SIXTH EDITION

Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum

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- the *summary*
- the *critique*
- the *synthesis*

Each chapter of Part II of this text represents a subject from a particular area of the academic curriculum: psychology, political science, folklore, technology, film studies, biology, and business. These chapters, dealing with such topics as "Obedience to Authority," "Privacy and Technology," and "The American Political Spectrum," illustrate the types of material you will be asked to study in your other courses.

Various sets of questions following the readings will allow you to practice typical college writing assignments. Review Questions help you recall key points of content in factual essays. Discussion and Writing Suggestions ask you for personal, sometimes imaginative responses to the readings. Synthesis Activities at the end of each chapter allow you to practice assignments of the type that are covered in detail in the first four chapters of this book. For instance, you may be asked to *describe* the Milgram experiment, and the reactions to it, or to *compare* and *contrast* a controlled experiment to a real-life (or fictional) situation. Finally, Research Activities ask you to go beyond the readings in this text in order to conduct your own independent research on these subjects.

Our selection of passages includes articles written by economists, sociologists, psychologists, lawyers, folklorists, political scientists, journalists, and specialists from other fields. Our aim is that you become familiar with the various subjects and styles of academic writing and that you come to appreciate the interrelatedness of knowledge. Geneticists, sociologists, and novelists have different ways of contributing to our understanding of biotechnology. Fairy tales can be studied by literary critics, folklorists, psychologists, and feminists. Don't assume that the novel you read in your literature course has nothing to do with an assigned article from your economics course. Human activity and human behavior are classified into separate subjects only for convenience.

We hope, therefore, that your writing course will serve as a kind of bridge to your other courses, and that as a result of this work you can become more skillful at perceiving relationships among diverse topics. Because it involves such critical and widely applicable skills, your writing course may well turn out to be one of the most valuable—and one of the most interesting—of your academic career.

Laurence Behrens
Leonard J. Rosen

PART I

How to Write Summaries, Critiques, and Syntheses

1

Summary and Paraphrase

WHAT IS A SUMMARY?

The best way to demonstrate that you understand the information and the ideas in any piece of writing is to compose an accurate and clearly written summary of that piece. By a *summary* we mean *a brief restatement, in your own words, of the content of a passage* (a group of paragraphs, a chapter, an article, a book). This restatement should focus on the *central idea* of the passage. The briefest of all summaries (one or two sentences) will do no more than this. A longer, more complete summary will indicate, in condensed form, the main points in the passage that support or explain the central idea. It will reflect the order in which these points are presented and the emphasis given to them. It may even include some important examples from the passage. But it will not include minor details. It will not repeat points simply for the purpose of emphasis. And it will not contain any of your own opinions or conclusions. A good summary, therefore, has three central qualities: *brevity*, *completeness*, and *objectivity*.

CAN A SUMMARY BE OBJECTIVE?

Of course, this last quality of objectivity might be difficult to achieve in a summary. By definition, writing a summary requires you to select some aspects of the original and to leave out others. Since depending what to select and what to leave out calls for your own personal judgment, your summary is really a work of interpretation. And certainly your interpretation of a passage may differ from another person's. One factor affecting the nature and quality of your interpretation is your *prior knowledge* of the subject. If you're attempting to summarize an anthropological article, and you're a novice in the field, then your summary of the article might be quite different from that of your professor, who has spent twenty years studying this particular area and whose judgment about what is more significant and

what is less significant is undoubtedly more reliable than your own. By the same token, your personal or professional *frame of reference* may also affect your interpretation. A union representative and a management representative attempting to summarize the latest management offer would probably come up with two very different accounts. Still, we believe that in most cases it's possible to produce a reasonably objective summary of a passage if you make a conscious, good-faith effort to be unbiased and not to allow your own feelings on the subject to distort your account of the text.

▼ USING THE SUMMARY

In some quarters, the summary has a bad reputation—and with reason. Summaries are often provided by writers as substitutes for analyses. As students, many of us have summarized books that we were supposed to *review* critically. All the same, the summary does have a place in respectable college work. First, writing a summary is an excellent way to understand what you read. This in itself is an important goal of academic study. If you don't understand your source material, chances are you won't be able to refer to it usefully in an essay or research paper. Summaries help you to understand what you read because they force you to put the text into your own words. Practice with writing summaries also develops your general writing habits, since a good summary, like any other piece of good writing, is clear, coherent, and accurate.

Second, summaries are useful to your readers. Let's say you're writing a paper about the McCarthy era in America, and in part of that paper you want to discuss Arthur Miller's *Crucible* as a dramatic treatment of the subject. A summary of the plot would be helpful to a reader who hasn't seen or read—or who doesn't remember—the play. (Of course, if the reader is your American literature professor, you can safely omit the plot summary.) Or perhaps you're writing a paper about nuclear arms control agreements. If your reader isn't familiar with the provisions of SALT I or SALT II, it would be a good idea to summarize these provisions at some early point in the paper. In many cases (a test, for instance), you can use a summary to demonstrate your knowledge of what your professor already knows; when writing a paper, you can use a summary to inform your professor about some relatively unfamiliar source.

