray the reality of America’s perception of Asian Americans, and many of his points are strong, stil, they are not necessarily believable without some sort of validation and evidence.

Helpful Hints for Essay 1



Examine! Scrutinize! Consider! Evaluate! Analyze! Assess!