

## Summary-Response Strategy

To read rhetorically means to think about 1) what the author said, and 2) what the author wants the writing to do – the purpose. Remember that you are reading to gather ideas for your own argumentative essay. You need to think critically about the author’s purpose, understand the main ideas, take notes in your own words, and later use those notes to write an effective argument. If the article is an argument, you are trying to understand the reasons and evidence on both sides and evaluate them. If it is not an argument, you are reading to find information that you could use as reasons and evidence. The strategy guides the reader to read through the article twice and write both a summary paragraph and a response paragraph:

**First reading.** Analyze the article rhetorically using **Topic, Author and Source, Audience, Purpose, and Organization (TAAPO)**:

- **Topic.** What do you know about the topic? What is the issue, problem, or question addressed?
- **Author and source.** Who is the author? What organization published it? Is it credible?
- **Audience.** For whom is the author writing?
- **Purpose.** What is the author’s purpose for writing? Persuade, inform, share experience?
- **Organization.** How is it organized to meet the purpose? Argument with position/reasons/evidence? Discussion of arguments on both sides? Or another organization?

**Second (closer) reading.** Read the article again to identify main ideas and take notes on the Graphic Organizer (GO).

- Read a paragraph or chunk at a time.
- Look for the argument elements (or other main ideas); underline and label them.
- Check your understanding of important vocabulary (circle key terms).
- Take notes on the GO. Use your own words as if you were telling someone what you read.
- Evaluate the ideas. Think what you might use in your essay. Comment on the GO.

**Summary.** Now, use the GO and Sentence Frames to write a one paragraph summary.

- Put the text aside and write a summary using your GO.
- Remember to present the *author’s ideas* in your own words, not your ideas.
- Use the sentence frames.

**Response.** Then, write a one paragraph response, to evaluate and give your thoughts.

- Comment on the credibility of the author and source.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s argument. Are reasons supported with evidence? Are opposing positions considered?
- Discuss the ideas you could use in your essay.
- In the response, you can also include *your own ideas* and opinions on the issue.

**TAAPO and Graphic Organizer**

**Taking Notes to Write a Summary-Response Paper**

**Analyze Using TAAPO:**

**Topic:**

**Author and source:**

**Audience:**

**Purpose:**

**Organization (elements):**

<b>Citation:</b>			
<b>Issue/Problem:</b>			
<b>Author's position (or central idea)</b>			
Reasons (or main points)	Key evidence (or supporting details)	Comments for response	
<b>Opposing position (if present)</b>			
Opposing Reasons	Support/evidence	Rebuttal	Comments for response

## Instructional Procedures for the Summary-Response Strategy

### Thinking Rhetorically: Summary-Response Strategy

Thinking rhetorically is at the heart of critical reading and argumentative writing. To understand and critically think about a text requires students to think—before, during, and after reading—about the author’s purpose and perspective on the issues discussed. When students write about issues, they are entering a conversation with others who have written from multiple perspectives with multiple voices. This level of writing requires students to have a solid understanding of the sources they read so that they can integrate the ideas into a source-based argument.

Students will use the Summary-Response Strategy when reading articles in preparation for writing their own argumentative essay. The sources they read might be explicit arguments, discussions of arguments on both sides, informative pieces, or stories that make a point. Even for non-argumentative pieces, students should still read with an emphasis on finding ideas that they could use as reasons or evidence in their argument. The strategy guides rhetorical analysis to support the reading comprehension of struggling learners. It also provides a set of structured procedures for students to learn to guide reading an article twice and writing both a summary paragraph and a response paragraph.

