



Academic Research and Writing
Summary/Description Paper
Dr. Sue Short

Standard instructions: The paper must be word processed (or typed), have a standard 12 point font and one inch margins, and be stapled together. The length of the paper is your decision; about 5 pages will probably be typical

Draft is due: 2.23.07

Workshops: 2.23.07

Final Paper Due: 3.1.07

For the Summary paper, you will locate a **scholarly** article that discusses the work of a visual artist whose work interests you and give a fair and objective summary of what the author says. The article should expressly refer to at least one specific example of the artist's work; as part of your summary, you must also incorporate a digital image of at least one work of art by that artist and give a complete verbal description of that work. The article you choose should include some good quality analysis of the artist's style and technique. Art Index Full Text or EBSCO Academic Search Premier would be good places to start in searching for your article. You are looking for an article that analyzes artwork; avoid book reviews and do not use an entire book for this assignment.

There are links to two articles (.pdf files) that are examples of materials that would work well for this assignment on the course web site. You may access them from the main page: <http://shortstreet.net/comp2.htm>. You may use one of them if you wish.

1. Mark Rothko article: rothko_nothingness.pdf
2. Gauguin article: gauguin_fan.pdf.

The degree of detail used in the summary is an important author's decision. Include enough detail to represent the content fairly and to capture the author's main points, but do not include so much detail that you overwhelm the main ideas with needless elaboration. Use quotations **only where necessary** to convey the main ideas. The most important component of any summary is putting the author's ideas into your own words and establishing your own framework of thinking about the concepts and themes.

As you write and revise the Summary/Description paper, pay special attention to the following issues:

Thesis:

The paper must be structured around a central thesis statement. A thesis is a statement of the topic and a comment about the topic. Your thesis statement will be a conclusion about some aspect of the artist's style, message, or technique, as developed in the article you have read. Since you are writing a summary, it should reflect the thesis statement of the author of the article.

Summary:

Provide a coherent summary of the main points of the article. Use proper MLA citations when referring to ideas set forth by the author. Your summary will be substantially shorter than the original and emphasize the main points.

Description:

Describe the artwork with vivid and specific detail. Imagine that the reader cannot see the work as you describe the work systematically.

Organization:

Organize the presentation clearly. Paragraph structure and careful use of topic sentences in each paragraph are important tools in keeping the discussion clear and on track. You need to develop your own organization of ideas; do not simply reproduce the author's ideas sequentially.