Third, summaries are frequently required in college-level writing. For example, on a psychology midterm, you may be asked to explain Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and to show how it differs from Freud's theory of the personal unconscious. The first part of this question requires you to *summarize* Jung's theory. You may have read about this theory in your textbook or in a supplementary article, or your instructor may have outlined it in his or her lecture. You can best demonstrate your understanding of Jung's theory by summarizing it. Then you'll proceed to contrast it with Freud's theory—which, of course, you must also summarize.

It may seem to you that being able to tell (or to retell) exactly what a passage says is a skill that ought to be taken for granted in anyone who can read at high school level. Unfortunately, this is not so: For all kinds of reasons, people don't always read carefully. In fact, it's probably safe to say that they usually don't. Either they read so inattentively that they skip over words, phrases, or even whole sentences or, if they do see the words in front of them, they see them without registering their significance.

When a reader fails to pick up the meaning and the implications of a sentence or two, there's usually no real harm done. (An exception: You could lose credit on an exam or paper because you failed to read or to realize the significance of a crucial direction by your instructor.) But over longer stretches—the paragraph, the section, the article, or the chapter—inattentive or haphazard reading creates problems, for you must try to perceive the shape of the argument, to grasp the central idea, to determine the main points that compose it, to relate the parts of the whole, and to note key examples. This kind of reading takes a lot more energy and determination than casual reading. But, in the long run, it's an energy-saving method because it enables you to retain the content of the material and to use that content as a basis for your own responses. In other words, it allows you to develop an accurate and coherent written discussion that goes beyond summary.

▼ HOW TO WRITE SUMMARIES

Every article you read will present a different challenge as you work to summarize it. As you'll discover, saying in a few words what has taken someone else a great many can be difficult. But like any other skill, the ability to summarize improves with practice. Here are a few pointers to get you started. They represent possible stages, or steps, in the process of writing a summary. These pointers are not meant to be ironclad rules; rather, they are designed to encourage habits of thinking that will allow you to vary your technique as the situation demands.

HOW TO WRITE SUMMARIES

- *Read* the passage carefully. Determine its structure. Identify the author's purpose in writing. (This will help you distinguish between more important and less important information.)
- *Reread.* This time divide the passage into sections or stages of thought. The author's use of paragraphing will often be a useful guide. *Label,* on the passage itself, each section or stage of thought. *Underline* key ideas and terms.
- *Write one-sentence summaries,* on a separate sheet of paper, of each stage of thought.
- *Write a thesis: a one- or two-sentence summary of the entire passage.* The thesis should express the central idea of the passage, as you have determined it from the preceding steps. You may find it useful to keep in mind the information contained in the lead sentence or paragraph of most newspaper stories—the *what, who, why, where, when,* and *how* of the matter. For persuasive passages, summarize in a sentence the author's conclusion. For descriptive passages, indicate the subject of the description and its key feature(s). *Note:* In some cases, *a suitable thesis may already be in the original passage.* If so, you may want to quote it directly in your summary.
- *Write the first draft of your summary* by (1) combining the thesis with your list of one-sentence summaries or (2) combining the thesis with one-sentence summaries *plus* significant details from the passage. In either case, eliminate repetition and less important information. Disregard minor details or generalize them (e.g., Reagan and Bush might be generalized as "recent presidents"). Use as few words as possible to convey the main ideas.
- *Check your summary against the original passage* and make whatever adjustments are necessary for accuracy and completeness.
- *Revise your summary,* inserting transitional words and phrases where necessary to ensure coherence. Check for style. *Avoid a series of short, choppy sentences.* Combine sentences for a smooth, logical flow of ideas. Check for grammatical correctness, punctuation, and spelling.

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DEMONSTRATION: SUMMARY

To demonstrate these points at work, let's go through the process of summarizing a passage of expository material. Read the following passage carefully. Try to identify its parts (there are four) and to understand how these parts

Bilingual Education: A War of Words

RICHARD BERNSTEIN

In a well-worn classroom at the San Fernando Elementary School, 30 miles north of Los Angeles, Aracelis Tester, a second-grade teacher, is reading "Cuidado, un Dinosaurio!"—"Watch Out, a Dinosaur!"—with her diminutive pupils. This could just as well be Mexico City or San Salvador, Grenada or Seville: a roomful of Hispanic children and a Hispanic teacher speaking Spanish. 1

In downtown Los Angeles, at a school called the Wilton Place Elementary, Chan Hee Hong, a first-grade teacher, is talking in Korean with the children of recent immigrants about the wonderful world of frogs. There are public schools in Oklahoma where Cherokee is the language of instruction. In Astoria, Queens, Greek is taught in Public School 122; Haitian Creole is a language of instruction in some 20 public schools in Brooklyn and Queens; New York, in addition, offers schooling in Chinese, Korean, French, Italian, Russian, Vietnamese and Khmer. 2

