Today, July 17th

Ch. 5 and more…

Let’s discuss outlining and summarizing.

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| \*Ch. 5 reading/questions | Meet w/meSummarizing and Outlining |
| \*Marisa Use a computer on the north side of the room, please. | Hannah |
| \*Raquel | Aaron |
|  | Sarah |
|  | Jama |
|  | James |
|  | Sheila |
|  | Elizabeth |
|  | Dale |

\*1. Choose a test which needs to be improved to earn your 80% in MyReadingLab

Assignments due Monday before 9:20: (Submit as docs in Bb.)

From Deanne Spears, “Developing Critical Thinking Skills,” pp. 41-43

**WRITING SUMMARIES**

A colleague describes a summary as a distillation of ideas. As she put it,“We can reduce a large number of grapes into a very small but potent glass of wine. The grapes are still there, but in a different, more condensed and

powerful form.” In other words, a summary is a condensed version of an essay, article, or book; it presents the writer’s thesis, the supporting ideas, and the conclusion—in other words, only the important information.

Writing summaries provides many intellectual benefits: A summary is a good measure of your reading and writing skills. Like a paraphrase, it requires that you understand a passage accurately. But summarizing goes beyond a paraphrase because the process forces you to weigh the relative worth of ideas, deciding what is essential and what is nonessential, what to retain and what to omit. It forces you to discern the arrangement of ideas and requires you to restate the ideas concisely, accurately, and fairly, without intruding your own opinion or judgment or distorting the thinking. Finally, it helps avoid plagiarism (copying). Your ability to restate the main ideas of a passage in your own words is a true indicator of how well you understand it.

How long should a summary be? Unless your instructor requires you to conform to a particular length, use this formula as a guide: A summary should be roughly between 5 and 15 percent of the original. Some instructors ask that a summary be no more than a single typed page, double-spaced, or roughly 200 to 250 words. The Hillenbrand essay at the end of this chapter is relatively short, about 825 words, so your summary should be between 50 and 125 words. One hundred words would be the perfect length.

**HOW TO WRITE A SUMMARY**

Follow these suggestions to write an effective summary:

• Read through the passage at least twice so that you have a good understanding of the content. Circle any unfamiliar words and look them up.

• Annotate it, noting main ideas and key supporting statements. Determine where the piece breaks into sections.

• Transfer your annotations to a separate sheet of paper. Write the main point of each section (or of each paragraph, if the piece is short). Leave plenty of space between each point to make changes or to add material.

• Maintain the balance between main ideas and supporting details in the original. Include only the supporting details that best support the main points.

• Paraphrase the writer’s ideas as much as possible, but do not change key terms. For example, in writing a summary of “How Jockeys Controlled Their Weight,” it would not be plagiarizing to use words or phrases from the essay like “jockeys” or “assigned weights.” Don’t strain to find synonyms for words that form the basis of the essay.

• Insert transitional words or phrases as necessary to show the relationship between ideas. (See Chapter 5 for a list of common transitions and their functions.)

• Prepare a final draft by rewriting your sentences. Check to see that your summary is accurate and free of your own ideas and opinions. (Note, however, that many instructors assign a summary-response paper, in which you would be asked both to summarize an essay and then to evaluate it by explaining your objections, criticisms, or other observations. In this case, your instructor is asking for your point of view. If you are unsure about an assignment, ask for clarification.)

• Your summary’s first sentence should include the author’s name and the essay title in the first sentence as well as

its main idea. Use the present verb tense throughout. If you use quotations, do so sparingly.

• Do a word count, making sure that your summary is the appropriate length. If it is too long, cut unnecessary verbiage or supporting examples.

**The One-Sentence Summary**

Writing a one-sentence summary of an essay, article, or other sustained piece of writing is an especially good way to check your comprehension of the writer’s main point. Distilling a lengthy discussion to a single sentence is useful outside of college in the real world of meetings, proposals, and strategy sessions.

**3** tardies = 1 absence

**3** absences = possible withdrawal