**First Writing Assignment: Summary**

**College English 102**

For your first writing assignment, you will be composing a two-page, double-spaced summary of ONE article that addresses your issue for the semester. Since the summary will be two pages, the article you choose to summarize should be substantial. Use the academic search engines provided to locate a scholarly article.

**Content:**

You will be writing a longer summary that combines a thesis sentence, sub points, counterarguments, and carefully chosen details (see Ch. 9 in *Practical Argument).* Remember, when writing a summary, you want to be objective (as objective as possible), complete, and as brief as possible while still including necessary details. Always check your summary against the original to ensure you are writing everything in your own language and not forgetting anything important.

**Format:**

Your summary should be MLA-formatted and two double-spaced pages.

Make sure to reference the title of the article, as well as the author, in the opening of your summary/thesis statement. Include brief direct quotations—single words, phrases, or portions of sentences embedded in your own writing. This summary should be 90% your own language.

**Assessment:**

Refer to the rubric to see what criteria must be met to earn each grade level. This will be a 50 point writing assignment.

**Process:**

Due on Monday. 1/12: Choose your article and complete the following :

* Read the article you select carefully. You might have to skim several articles to decide which lends itself to a two-page summary. Determine the structure and author’s purpose. If you have questions or confusion, mark that in the margin. Highlight or underline important information sparingly the first time through.
* Reread! This time, you should divide the passage into sections or stages of thought. You can use brackets. This does NOT necessarily mean you are dividing by paragraph—sometimes there could be 3, 4, 5 paragraphs in one section. Divide by topic rather than by format. LABEL in the margins of the article each section or stage of thought—this can be brief. UNDERLINE key ideas and terms. Jot down notes in the margin.
* Write a one-sentence summary (on a separate sheet of paper) for each section that you labeled in step 2. These should be in your own words completely.
* Write a thesis of the ENTIRE article—one to two sentences. It should express the central idea of the whole passage.

**1/12:** Email COMPLETE rough draft to me by end of class.

**1/13:** Peer review: You’ll be given a listing of errors found in the rough drafts. Help your classmates find and fix them. Then complete the revisions in class. Conference with me during peer review/editing time.

**1/14:** Final summaries due, emailed to me by the end of the day. Summarize the summary to include in your annotated bibliography, and add analytical, critical comments as necessary.

**Academic Summary Grading Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Excellent (5)** | **Satisfactory (4)** | **Unsatisfactory (3)** | **Points** |
| **Purpose/Audience**: The summary convinces the reader that you have read the article closely and understand its argument because the summary accurately represents the author's central claim and key supporting points. The summary does not merely list the main ideas but shows how the reasons support the claim. The summary avoids specific details & examples, rather focuses on the argument. | The summary convinces your reader that you have read and understood the points of the article.  It could, perhaps, improve in showing the connection between the main claim and how it is supported.  The summary may have some extra, unneeded details from the article.  It is accurate. | Your reader may question whether you have read the article closely because its argument is not clearly presented.  There may be inaccuracies or subjective statements (opinions, judgments).  The summary may provide a list of points rather than any sense of a claim supported by reasons and evidence. | **X5** |
| **Objectivity:** The summary remains focused on reporting the argument objectively. The summary avoids anything subjective (such as personal reactions or judgments). | You may use some language that reveals your opinions, but, in general, the summary is objective. | You have not objectively represented what the author wrote.  Your opinions and judgments are included in the summary. | **X2** |
| **Attribution:** The summary cites the author, title, date and publication of the article. The summary writer uses author tags so that it remains clear that he/she is reporting the author's ideas and words. | Generally, your reader can tell that you are referring to the author's words.  More frequent or varied author tags would improve your summary. | It is not clear when you are referring to the article and when you are presenting your own ideas.   | **X1** |
| **Quotes & Paraphrases:** The summary contains both paraphrases and quotes. The paraphrased and quoted passages are chosen appropriately and integrated into the summary. | The summary needs a better balance of paraphrasing and quoting or to choose and integrate quotes more effectively.   | The summary is mostly quotes strung together, or there is little material used from the article, or the material used is poorly chosen and integrated. | **X1** |
| **Conventions & Style:** The writer maintains an objective tone throughout the summary. The summary is carefully proofread and edited for accuracy and clarity. | While the writer maintains an objective tone throughout the summary, the summary would benefit from careful proofreading and editing for accuracy and clarity.  | The tone is inappropriate for this context and/or the document is unclear and/or inaccurate.  Attention to conventions is needed to avoid alienating or frustrating readers. | **X1** |

**Total = \_\_\_\_\_/50**