

Rhetorical Précis Assignment

Word Count: 125-250 words

Required Sources: One academic article of your choosing that reflects the topic area you'd like to research for future assignments this term.

Rubric: [Here](#)

Sample Assignment: [Click here for a sample student précis that has been annotated with comments about what it's doing well.](#)

Introduction: What Is a Rhetorical Précis?

A rhetorical précis is a four sentence summary of an article or book that accurately, specifically, and briefly represents the author's argument, method of development and support, purpose, and relationship to the audience (which suggests tone). Writing a précis can help you both consolidate your understanding of what you read and prepare you for synthesizing ("putting into conversation"/making connections between) and arguing about ideas within multiple sources of information (which you will be doing in the other two major assignments of this course).

Directions

Your précis must contain the following elements:

- **A full citation for the source** as it would appear on an APA References page of an essay (review previously assigned course readings for guidelines). Follow this with one blank line before the next element.
- **A link to your article.** This is not a standard element of a précis; you are including this so that I can best evaluate the success of your précis. For this element, simply type Link: followed by the link to your article. This should appear as its own line (or two if the address is long). Follow this with one blank line before beginning the body of the précis (the next four elements listed below--the actual body of your précis) should be formatted to appear as a single paragraph.

- **An introductory sentence giving the following details:** the name of the author followed by a brief appositive phrase describing the author; the genre and title of the essay followed by the date in parentheses; a rhetorically accurate verb (such as “asserts,” “argues,” “suggests,” “implies,” “claims,” etc.); and a THAT clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the work.
- **A second sentence explaining how the author develops and/or supports the thesis**, usually in chronological order (nature of evidence).
- **A third sentence stating the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order” phrase** (this phrase explains that the author's purpose is to _____ *in order to* achieve a specific result that you can state).
- **A final sentence describing the intended audience** and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

You should create an APA cover page for this assignment and otherwise follow APA conventions for running head, etc., just for practice. You do **not** need to follow your cover page with an abstract, as the rhetorical précis is already itself a short summary of your work. ;-)