

Child Development 11 – Dr. Smith

Assignment	Professional Journal Article – Rhetorical Précis																																	
Due	<input type="checkbox"/> Hard copy in class before class begins <input type="checkbox"/> Typed rhetorical précis + FULL article (stapled/article link)																																	
Task & Purpose	You are to synthesize a professional journal article into a 4-sentence paragraph. The purpose is to summarize a text by looking closely at an author’s language.																																	
Directions	<p>1. Select, print, read, and annotate an article from any professional journal focused on a topic covered in this course and is of interest to you. → Resource: Google Scholar or www.eric.ed.gov After typing in your search topic, check “peer reviewed only” and “full text available.”</p> <p>2. Write a 4-sentence paragraph, also known as the <i>rhetorical précis</i>. → Resource: Google “<i>Rhetorical Précis Frame - sdsuwriting</i>” (see attachment)</p> <p>3. Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ typed ○ font size: 12-point ○ font: times new roman ○ double-spaced ○ staple your article behind the typed rhetorical précis 																																	
	Name _____ Course _____ Class day/time _____ Assignment _____																																	
Scoring Guide	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Advanced: 5 points</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Proficient: 4 points</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Developing: 3 points</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Foundational: 2 points</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Sentence 1</td> <td>The sentence begins with a dependent clause correctly identifying all of the following: the author’s full name, genre of the work, year of publishing followed by a “that” clause with an accurate paraphrase and/or quoting of the overall message of the piece.</td> <td>The sentence begins with a dependent clause identifying most of the following: author’s name, genre, year of publishing, followed by a “that” clause with a somewhat accurate or partial paraphrase and/or direct quoting of the overall message of the piece.</td> <td>The sentence may or may not begin with a dependent clause only adequately identifying most of the following: author’s name, genre, year of publishing, followed by a “that” clause with only an adequate paraphrase or quoting of the overall message of the piece.</td> <td>The sentence does not or attempts to create a dependent clause containing only some of the following: author’s name, genre, year of publishing. 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<p>25 points =</p> <p>(assignment must have article attached or linked)</p> <p>*Late assignments are penalized 10% per class day it is late.</p>																																		

RHETORICAL PRÉCIS*

A rhetorical précis differs from a summary in that it is a less neutral, more analytical condensation of both the content and method of the original text. If you think of a summary as primarily a brief representation of what a text says, then you might think of the rhetorical précis as a brief representation of what a text both says and does. Although less common than a summary, a rhetorical précis is a particularly useful way to sum up your understanding of how a text works rhetorically (*Reading Rhetorically*, 62).

► The Structure of a Rhetorical Précis

Sentence One: Name of author, genre, and title of work, date in parentheses; a rhetorically active verb; and a THAT clause containing the major assertion or thesis in the text.

Sentence Two: An explanation of how the author develops and supports the thesis.

Sentence Three: A statement of the author's apparent purpose, followed by an "in order to" phrase.

Sentence Four: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

► Rhetorical Précis Sentence Starters

Sentence One (Who/What?)

_____ in the _____ , _____ ,
(Author) (A) (Title)
_____ that _____
(B)
_____.

Sentence Two (How?)

_____ supports his/her _____ by _____
(Author's Last Name) (B) (C)

_____.

Sentence Three (Why?)

The author's purpose is to _____
(D)
_____ in order to / so that _____.

Sentence Four (To Whom?)

The author writes in _____ tone for _____
(E) (audience)

Word Bank – some possibilities

A	B	C	D	E
article, book review, essay, column, editorial	argues, argument, asserts, assertion, suggests, suggestion, claims, questions, explains, explanation	comparing, contrasting, telling, explaining, illustrating, demonstrating, defining, describing, listing	show point out suggest inform persuade convince	Formal informal sarcastic humorous contemptuous

(*by Micah Jendian)

Précis Examples

A. Sheridan Baker, in his essay "Attitudes" (1966), asserts that writers' attitudes toward their subjects, their audiences, and themselves determine to a large extent the quality of their prose. Baker supports this assertion by showing examples of how inappropriate attitudes can make writing unclear, pompous, or boring, concluding that a good writer "will be respectful toward his audience, considerate toward his readers, and somehow amiable toward human failings" (58). His purpose is to make his readers aware of the dangers of negative attitudes in order to help them become better writers. He establishes an informal relationship with his audience of college students who are interested in learning to write "with conviction" (55).

B. In her article "Who Cares if Johnny Can't Read?" (1997), Larissa MacFarquhar asserts that Americans are reading more than ever despite claims to the contrary and that it is time to reconsider why we value reading so much, especially certain kinds of "high culture" reading. MacFarquhar supports her claims about American reading habits with facts and statistics that compare past and present reading practices, and she challenges common assumptions by raising questions about reading's intrinsic value. Her purpose is to dispel certain myths about reading in order to raise new and more important questions about the value of reading and other media in our culture. She seems to have a young, hip, somewhat irreverent audience in mind because her tone is sarcastic, and she suggests that the ideas she opposes are old-fashioned positions.

C. Douglas Park, in his essay "Audiences" (1994), suggests that teaching audience is an essential but elusive aspect of teaching writing. Park develops this idea by exploring different definitions of audience, looking at how a text itself can delineate audience, and then discussing specific strategies writers can use to create contexts for audience. His purpose is to help teachers of writing understand and teach the different aspects of audience in order that they can help students improve the sense of audience in their writing. Park establishes an informal relationship with teachers who are interested in strengthening their students' weak writing.

Other helpful resources:

Step-by-Step How-To:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Precis>

YouTube Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dc9SzYuJJds>