

Short Paper 1.2: Summary Of

gis 140 / sec. A / early fall quarter 2007-08 / chang



A skill important to reading, writing, learning, and academic inquiry is summary. On the one hand, summarizing is about distilling or condensing a text, outlining a text's main ideas, putting into your own words a broad overview of the most important parts of a text. It is all about the gist. On the other hand, summarizing is about transforming a text, digesting it, understanding what you need from it so that you can make decisions about the text. Is it useful to your writing? Do you agree or disagree with the argument? Does it further your ideas or research? Does it support or contradict other texts? In other words, the skill and art of summary is often the first step in reading, writing, and inquiry since you need to "get" the text before you can ask questions of it or enter into conversation with it.

For this short paper, you will write a brief summary of one of the texts you have read so far in class including Day, Douglass, Alexie, or Tan. Your summary should be specific, detailed, focused on what you think are the most salient and interesting points, and express the overall invention of the text. Because the summary is supposed to be short and precise, get to the heart of the matter, make decisions about what is vital to include in your paper, and avoid unnecessary generalizations irrelevant to the text. Your summary should include and address the following:

- 1) A brief introduction to the text, the author, and its main invention
- 2) One to three significant points, arguments, terms, or ideas
- 3) Support what you find significant with at least three quotes or examples directly from the text

Turn in: 1-2 pages, typed, no title page, proper heading, double-spaced, stapled

Due: Wednesday, August 22

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