

English 100
Summary paragraphs

Primary goal of the summary paragraph: practice in critical reading, i.e., developing the ability to formulate the central ideas of what you read and identify the way the writer develops and supports his/her argument.

Note: these are articles/essays. The titles should be put in quote marks, as per the instructions on page four of the General Syllabus. Titles of short stories and poems should also be put in quotes.

Title format: “Why I Want a Wife”
Judy Brady

Name format: (since there is some confusion and people have asked)

Upper right hand corner:
Name
Class
Professor (Smallenburg)
Date

Summary paragraphs should take the following form.

a. First sentence: State the central idea of the essay, which might also be considered the writer’s motive for writing it, or a way of explaining what the writer wants to accomplish, what he/she wants the reader to understand or believe by the end of the essay

Example: Jonathan Kozol, in his essay “The Details of Life,” uses St. Ann’s Church school to argue that children from poor communities ought to be treated as human beings rather than merely as investments for the future.

(Note: the first sentence of your summary identifies the title, the genre, and the author.)

b. give a brief (two sentences at the most) summary of the content and format (narrative, description, example, argument, cause-effect—or more some combination if appropriate)

Example: Kozol combines description of incidents, teachers, and students at the school with explicit criticisms of the dehumanizing attitude that donors frequently take.

- c. **identify the kinds of support the writer uses and give examples** (these don't necessarily have to be quotes, but they should be as specific as possible)

His characterizations gain sympathy for both the students who come there from difficult home situations and the teachers who sympathize and treat them like humans while maintaining an academic program with high standards. Mother Martha and Armando help seven-year-old Jefferson, for example, to grieve for his cat by holding an actual funeral; quotes from donor types, like the CEO of a toothpaste company, reveal how we fail kids in schools generally by thinking of them merely as future economic units.

- d. **describe the tone or significant features of style the writer uses to appeal to the reader on an emotional level.** For Brady, it is irony or exaggeration; for Kozol, it is the sympathetic and detailed description of the kids contrasted with the mindset of the CEO and educational-testing types; Kozol's tone could be described as "warm," "touching," "poignant." Staples' tone in "Black Men and Public Space" could be described as "sad," "resigned," (maybe other terms as well). Hentoff is ironic and critical. This would be the point where you could point out that Staples begins his essay with a reference to "My first victim. . ." in order to shock the reader into thinking that he has committed some really terrible crime when all he did to "victimize" the young white woman was walk down the street.

Brady: irony, humor, sarcasm, exaggeration (technique)

Possible ways to formulate a first sentence:

- a. Judy Brady, in her essay "I Want a Wife," . . .
- b. In her essay "I Want a Wife," Judy Brady takes a satirical approach to arguing that gender roles in marriage make virtual slaves of women while allowing men to get away with little responsibility to the home or the marriage.
- c. Jonathan Kozol, in his essay "The Details of Life," uses the school at St. Ann's Church to

Avoid a running paraphrase/summary of the contents of the essay paragraph by paragraph. Your account may be perfectly accurate, and that's good, but it won't have focus and analytic coherence. You need to be able to step back and see the essay in overall terms, not just from moment to moment.

Example paragraphs:

1. The essay begins with a woman that classifies herself as a wife and soon-to-be mother. While ironing one evening, she thought about her male friend that had recently been

through a divorce and is now looking for another wife. She then realizes that she also wants a wife. She, the narrator, wants a wife who will work, send her to school, take care of the children and track their doctor and dentist appointments. She wants a wife . . . And when the narrator is finally through with school and has a job, she wants her wife to quit working and remain at home so that her wife can more fully and completely take care of a wife's duties.

2. In this concisely worded piece, the author chronicles the prejudices black men face due to many individuals' hidden fears of them. He details the trouble he has faced when walking alone at night and other difficulties. Realizing his sad plight, he comes to a conclusion. Black men must face this problem all the time. With some resignation, he arrives at an elegant solution. He whistles classical music when needed. Thus he is marked as an educated black man, and probably harmless.

3. In Brent Staples's essay "Black Men and Public Space," Staples explains the disadvantages of being an African American man through the events that happened in his own life and the lives of others.

4. I chose the essay "Should this Student have been Expelled" by Nat Hentoff. The purpose of this essay is to make the reader think about the meaning of "freedom of speech," especially how it applies to young adults in a diverse setting.

Sentences/passages to consider:

1. There is still plenty of people who are racist and intimidated by blacks.
2. The questions to this story was "should this student have been expelled?".
3. This essay puts a new perspective on having a wife. Judy Brady has decided that she would like a wife to take over her duties of being a wife herself.
4. This story is about a female who expresses her feelings very deeply. Who is a wife and a mother herself, who sacrifices a lot for her family. Who thought to herself how helpful it can be to have a wife, meaning someone who does a lot for the family.
6. In the essay *should this student have been expelled?* By Nat Hentoff tells the story of Doug Hann, a varsity football player at brown university who went out one night celebrate his twenty-first birthday and got drunk, which resulted in Doug screaming out racist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic insults.
7. I chose to write my summary about Nat Hentoff's essay "Should This Student Have Been Expelled?"
8. An essay written by Judy Brady, *Why I want a wife*, discuss about the expectation of a husband in a wife when they get married.
9. One of his many encounters include the time when a white woman with a worried expression . . .
10. I will be analyzing the essay of Judy Brady, which is called, "Why I want a wife." This essay talks about how the writer feel and thinks a wife should be like for her.
11. . . . people would not even feel safe in there cars . . . These action surprised him. He didn't let other peoples action toward him walk at night get to him.