

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 S. DeCarlo  
 EN1010- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

**The Academic Précis**

For this writing assignment, your task is to write an effective academic précis (or summary) of an article. Choose one of the following articles from *Language Awareness*: Hairston’s “What Happens When People Write?” (79); Flower’s “Writing for an Audience” (88); or Lamott’s “S@#\\$!! First Drafts” (93).

1. The MLA citation of the article or book.
2. An accompanying paragraph that includes the following:
  - a. The name of the author, the genre (article, essay, etc.), a rhetorically accurate verb (e.g. “asserts,” “argues,” “suggests,” “implies,” “claims,” “demonstrates,” etc.) and a “that” clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the piece of writing.
  - b. An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports the thesis. For example: chronological order, case studies, surveys, statistical studies, personal experience, examples, literary analysis, etc.
  - c. A statement of the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order to” phrase.
  - d. A description of the author’s intended audience **if that seems pertinent**.
3. Your tone should be detached, objective; your aim should be accuracy **not** evaluation of, or agreement/disagreement with, the writer’s argument.
4. Generally speaking, a précis should not exceed 200 words.

**Example:** (*highlighted portions are for example only; don’t highlight yours*)

Smith, Eloise J. “The Seduction of Television, The Destruction of Desire.” *Pop Dreams*. Eds. William Kay and Nora Yu. NY: Macmillan, 1990. 45-63.

**In this article, Eloise Smith, professor of English at Mackensie College, concludes that** television turns habitual viewers into passive individuals who are less likely to be actively involved with their families, their communities, or their own lives. **The author faults the** American economic system that supports commercial television by declaring it is more concerned with profit than the toll it takes on society. **Smith develops her thesis by citing** a number of economic statistics, psychological profiles, and attitudinal surveys to show the connections between income and economic status and television viewing habits. Her research shows that people in lower income brackets tend to watch more television than those in higher income brackets. Smith connects socioeconomic standing with the amount of television **viewed in order to** convince others that television is not harmless but is, rather, a destructive force in American society.

(141 words)

Grading rubric:

Document in MLA format	10	_____
Correct MLA citation of article	10	_____
Content of précis (#2 above)	50	_____

Tone	10	-----
Length	10	-----
Use of standard American English	<u>10</u>	-----
	100	