In the San Fernando Elementary School, the teaching of non-English-speaking children in their native language enjoys a virtually religious status: it is seen as a kind of panacea for the generally poor performance of Hispanic children in public schools. But at the Glenwood Elementary School in the San Fernando Valley, a neighborhood of neatly kept stucco homes festooned with bougainvillea, bilingual education is anathema. The Glenwood teachers often conduct classes in Spanish, since they are given no choice by the Los Angeles School District. The school, a political model for some, is notorious for others. Hispanic demonstrators shouting "racist" and carrying signs printed "KKK" have picketed outside the school, where teachers have been outspoken in their view that teaching children in Spanish is a fraud, a trick played by tendentious adult theoreticians on innocent children. They say that bilingual education is a failure, a tactic that in the end will harm the chances of generally poor, non-English-speaking children ever having an equal share in the promise of American life. 3

The San Fernando school and the Glenwood school represent the two poles of a debate, already 20 years old, that has lately become more acrimonious than ever. This is a nation that has successfully absorbed millions of immigrants without creating a huge bureaucracy or spending tens of millions of dollars to teach them in the languages of their ancestors. But in the last few years, teaching children "Watch Out, a Dinosaur!" in Spanish and talking to them about frogs in Korean has become a matter of deep importance to an ever-growing minority. 4

Part of the reason for this is that in America today more people speak foreign languages than ever before. Neighborhoods like those in the San Fernando Valley, whose residents were largely white and English-speaking 10 to 20 years ago, today have a Hispanic population of at least 90 percent. In Los Angeles, school-district officials say that there are, besides Spanish 5

and English, seven other major languages being spoken in their district—Korean, Cantonese, Armenian, Vietnamese, Filipino, Farsi and Cambodian.

Why aren't these students being taught only in the language of their newly adopted land? One reason is that organized minority groups are demanding they be educated in their native language, and they have won allies within the local education establishments of quite a few cities. For many of these minorities, the subject evokes deep emotions. Advocates of bilingual education believe that it represents the best chance for non-English-speaking children—who, not so coincidentally, often come from the lower-income groups—to enjoy the richness and opportunities of American life. "We have found a way to achieve educational parity and, by the way, to have people who are competent in two languages," said Raul Yzaguirre, the director of the National Council of La Raza in Washington, an umbrella group of several hundred Hispanic organizations. 6

The forces in favor of bilingual education . . . gained an ally in the [Bush] White House,[1] [but] there are still plenty of people on the other side of the issue, people who are convinced that teaching children in their native languages is bad, both for them and the country. Bilingual education, they argue, is more likely to prepare minority children for careers in the local Taco Bell than for medical school or nuclear physics. "It doesn't work," said Sally Peterson, a teacher at the Glenwood School and the founder of Learning English Advocates Drive, or LEAD, a group of teachers and citizens that has quickly gathered adherents across the country. "It seemed to make a lot of sense and I bought it at the beginning, but after a year or so I saw that children were languishing in the program." 7

The other, more subterranean part of the argument is political. Ethnic pride is involved here on one side, a sense that what is sometimes called "white, Anglo" education is demeaning, psychologically harmful to minority groups. On the other side, there is a deep-seated worry that more is involved than an educational program to help minority students. The country is becoming far more ethnically diverse. Immigration is no longer the European affair it was during the first half of this century. Hundreds of thousands of people each year come from the Caribbean Islands, from the Middle East and from a dozen countries in Asia. In other words, just at a time when a more powerful glue is needed to hold the various parts of the society together, some critics see an ethnic and cultural assertiveness pushing it apart. 8

Bilingual education is only one element in this picture, its opponents believe, a reflection of intensifying demands within the schools for courses that represent the interests of particular ethnic constituencies. It's no longer 9

[1]The reference is to Rita Equivel, a proponent of bilingual education who headed federal programs in the Department of Education during the Bush administration.

enough for children to learn who George Washington was. They have to learn to feel good about their own heritage. The much-discussed "Curriculum of Inclusion," produced by a special minority task force in New York State last year, argued that "African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Puerto Ricans/Latinos and Native Americans have all been the victims of an intellectual and educational oppression that has characterized the culture and institutions of the United States and the European-American world for centuries."

