

Summary and Response Essay

Purpose: Summarize subject matter and key ideas
Respond to Content

Preparation:

1. Read and annotate, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" By Nicholas Carr
2. Participate in group "Mining for Information" activity
3. Prepare a "Reading the Text" graphic organizer

Writing Task:

Write a 3, no more than 4 page, typed, double spaced summary and response essay.
The student writer will...

1. Clearly state a thesis that shows whether they agree or disagree with Carr's argument.
2. Produce an introduction, body (3-4), and conclusion
3. Practice paraphrasing
4. Practice integrating select quotations
5. Practice using a specific organizational pattern (block style or point by point style).

See Rubric for grading criteria.

Overview

A summary/response is a natural consequence of the reading and annotating process. In this type of essay, writers capture the controlling idea and the supporting details of a text and respond by agreeing or disagreeing and then explaining why.

The first step after active reading is writing a summary. Writing summaries is a common practice in college. They pull together the general conclusions and approaches of experts who have done research in a particular subject. Summaries should be written in your own words although you could include *short* quoted excerpts if you decide the author's or speaker's words summarize a point most precisely. Try to use pertinent quotations from the source, working them in gracefully where appropriate. Probably the best way to write a summary is ask yourself the following questions:

- What issues are described, explained or resolved in this work?
- What is the controlling idea?
- What are the supporting details?
- What results or conclusions are made?
- What opinion does the author want readers to keep in mind about this topic?
- What information does the author use to convince readers?

After you have written your summary, double-check to be sure that all facts you included are correct.

Summary Writing Guidelines

To move from an outline to a draft of a summary, follow these guidelines:

- a) State the author's name and the title of the text you're summarizing in the first 1-2 sentences of the summary.
- b) Express the author's main idea in your own words in the first 1-2 sentences of the summary (no more than three words in a row from the text you're summarizing.)
- c) Identify main points that support the main idea. Write the main points in your own words (no more than three words in a row from the text.)
- d) Use minor details (e.g. examples, explanations and specific details) only when needed to support the main points.
- e) Arrange the ideas so the organization and transition words in the summary paragraph reflect the original text.
- f) Show that you are summarizing someone else's ideas with expressions like "According to" + author's name or author's last name + a signal verb.

| | Some Signal Verbs | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------|------------|--|
| asserts | | explores | notes | |
| considers | | contends | points out | |
| discusses | | maintains | compares | |
| examines | | mentions | suggests | |

Preparing a Response

Response, in this case, connects personal experiences, ideas, observations, and/or opinions with the article you have been actively reading. It provides you the opportunity to explain your thoughts about the author's argument. To do this well, you need to consider how you "see" the article's main idea in the real world, how it influences you or others, and what are its causes, effects, and potential solutions. When writing your response, think about how you would finish the following sentences...

Summary Response Essay Outline Patterns

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Introduction: Introduce the article by providing the title of the article and the author's name, and perhaps a small amount of information about the author.</p> <p>State the thesis for the essay</p> <p>State your thesis for your essay</p> | <p>Introduction: Introduce the article by providing the title of the article and the author's name, and perhaps a small amount of information about the author.</p> <p>State the thesis for the essay</p> <p>State your thesis for your essay</p> |
| Write the Summary point by point | Summarize each point and then provide your response to that point |
| Write the Response point by point | |
| Conclusion: End the essay by making a final statement about the essay and the author. | Conclusion: End the essay by making a final statement about the essay and the author. |
| Outline #1: Block Pattern | Outline #2: Point Pattern |
| <p>I. Introduction (1 paragraph)</p> <p>II. Summary: (1 paragraph) Remember you are only summarizing (you may have fewer or more than these 4 points)</p> <p>A. Main Point 1 B. Main Point 2 C. Main Point 3 D. Main Point 4</p> <p>III. Response Section (3-5 paragraphs)</p> <p>A. Respond to Main Point 1 by stating whether you agree or disagree and offer explanation and proof to defend your point of view.</p> <p>B. Respond to Main Point 2 in same manner, providing a good transition (agree/disagree)</p> <p>C. Respond to Main Point 3 in same manner (agree/disagreed)</p> <p>D. Respond to Main Point 4 in same manner (agree/disagreed)</p> <p>IV. Conclusion</p> | <p>I. Introduction</p> <p>II. Main point 1</p> <p>A. Summarize Point 1 B. Respond to Point 1 (agree/disagree) Support your statement with explanation</p> <p>III. Main Point 2</p> <p>A. Summarize Point 2 B. Respond to Point 2 (agree/disagree) Support your statement with explanation</p> <p>IV. Main Point 3</p> <p>A. Summarize Point 3 B. Respond to Point 3 (agree/disagree) Support your statement with explanation</p> <p>V. Main Point 3</p> <p>A. Summarize Point 3 B. Respond to Point 3 (agree/disagree) Support your statement with explanation</p> <p>VI. Conclusion</p> |