

PASSAGE(S) SUMMARY GUIDELINES
PHI 201: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY
Dr. Dave Yount

General Guidelines: For every set of passages assigned from Baird's *Ancient Philosophy (Philosophic Classics: Volume I)* (see the numbers in the second column of the Presentation Schedule, going from 1 to 29), Passage Summaries will be due (for exceptions, see 4 and 5 below). We will start with the fragments of Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes. These summaries will either (1) force you to read the reading or (2) help you strive to understand the passages, depending on your personality. In order to receive credit for the passage summaries, they should:

- Have your name at the top and the name of the topic for the day's readings you're summarizing;
- Be handwritten (provided I can read your handwriting – I usually am able) or computer printed;
- Be at least a half a page (but can be more), single-spaced, in size 12 font with 1" margins (if you're using a computer).
- Contain one (and only one) question about the readings (see below);
- Be a summary in essay form, and **not** make a simple list of points or key words mentioned;
- Be turned in at the very beginning of class **IN CLASS** (if you're tardy, walk up to my desk and hand it to me, if you would like credit for the summary); and
- Be informal – save the formal stuff for the papers (Do **not** worry about plagiarism for the summary.)

More Specific Guidelines:

1. **Summarize the argument:** State what the philosopher is arguing, sticking closely to their words. If there are sections, you need to write, for instance, "In the first section, [Author] states, " ..."; if there are not sections, you need to say something from each page, at least briefly. So if your summary needs to be longer than a half of a page in order to cover the whole article, then so be it. You should write up the summary in an essay form. You should explain what the author is saying objectively. For instance, do not write, "Another excellent point is ..." or "I disagree with the next statement" You may, however, say--in only one sentence at the end of your summary, in the same paragraph--if you liked the article, disliked the article, etc.
2. **Write down only 1 question you had about the article:** Make sure that you really think about what you'll have this question be, while you're reading. For example, please do not ask, "What is Thales saying?" or "Is Plato on drugs?" Be more specific, such as: "What is Thales' view of God?" "Was Plato reacting to a specific social situation or event when he said ...?" "Based on what he argues, would Aristotle be for or against the death penalty?" **NOTES:** (1) If you have a question about a specific word or sentence, please be sure to include the page, fragment number (if applicable), and/or line number(s) you're asking about – this is very handy. If you do not have any questions about a specific word or passage, you do not need to reference page numbers (though they may be very helpful to have later if you write a paper topic on that author). (2) If you have more than one question, write questions 2 through "?" down on a separate sheet of paper (or in your notes), and come to class with them ready to ask – this is precisely the idea – to try to answer your questions, and hence learn the material.
3. **Please either use only ONE sheet of paper (front and back if you're handwriting it), or staple the pages together. This saves lots of time and paper shuffling, and possible lost pages – for you and me. IF you are over one page for one summary, you may change the margins to 0.5", and even go down to size 9 font. But until you get to the end of the page, you should have 1" margins with a size 12 font.**

4. Do **not** turn in article summaries into either of my mailboxes or via email, or have another classmate turn in your summary if you are not in class or if you are going to be tardy: turn in your own summary – you will not receive credit for these summaries. Article summaries are due in class on the day they are assigned to be done. If you have an unexcused absence, you will not receive credit for turning a summary in; if you have an excused absence and you turn in an article summary (if one was due the day you missed), you will receive credit for the summary. **[NOTE:** I will not be reminding you of the summaries you have not turned in; it is your responsibility to know how many you have turned in and might turn in.] The deadline for turning in all "excused absence" article summaries is the last day of class when your last paper is due (see the last day on the Presentation Schedule; "last day" does not mean the "Final exam day"), unless otherwise arranged with Dr. Y.

5. You do **not** need to turn in a summary if you do a presentation for an article – but you **do** need to turn in your presentation notes so I can grade the presentation and return the notes.