The solution, the task force concluded, was a new curriculum that, by concentrating on contributions by members of minority groups to the culture, would insure that minority children "have higher self-esteem and self-respect, while children from European cultures will have a less arrogant perspective of being part of the group that has 'done it all.'" 10

What's at stake, then, is nothing less than the cultural identity of the country. Those who argue that bilingual education is a right make up a kind of informal coalition with those who are pressing for changes in the way the United States is perceived—no longer as a primarily European entity to which all others have to adapt, but as a diverse collection of ethnic groups, each of which deserves more or less equal status and respect. 11

"Rather than see the United States as a melting pot, we like to think of it as a salad bowl, with equal recognition of everyone, and I think bilingual education is part of that," said Suzanne Ramos, a lawyer for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, a group that has sued local school boards to force them to adopt native-language instruction for Hispanic youngsters. The fund's goal, she said, is to have Spanish-language instruction in conjunction with the teaching of English for Hispanic students through the 12th grade—in the fund's view, the best means of insuring that Hispanic culture is nurtured as part of the basic public-school routine. 12

"The disagreement is whether a child has a right to have his native language developed—not just maintained but developed," said James J. Lyons, the executive director of the National Association for Bilingual Education, a professional organization that drafted much of the Federal legislation on bilingual programs. "There is a racist xenophobia about Spanish in particular." 13

Those on the other side insist that diversity is all well and good; but they argue that bilingual education could lead to an erosion of the national unity, a fragmentation of the nation into mutually hostile groups. Leading the fight is a group called U.S. English, whose major objectives are to promote opportunities for people to learn English and to get a constitutional amendment adopted that would make English the official language of Government. Founded by former Senator S. I. Hayakawa and including such eminent figures as Saul Bellow, Barry Goldwater and Eugene McCarthy on its board of advisers, U.S. English has seen its membership swell to 400,000 in just seven years of existence. "Language is so much a 14

part of our lives that it can be a great tool either for unity or disunity," said Kathryn S Bricker, the group's former executive director. "And we are getting close to the point where we have a challenge to the common language that we share Just look at what's going on in Miami, where a candidate to be school superintendent wanted everybody to have to learn Spanish

"We are basically at a crossroads," she added. "We can reaffirm our need for a common language or we can slowly go down the road of division along language lines." 15

In his autobiography, "A Margin of Hope," the critic Irving Howe, speaking about the "ethnic" generation of the 1920's and 1930's, recalls his hunger for school as a child of Jewish immigrants growing up in the Bronx; for Howe, mastering the English language was a badge of Americanness "The educational institutions of the city were still under the sway of a unified culture, that dominant 'Americanism' which some ethnic subcultures may have challenged a little, but which prudence and ambition persuaded them to submit to," he writes. 16

The question now is: What is the "dominant Americanism"? Can there even be such a thing in a country committed to a kind of ethnic self-realization that did not exist when Howe was growing up? The answers will be hammered out in the years ahead in classrooms like Aracelis Tester's and Sally Peterson's, and they have to do with more than pedagogical philosophy. In the end, the way language is taught in this country will reflect where the country is going, its very identity. 17

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Reread, Underline, Divide into Stages of Thought

Let's consider our recommended pointers for writing a summary.

As you reread the passage, consider its significance as a whole and its stages of thought What does it say? How is it organized? How does each part of the passage fit into the whole?

Many of the selections you read for your courses will have their main sections identified for you by subheadings When a passage has no subheadings, as is the case with "Bilingual Education: A War of Words," you must read carefully enough that you can identify the author's main stages of thought

How do you determine where one stage of thought ends and the next one begins? Assuming that what you have read is coherent and unified, this should not be difficult (When a selection is unified, all of its parts pertain to the main subject; when a selection is coherent, the parts follow one another in logical order) Look, particularly, for transitional sentences at the beginning of paragraphs. Such sentences generally work in one or both of the following ways: (1) they summarize what has come before; (2) they set the stage for what is to follow.

For example, look at the sentence that opens paragraph 4: "The San Fernando school and the Glenwood school represent the two poles of a debate, already 20 years old, that has lately become more acrimonious than ever." Notice how the first part of this sentence asks the reader to recall information

from the previous three paragraphs. Holding in mind the two opposing views just presented, the reader is then cast forward into the coming paragraph with its discussion about the national debate on bilingual education For a different transition, see paragraph 6, which begins with a question: "Why aren't these students being taught only in the language of their newly adopted land?" This question first requires the reader to recall the previous paragraph. Then the question helps the reader to anticipate what will immediately follow: an accounting of why bilingual education has gained support around the country.

Each section of an article will take several paragraphs to develop. Usually between paragraphs, and almost certainly between sections of an article, you will find transitions to help you understand For articles that have no subheadings, try writing your own section headings in the margins as you take notes. Then proceed with your summary.

The sections of Bernstein's article are as follows:

Section 1: Introduction—the national debate on how non-English-speaking students should be taught (paragraphs 1–5).
Section 2: Debate on the merits of bilingual education (paragraphs 6–7)
Section 3: Debate on the larger political and cultural issues related to bilingual education (paragraphs 8–10).
Section 4: Significance of the overall debate—key issue of how America will perceive itself (paragraphs 11–17)

Here is how the first of these sections might look after you had marked the main ideas, by underlining and by marginal notation:

Intro

Teachers teaching in native language

Key example of debate in S. California

In a well-worn classroom at the San Fernando Elementary School, 30 miles north of Los Angeles, Aracelis Tester, a second-grade teacher, is reading "Cuidado, un Dinosaurio!"—"Watch Out, a Dinosaur!"—with her diminutive pupils. This could just as well be Mexico City or San Salvador, Grenada or Seville: a roomful of Hispanic children and a Hispanic teacher speaking Spanish. 1

