

Writing 121/122

N. Noteboom

Summary/Analysis/Response Guidelines (SAR)

A Summary/**Analysis**/Response paper will summarize, analyze, and respond to, an essay read for class. It should always be typed, spell-checked, and free of mechanical errors. It will be three paragraphs long. It should be double spaced and in MLA format. You may utilize direct quotations to illustrate your point, but do not pad the SAR with quotes.

Paragraph 1: SUMMARY

Summarize the main ideas of the piece, mostly in your own words. Say the essay title and author's name. If you'd like, you can include brief quotations from the essay as an example. Try to restate its main point. Do NOT put your opinion in this paragraph. It should be neutral, just a summary of what the essay said.

The first time you use the author's name, use first and last name. After that, use last name only.

Paragraph 2: ANALYSIS - What tools does the author use?

Discuss the tools the author used to convey her message (hint: there's a list of tools authors use posted in the G Classroom). Keep opinion out of the analysis.

Consider:

How does the author provide support? Statistics? Anecdotes? Examples? Humor? Logical reasoning? Repetition? Emotional appeals? Sarcasm?

If you are struggling with the difference between summary and analysis, think of doing this:

start each sentence with the ***The author uses*** . . . or *The essay uses*

Don't use says, discusses, writes about, explains, or similar verbs.

Tell us about the writing, not the topic.

Don't just answer these questions, one after the other; rather, write a developed, focused paragraph in which you break the essay into parts.

Paragraph 3: RESPONSE

Give a personal response to the reading. What ideas did you find interesting? Why? Was there anything in the essay you could relate to? What did you like about it? What did you dislike about it? Was the purpose of the essay achieved? Do you agree or disagree with what it said? Do NOT simply answer these questions one after the other. They are just a few suggestions of the kinds of things you might talk about in your response. Your response should show that you read the piece, understood, thought about it, and applied it beyond the text.

30 pts.

MLA Heading – Title is the assignment

SAR on “In Praise of the ‘F’ Word”

Author Mary Sherry **feels** that schools should be more honest when giving grades to students. She **thinks** they pass too many students who really do not deserve a diploma. She thinks school should flunk more kids than they do currently. She **shares** the story of her son, who was a “slacker” in class until a teacher threatened to flunk him; she **says** that schools should, “reveal the trump card of failure.” This motivated him to actually start learning and do his work. She **explains** that teachers would need support from parents to follow through on this, but that students would be better off.

Sherry **introduces** her persuasive essay by making a shocking statement: “Tens of thousands of eighteen-year-olds will graduate this year and be handed meaningless diplomas.” She **traces** the journey of these ill-prepared students into her remedial college courses. She **cites** the example of her son’s personal experience as a success story. Sherry further **reasons** that it’s cheating the students out of education when school allow them to graduate with minimal skills; and **claims** that fear of failure could be the motivation these students need. The author **concludes** by calling on teachers to fail more students.

I have mixed opinions toward Sherry’s topic. I think schools give out too many A’s and pass too many students who really can’t read or write decently. But I also understand why this happens, and I’m not sure the author does. Teachers give assignments, students do assignments, they get a grade, the grades add up. Some students are capable of completing all the assignments without actually learning anything. I believe that school is what you make it – you can apply yourself and learn, or you can skate through, get the diploma, and not learn. So in that sense, I disagree with the author that it’s the school’s fault. I think that students have much more impact on their own education.