

SUMMARY ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

This summary will become the first part of your Summary and Response paper.

TASK:

1. First, go to <https://nu.libguides.com/ENG240> and choose a **Primary Response Article (PRA)**. These articles have been vetted by NU faculty and librarians for this assignment. Choose one that interests you. I recommend you pick an article in your academic discipline (field of study), but this is not a requirement. **A few of the articles are relatively brief; make sure the one you select is substantial enough for you to write a detailed two-page summary and contains interesting and perhaps controversial ideas you can address in your Summary and Response Paper. Students sometimes also struggle to effectively summarize articles that rely very heavily on source material.** Please talk to me if you have any questions about the suitability of an article.
2. Alternatively, you can choose one of the articles in the readings section of our textbook, *From Inquiry to Academic Writing: A Text and Reader* (third edition). The readings begin on page 345. Do not choose any of the articles earlier in the book.
3. Write a summary of your article of roughly **two pages**. Be sure to accurately identify the purpose, thesis, and main points of the article. Your goal is to fairly represent the author's position and main arguments, even if you disagree with some or all the points in the article. Be selective, though. Focus your summary on the points you want to respond to in the response section of the upcoming Summary and Response Paper.

PURPOSE:

- To show that you can write an effective summary of a substantial piece of writing.
- To demonstrate your ability to identify the main points in your article and convey them clearly to your reader.
- To familiarize you with the conventions of academic writing in your discipline.
- To show your ability to integrate source material effectively into your own writing through paraphrase and quotation.
- To identify key ideas in the PRA that you will respond to in the Summary and Response Paper.

GRADING CRITERIA:

- **Summary:** Is the summary accurate and does it show comprehension of the main and important secondary points of the PRA? Poor summaries will misrepresent or ignore major points in the PRA and may be underdeveloped and lacking detail.

- **Grammar and Style:** Is the writing clear and concise? Is the paper virtually free of errors? Poor writing will be wordy, vague or confusing, and will contain numerous grammatical and mechanical errors that sometimes impede understanding.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS:

1. Begin by reading the PRA carefully. I recommend printing and carefully annotating it to identify the thesis, main points, and ideas you might want to address in the Summary and Response Paper. The students who write the strongest summaries will likely have read their article multiple times.
2. Students often struggle to “see the forest through the trees” in this assignment. Be sure to look for and understand the big-picture points the author is making. Remember, evidence and examples are there to support the author’s points—they aren’t the point themselves. (All or almost all of the author’s evidence and examples should be left out of your summary.)
3. Make an outline before you start writing. (You don’t need to turn in an outline.)
4. **Do not use the first-person “I” in this paper.** The first-person is sometimes acceptable in academic writing, but not for a paper of this type.
5. The complete paper should about **two pages**, using a 12-point font and double-spaced. Include proper in-text citations and a works cited/reference page, the format of which is determined by the style you use (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). Choose the style used in your field of study. **Please identify the format you are using at the top of the first page.**