In downtown Los Angeles, at a school called the Wilton Place Elementary, Chan Hee Hong, a first-grade teacher, is talking in Korean with the children of recent immigrants about the wonderful world of frogs. There are public schools in Oklahoma where Cherokee is the language of instruction. In Astoria, Queens, Greek is taught in Public School 122; Haitian Creole is a language of instruction in some 20 public schools in Brooklyn and Queens; New York, in addition, offers schooling in Chinese, Korean, French, Italian, Russian, Vietnamese and Khmer 2

In the San Fernando Elementary School, the teaching of non-English-speaking children in their native language enjoys a virtually religious status it 3

is seen as a kind of panacea for the generally poor performance of Hispanic children in public schools. But at the Glenwood Elementary School in the San Fernando Valley, a neighborhood of neatly kept stucco homes festooned with bougainvillea, bilingual education is anathema. The Glenwood teachers often conduct classes in Spanish, since they are given no choice by the Los Angeles School District. The school, a political model for some, is notorious for others. Hispanic demonstrators shouting "racist" and carrying signs printed "KKK" have picketed outside the school, where teachers have been outspoken in their view that teaching children in Spanish is a fraud, a trick played by tendentious adult theoreticians on innocent children. They say that bilingual education is a failure, a tactic that in the end will harm the chances of generally poor, non-English-speaking children ever having an equal share in the promise of American life.

Key example of debate in S. California

The San Fernando school and the Glenwood school represent the two poles of a debate, already 20 years old, that has lately become more acrimonious than ever. This is a nation that has successfully absorbed millions of immigrants without creating a huge bureaucracy or spending tens of millions of dollars to teach them in the languages of their ancestors. But in the last few years, teaching children "Watch Out, a Dinosaur!" in Spanish and talking to them about frogs in Korean has become a matter of deep importance to an ever-growing minority. 4

Debate is 20 yrs old & heated

Debate: important to growing minority

Part of the reason for this is that in America today more people speak foreign languages than ever before. Neighborhoods like those in the San Fernando Valley, whose residents were largely white and English-speaking 10 to 20 years ago, today have a Hispanic population of at least 90 percent. In Los Angeles, school-district officials say that there are, besides Spanish and English, seven other major languages being spoken in their district—Korean, Cantonese, Armenian, Vietnamese, Filipino, Farsi and Cambodian. 5

More than ever, America is multilingual

Write a One-Sentence Summary of Each Stage of Thought

The purpose of this step is to wean you from the language of the original passage, so that you are not tied to it when writing the summary. Student Brian Smith has written one-sentence summaries for each of these sections as follows:

Section 1: Introduction—the national debate on how non-English-speaking students should be taught.

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Over the past twenty years, there has been a bitter
debate over the merits of bilingual education.
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Section 2: Debate on the merits of bilingual education.

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Proponents and opponents of bilingual education strong-
ly disagree over how much benefit students receive from
such programs.
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Section 3: Debate on the larger political and cultural issues related to bilingual education

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Underlying the educational arguments are powerful
political arguments arising from the increasing diver-
sity of America.
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Section 4: Significance of the overall debate—key issue of how America will perceive itself.

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The debate over bilingual education is a debate over
the cultural identity of America.
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Write a Thesis: A One- or Two-Sentence Summary of the Entire Passage

The thesis is the most general statement of a summary (or any other type of academic writing—see Chapter 2). It is the statement that announces the paper's subject and the claim that you or—in the case of a summary—another author will be making about that subject. Every paragraph of a paper illuminates the thesis by providing supporting detail or explanation. The relationship of these paragraphs to the thesis is analogous to the relationship of the sentences within a paragraph to the topic sentence. Both the thesis and the topic sentences are general statements (the thesis being the more general) that are followed by systematically arranged details.

To ensure clarity for the reader, *the first sentence of your summary should begin with the author's thesis, regardless of where it appears in the article itself.* Authors may locate their thesis at the beginning of their work, in which case the thesis operates as a general principle from which details of the presentation follow. This is called a *deductive* organization: thesis first, supporting details second. Alternately, authors may locate their thesis at the end of their work, in which case they begin with specific details and build toward a more general conclusion, or thesis. This is called an *inductive* organization, an example of which you see in "Bilingual Education: A War of

Words," where the thesis is stated last and is part of the conclusion (By contrast, a conclusion in a deductively organized piece *restates* the thesis, which has already been presented at the beginning of the selection.)