**First reading.** Analyze the article rhetorically using **Topic, Author and Source, Audience, Purpose, and Organization (TAAPO)**. The first reading focuses on students using TAAPO to guide rhetorical analysis: topic or issue, author and source, intended audience, purpose, and organizational elements:

- When considering **Topic**, students should take time to consider what they already know and think about the issue. This activates their prior knowledge. When working collaboratively with the class, thinking about the topic involves discussion and gives instructors an opportunity to fill in some important background knowledge. This discussion of the topic might be part of a TAPFOR analysis on an issue before they start reading a particular article.
- Consideration of **Author** and **source** is increasingly important with the proliferation of media on the Internet. The curriculum includes lessons on how to check online sources for credibility and bias. After students are introduced to the strategies for checking sources, they should use them whenever they read an article.
- To understand purpose, students should analyze the author’s **Audience**: to whom is the author directing his discussion? Is the audience familiar with his topic?
- **Purpose** is presented simply as persuasive, informative, and storytelling. However, class discussion can elaborate on the multiple purposes within these broad categories.
- **Organization** is also tied to *purpose*. Research shows that awareness of text structures (organization) supports comprehension. For example, published argumentative pieces may be organized in many ways, but the core elements of issue, position, reasons and evidence, and sometimes opposing positions will still be there. Looking for such elements can enhance student ability to understand the main ideas. Many published articles will examine reasons on two or more sides of an issue; we refer to these as discussion articles in the curriculum. For arguments and discussions, the elements will be the elements of argument. For informative pieces that do not present any arguments or for stories, students will look for main ideas. Looking for common organizational structures such as cause-effect, comparison, or problem-solution may be helpful; the curriculum does not include formal instruction in these structures, but instructors are asked to mention the structures at times.

**Second (closer) reading.** Identify main ideas and take notes on the Graphic Organizer (GO).

The second, closer reading deliberately goes slowly, asking students to read a paragraph at a time and check their understanding of the main ideas. **Finding the main ideas is supported by looking for the expected argument elements.** If the article is explicitly an argument, then students look for those argument elements (e.g., position, reasons, key evidence). If not, they can look for main ideas that could fit into an argument on the issue: cause-effect relationships, problems and solutions, narratives that make a point. During this close reading, students should be encouraged to stop and think when they do not understand vocabulary or encounter other difficulties. If they cannot figure out the word from context and it seems important to understanding, they will need to look it up on their cell phone or computer.

Also, during the close reading, students should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments and evidence presented. Students can apply the criteria on the evaluation rubric for argumentative writing that they have already learned. Evaluative comments can be recorded.

Summarizing ideas in one's own words is critical for comprehension and writing, but it is often difficult. We encourage a natural approach of trying to explain the ideas to another person, rather than more mechanical processes of paraphrasing parts of sentences. Taking notes on the GO supports understanding of the overall organization; it also gets students to take notes in their own words, so they can put the article aside when they write their summaries. The GO is oriented toward argumentative texts and organized like the GO they used for planning their own essays. However, it is adaptable to thesis and main ideas in informative texts, as well. The students use the TAAPO and GO strategies to improve comprehension and to write Summary-Response papers.

**Summary. Now, use the GO and Sentence Frames to write a one paragraph summary.**

The Summary-Response strategy asks students to write a summary paragraph based on their notes on the GO *without* looking back at the article, unless necessary. Drafting from the GO helps students to avoid plagiarism. The curriculum also includes Sentence Frames to help students manage the challenge of referring to the author and source appropriately. The summary is reserved for students to present the *author's ideas*, in their own words, from GO notes.

**Response. Then, write a one paragraph response, to evaluate and give your thoughts.**

The response paragraph following the summary paragraph includes comments on the credibility of the author and source. It includes students' evaluation of the author's argument from the initial rhetorical analysis, as well as the evaluative comments on the GO. Students can be guided to notice connections between any bias of the source and their evaluation of the arguments in the article. For non-argumentative pieces, the focus can be on evaluating whether the ideas could be used in the student's own essay. Students are also encouraged to offer their *own ideas* and opinions on the issue and discuss an idea they might use in your essay.

**Note:**

Writing Summary-Response papers is excellent preparation for learning to write essays with sources. However, students do not need to write summaries for all articles they use as sources. Nonetheless, it's useful for the student to use the TAAPO and GO note-taking strategies when reading source articles. In the last essay assignment in this course, students will use the TAAPO and GO to take notes on sources but not write Summary-Response Papers.