



Response Paper Tips

Response papers typically have two main sections.

- 1). Summary: The summary will give the reader a general sense of all key aspects of the original work. You want to keep your summaries objective, fair, and accurate to the author's writing. Remember to identify the author and title of the work early in the first paragraph.
- 2). Your response, or the critical engagement: This is your opportunity to explore your reaction and analysis.

Always check your syllabus or ask your professor about how much summary vs. analysis.

Steps to developing your response paper

Step 1: Take notes & annotate while reading:

- Keep track of KEY ideas
- Write down and highlight what you find most interesting
- Highlight potential evidence

Step 2: Choose a topic or goal

- Look over your notes and identify the main goal of your response paper: what do you want to say about this reading?
- Draft a "thesis" (your analysis or argument)
- Choose 3-4 sub-points that will support your thesis

Step 3: Start writing.

- Start with the summary first to help process your own argument or analysis. *You could draft your summary prior to choosing a topic or goal.*
- Develop your 3-4 sub-points into full paragraphs



Questions to help you brainstorm analysis

****adapted from Hunter College Writing Center resource*

1. How is the assigned work related to ideas and concerns discussed in the course for which you are preparing the paper? For example, what points made in the course textbook, class discussions, or lectures are treated more fully in the work?
2. How is the work related to problems in our present-day world?
3. How is the material related to your life, experiences, feelings and ideas? For instance, how did the reading make you feel?
4. Did the reading increase your understanding of a particular issue? Did it change your perspective in any way?
5. Evaluate the merit of the reading: the importance of its points, its accuracy, completeness, organization, and so on.
6. Consider whether or not you would recommend the reading, who would you recommend the work to, and why.