A thesis consists of a subject and an assertion about that subject. How can we go about fashioning an adequate thesis for "Bilingual Education: A War of Words"? Probably no two proposed thesis statements for this article would be worded exactly the same. But it is fair to say that any reasonable thesis will indicate that the subject is the debate over bilingual education and that the author asserts that this debate has large political and cultural significance. What issues, specifically, does Bernstein believe are raised by bilingual education? For a clue, look to his final sentence (his conclusion *and* his thesis, since this is an inductively organized piece): "The way language is taught in this country will reflect where the country is going, its very identity." Bernstein sees bilingual education as part of a larger debate about the role minorities will play in America's future identity. Mindful of Bernstein's subject and the assertion that he makes about it, we can write a single statement *in our own words* and arrive at the following:

```
The longstanding and increasingly bitter debate over
bilingual education is part of a larger national debate
over the role minorities will play in shaping America's
identity
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To clarify for our reader the fact that this idea is Bernstein's, rather than ours, we'll qualify the thesis as follows:

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In "Bilingual Education: A War of Words," Richard
Bernstein claims that the longstanding and increasingly
bitter debate over bilingual education is part of a
larger national debate over the role minorities will
play in shaping America's identity.
```

The first sentence of a summary is crucially important, for it orients your readers by letting them know what to expect in the coming paragraph(s). The preceding example sentence provides the reader with both a citation and thesis for the passage. The author and title reference also could be indicated in the summary's title, in which case it could be dropped from the thesis. And realize, lest you become too quickly frustrated, that writing an acceptable thesis for a summary takes time—in this case three drafts, roughly seven minutes of effort spent on one sentence and another few minutes of fine-tuning after a draft of the entire summary was completed. The first draft of the thesis was too cumbersome; the second draft was too vague; and the third draft needed minor refinements.

Draft 1: The debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate ~~about the extent to which the identity of ethnic minorities will become a visible part of the larger American identity.~~

too long

Draft 2: The debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate ~~about the direction in which America's cultural identity will develop.~~ and increasingly bitter

too vague

Draft 3: The longstanding debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate over the role minorities will play in shaping America's ~~future~~ identity

Final: The longstanding and increasingly bitter debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate over the role minorities will play in shaping America's identity.

Write the First Draft of the Summary

Let's consider two possible summaries of the example passage: (1) a short summary, combining a thesis with one-sentence section summaries, and (2) a longer summary, combining thesis, one-sentence section summaries, and some carefully chosen details. Again, realize that you are reading final versions; each of the following summaries is the result of at least two full drafts.

