

# Scholarly Summaries and Reflection: “They Say”

ENGL 211: English Composition

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In your second formal paper, you will conduct **scholarly** research on the topic/problem/concept you discussed in your exploratory essay, and you will select **3 credible, scholarly sources** that offer enlightening information on this topic/problem/concept. This is not an essay. It is a collection of summaries and reflections on those sources you have summarized.

Your objective will be twofold:

First, you will **summarize** the overall argument and significant supporting evidence of **each of the 3** scholarly sources. Your summaries should be primarily paraphrasing, and you should directly quote **no more than once briefly in the summary** to illustrate the argument asserted in each. **Please introduce the title, author(s), and location (if found in a journal or other collection) of each source in the first line of each summary; there is no need for MLA citation as of yet, although if you would like to cite you may.** This portion of your assignment should be no fewer than 3 pages.

Second, you will **reflect** on your own position regarding this topic/problem/concept and will consider how your position has been affected as a consequence of your research for each source. Connect your conclusions to clear evidence pulled from the sources you have summarized. In this section, you may choose to pull a couple direct quotations or paraphrase ideas and respond to those points of view for each, or you may talk generally about what you have learned. This portion of your assignment should be no fewer than 2 pages.

You may reflect on the sources **after you provide all summaries**, or you may choose to reflect **after each summary** and discuss the value of each source more directly. The form will be up to you.

The key here will be figuring out 1) how to identify **credible, scholarly source material** and sift through that information efficiently; 2) how to successfully summarize what might be complicated and unwieldy articles/book chapters; 3) how to synthesize the information you discover with your own ideas/position concerning the topic/problem/concept. Our reading from *They Say, I Say* and library instructional session will assist with these challenges.

**Requirements:** 5 pages minimum; 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, in-text citation for any quotations used is encouraged but will not be formally graded, no greater than 1.25 margins, **must be titled** (and should not simply be called “Scholarly Summaries and Reflection.”)

## Learning Outcomes Addressed:

- Analyzing and drafting a variety of compositions or genres shaped by readers’ and writers’ practices,
- Transitioning between situations and contexts by adjusting structure, content, diction, and tone,
- Understanding that rhetorical situations differ across communities and disciplines.
- Using writing as a tool for critical thinking and reflection,
- Reading and writing several genres that utilize analysis, reflection, narrative, critique, and argument skills,
- Locating primary and secondary research materials among library resources and evaluating them for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, and bias,
- Using strategies to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources,
- Understanding that thinking, reading, and literacy skills differ across communities and disciplines.
- Working through multiple drafts of a writing project and reflecting on composing practices,
- Understanding that composing strategies and processes differ across communities and disciplines.
- Refining the understanding of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling,
- Practicing genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics,
- Demonstrating a clear understanding of intellectual property rights and applying citation styles systematically, according to disciplinary conventions,
- Understanding that conventions differ across communities and disciplines.

### **Suggested steps for getting started:**

1. Practice using the library's resources to discover credible sources. Spend *at least* 45 minutes in at least 3 **different** sittings conducting research, saving sources that seem relevant, skimming sources, and thinking through your topic/problem/concept.
2. Annotate those sources (book chapters or articles) that seem most compelling ("annotate" means "to mark-up, take notes on, highlight, write in the margins"). Print them out (if possible); mark those passages that stand out or take notes on them as you read so that you will have a better grasp of them when you formally summarize.
3. Pause along the way to check-in with yourself. How is your position/understanding evolving? Take notes of your feelings about the topic/problem/concept each day. These will help you when you write the reflective portion of the assignment.

### **Important Dates:**

**Final Due:** Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> by end-of day (11:59 p.m.) via Blackboard

Take note: if I advise you NOT to further use one or more of the sources that you select for this assignment in my evaluative comments, then ***please do not continue to use that (those) source(s) for the remaining formal assignments; you should expect your grade to suffer if you ignore my directive.***

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### **Evaluative Guide for "Scholarly Summaries and Reflection:"**

**A papers may:** provide relevant, scholarly, and complementary sources; manage to summarize not just the primary argument of each source but also provide a comprehensive overview of all significant points covered (not too much information and not too little); provide an accurate summary of each source's argument, not simply a description of one part or a vague overview of topic alone; include reflection that is sharp, engaging, and demonstrates precise explanations of how the writer's position has evolved; include *specific* evidence from sources to support one's reflective observations; be a breeze to read while also engaging and indicative of the writer's intelligence; include little to no grammatical or syntactical errors.

**B papers may:** provide credible, scholarly sources; manage to summarize the primary argument of each source as well as provide a relatively comprehensive overview of all significant points covered (an adequate balance of information); provide a close to accurate summary of each source's argument – there may be some vagueness or some too-close-description in parts; include reflection that is smart and includes relatively precise explanations of how the writer's position has evolved; include at least some evidence from sources to support one's reflective observations; be relatively easy to read while also demonstrating competence; include few grammatical syntactical errors.

**C papers may:** provide sources which have questionable credibility and/or relevance; struggle a bit to summarize the primary argument of each source by either sounding too vague or too focused on a small part of the source; provide a relatively accurate summary of each source's argument; include reflection that is mediocre, vague, with an attempt at explaining how his/her position has evolved; include little to no evidence from sources to support one's reflective observations; be difficult to follow, which may break down ethos; include some grammatical and syntactical errors that interfere with readability and confidence in the writer.

**D papers may:** fail to provide an adequate number of sources or provide sources that are not credible or irrelevant; fail to summarize the primary argument of each source or provide an inaccurate summary of the argument; include reflection that is excessively vague or incoherent with no effort at explaining how one's position has evolved; include no evidence from sources to support one's reflective observations; be difficult to follow and frustrating to read; include a number of grammatical and syntactical errors that interfere with readability and confidence in the writer.

**F papers may:** demonstrate a catastrophic failure on all fronts.