Summary 1: Combine Thesis with One-Sentence Section Summaries

```
In "Bilingual Education: A War of Words," Richard
Bernstein claims that the longstanding and increasingly
bitter debate over bilingual education is part of a
larger national debate over the role minorities will
play in shaping America's identity. Proponents and
opponents of bilingual education strongly disagree over
how much benefit students receive from such programs.
But underlying the educational arguments in the debate
over bilingual education are powerful political argu-
ments arising from the increasing diversity of America.
For Bernstein, then, the bilingual education debate is
a debate over the cultural identity of America.
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Discussion

This passage consists essentially of Brian Smith's restatement of the author's thesis plus the four section summaries, altered or expanded a little for stylistic purposes. Notice that Brian has folded his summary of the article's first section into his thesis:

Summary of section 1:

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Over the past twenty years, there has been an acrimo-
nious debate over the merits of bilingual education
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Thesis:

> In "Bilingual Education: A War of Words," Richard Bernstein claims that the longstanding and increasingly bitter debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate over the role minorities will play in shaping America's identity.

In contrast to the section 1 summary, the thesis includes Bernstein's interpretation of the debate's significance. The first sentence also includes the article's author and title, information to help orient the reader. And for reasons of both content and style, Brian has condensed the section summary's "over the past twenty years" to the one-word adjective "longstanding." His original "acrimonious," revised to read "increasingly bitter," similarly becomes an adjective modifying "debate" and shows that the character of the debate has been changing.

Brian spent most of his energy folding the first section summary into the thesis. This accomplished, he followed with the other section summaries and made minor stylistic adjustments.

Summary 2: Combine Thesis Sentence, Section Summaries, and Carefully Chosen Details

The thesis and the one-sentence section summaries also can be used as the outline for a more detailed summary. Most of the details in the passage, however, won't be necessary in a summary. It isn't necessary even in a longer summary of this passage to discuss *particular* classrooms—for example, classes in which students are reading about dinosaurs in Spanish or frogs in Korean (paragraphs 1–4); it's sufficient to note that in schools where bilingual education is practiced students are taught in their native language. Nor is it necessary to quote extensively the various proponents and opponents of bilingual education that Bernstein cites—perhaps one or two *brief* quotations would do for your summary. Concentrate on a few carefully selected details that might be desirable for clarity. For example, you could mention New York State's "Curriculum of Inclusion" and its underlying principles (paragraphs 9–10); and you could mention the group U.S. English (paragraph 14), whose very existence and distinguished membership suggests the depth of the opposition's commitment to retaining English as the national language.

How do you know which details may be safely ignored and which ones may be advisable to include? The answer is that you won't always know. Developing good judgment in comprehending and summarizing texts is largely a matter of reading skill and prior knowledge (see page 3). Consider the analogy of the seasoned mechanic who can pinpoint an engine problem by simply listening to a characteristic sound that to a less experienced person is just noise. Or consider the chess player who can plot three separate winning

strategies from a board position that to a novice looks like a hopeless jumble. In the same way, the more practiced a reader you are, the more knowledgeable you become about the subject, the better able you will be to make critical distinctions between elements of greater and lesser importance. In the meantime, read as carefully as you can and use your own best judgment as to how to present your material.

Here's one version of a completed summary, with carefully chosen details. Transitional words and phrases are circled:

Thesis

Section 1

Summary of ¶s 1–5

Section 2

Summary of ¶6

Summary of ¶7

Section 3

Transition & topic sentence

Summary of ¶8

Summary of ¶s 9–10

> In "Bilingual Education: A War of Words," Richard Bernstein claims that the longstanding and increasingly bitter debate over bilingual education is part of a larger national debate over the role minorities will play in shaping America's identity. Bilingual education programs have flourished because of the increasingly diverse ethnic makeup of American schools. (But) bilingual education is intensely controversial. At one southern California high school, Hispanics picketed teachers who denounced bilingual education programs as "a fraud." (These teachers) had argued that such programs end up harming the very minority groups they are intended to help.
>
> (Those favoring) bilingual education believe that teaching students in their native languages offers young people their best chance for success in American life. (Those opposed) insist that bilingual education fails to prepare students for today's competitive and advanced job markets.
>
> (But) underlying the educational arguments in the debate over bilingual education are powerful political arguments arising from the increasing diversity of America. Most immigrants to this country are no longer from Europe, but from the Caribbean, from the Middle East, and from Asia. (Opponents) of bilingual education argue that now, more than ever, America needs the common bond of language to hold its increasingly diverse population together. (But advocates) see bilingual education as a means of moving away from the kind of "white Anglo" education that has belittled the ethnic identities of nonwhite minorities. (Moreover,) advocates of ethnic identity want to go beyond bilingual education programs to

Section 4 Transition & summary of ¶11

courses for all children emphasizing the role of America's ethnic minorities. (For example,) New York's "Curriculum of Inclusion" is designed to stress minority involvement in important historical developments.

Summary of ¶s 12–13

For Bernstein, (then,) the bilingual education debate is a debate over the cultural identity of America. (Those in favor) of bilingual education and ethnic identity see America as a "salad bowl," rather than a "melting pot." They want each ethnic group to retain its own distinctive qualities. (In contrast,) opponents of bilingual education believe that while diversity is valuable, an overemphasis on ethnic identity could lead to hostility between ethnic groups and a breakdown of national unity. (Indeed,) one group, U.S. English, is lobbying for a constitutional amendment "that would make English the official language of Government." (In the end,) Bernstein believes, schools will encourage their students either to develop their "ethnic self-realization" or to be part of a "unified culture." These very different choices will determine America's future identity.

Summary of ¶s 14–15

Summary of ¶s 16–17

Discussion

The final two of our suggested steps for writing summaries are (1) to check your summary against the original passage, making sure that you have included all the important ideas, and (2) to revise so that the summary reads smoothly and coherently

The structure of Brian Smith's summary reflects what he understood was the four-part structure of the original passage. He devoted one paragraph of summary to each of Bernstein's four sections:

1. Paragraphs 1–5, the introduction
2. Paragraphs 6–7, the debate on the merits of bilingual education
3. Paragraphs 8–10, the political underpinnings of that debate
4. Paragraphs 11–17, the relationship between the debate and America's cultural identity

Within individual paragraphs of the summary, the structure generally reflects the sequence of ideas in the original. For example, paragraph 2 of the summary is two sentences; section two of Bernstein's article is two paragraphs. Brian wrote one sentence of summary for each paragraph.

The expanded summary communicates many more details than does the first summary. The two summaries begin with the same thesis. In the expanded summary, Brian Smith adds four sentences (in paragraph 1) to provide more background information on the bilingual debate. Recall that in the brief summary he collapsed that same background into a single sentence—the thesis. The first summary reduces the debate over bilingual education—paragraphs 6 and 7 of the article—to a single sentence ("Proponents and opponents of bilingual education strongly disagree over how much benefit students receive from such programs"). The expanded summary, however, offers two detailed sentences (paragraph 2), one devoted to the proponents in the debate and another to the opponents. In the expanded summary, Brian devotes a full paragraph (paragraph 3), not a single sentence, to the political underpinnings of the argument over bilingual education. In this instance, Brian retains the sentence from his original summary and adds details on the origin of America's recent immigrants, on U S English, and on New York's "Curriculum of Inclusion." He similarly devotes a whole paragraph (paragraph 4), as opposed to a single sentence, to Bernstein's final point about the relation between the bilingual debate and America's identity. Once again, Brian begins with a sentence from his original summary and then adds details.

How long should a summary be? This depends on the length of the original passage. A good rule of thumb is that a summary should be no longer than one-fourth of the original passage. Of course, if you were summarizing an entire chapter or even an entire book, it would have to be much shorter than that. The summary above is about one-fifth the length of the original passage. Although it shouldn't be very much longer, you have seen (page 15) that it could be quite a bit shorter.

The length of a summary, as well as the content of the summary, also depends on its *purpose*. Let's suppose that you decided to use Bernstein's piece in a paper that dealt, primarily, with the evolution of America's cultural identity. You would likely be interested in summarizing the final section of the article, in which Bernstein introduces the "melting pot" and "salad bowl" as metaphors that can explain contrasting views of that identity. If, instead, you were writing a paper focused on the bilingual debate itself, you would likely be interested in summarizing the first three sections of Bernstein's article, which focus on the debate and its political underpinnings. Thus, depending on your purpose, you will summarize either *selected* portions of a source or an entire source, as we will see more fully in the chapter on synthesis.

▼

SUMMARIZING A NARRATIVE

A narrative is a story, a retelling of a person's experiences. That person and those experiences may be imaginary, as is the case with fiction, or they may be real, as in biography. Summarizing a narrative presents special challenges. You have seen that an author of an expository piece (such as Bernstein's "Bilingual Education: A War of Words") follows assertions with examples and statements of support. Narrative presentations are usually less

direct. The author relates a story—event follows event—the point of which may never be stated directly. The charm, the force, and the very point of the narrative lies in the telling; and, generally, narratives do not exhibit the same logical development of expository writing. They do not, therefore, lend themselves to summary in quite the same way. Narratives do have a logic, but that logic may be emotional, imaginative, or plot-bound. The writer who summarizes a narrative is obliged to give an overview—a synopsis—of the story's events and an account of how these events affect the central character(s).

The following narrative appears in Rosalie Pedalino Porter's *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education,* which opposes bilingual education. In Porter's account of growing up as a member of an ethnic minority, you will find the seeds of her present-day opposition to bilingual education.

Perils in the Demand for Biculturalism

ROSALIE PEDALINO PORTER

My family was poor, so the first necessity was for us to gain the economic means to survive. We children did not enjoy the middle-class luxury of a choice of schooling or careers. The thought of taking time to "get in touch with myself" did not exist. I was fortunate that my mother convinced my father to let me finish high school and not leave school at sixteen to work in his grocery store. Because I was the oldest of five children and a girl, I did not think to question my fate: I should help my mother after school every day, and when I reached the age of sixteen, I should leave high school and help in the store. In fact, my father would have preferred that we stay closely attached to the family and neither attend school nor learn English. Mandatory attendance at school saved us! For me, convention dictated that family bondage would not end until I married—and married within the ethnic group and preferably in the neighborhood, when I would then no longer be my father's but my husband's responsibility. 1

School, however, opened up my horizons, and the English language gave me the entry not only to the excitement of academic advancement but to friendships with children from very different families, other ethnic groups, and other religions. I began to want to learn, with a desire for a range of experiences, and, yes, a desire for material things and an interesting job. 2

Of course, my experience was not unusual. I wanted to be free from what seemed the restrictive customs and language of my family and community, free from the burden of being "different." The desire is common to young people of various ethnic groups, and it is not surprising, therefore, that this liberation is the enduring subject of a large body of literature and drama, in novels such as *The Fortunate Pilgrim, Call It Sleep,* and *Goodbye, Columbus* and films such as *West Side Story, Hester Street,* and *Crossing Delancey.* 3

It is daunting for anyone to cross the ethnic divide, but for women the voyage has been and continues to be even more difficult. To move out of poverty and beyond ethnicity requires individual motivation and strength of purpose *and* the reinforcement of outside help from the schools, job opportunities, and the presence of achievable role models. 4

I saw with renewed immediacy the clash of cultures and the hardship it imposes on the young in the case of three refugee women from Afghanistan who were in the Newton North High School ESL program for two years. They had learned English fairly well and completed a good part of their high school graduation requirements. They longed to enroll in a local community college, but the families arranged marriages for all three, finding them Afghan husbands instead. The teacher who knew the students and their families and had been an advisor to the young women was deeply disappointed. It is often just not possible to effect such change in the first years of residence in a new country. 5

The language and culture shift in my own immigrant family took an unusual twist. Oldest of the children in a family of three sons and two daughters, I have moved the farthest from my family geographically and in terms of assimilation into American middle-class life. My brothers and sister, who have all completed college degrees and achieved economic success, live near my mother and have, unlike me, married within the ethnic group and the religion of our upbringing. Yet I am the only one of us who has maintained and expanded her knowledge of Italian, which I speak and write fluently. None of the others is the least bit interested in the language, but they are still very close to the customs. Paradoxically, I am closer to our "roots," to our country of origin, because I travel to Italy frequently and have a husband and three sons who are all Italophiles. My sister and brothers, however, are more closely involved in Italian-American culture. We have each chosen the degree of ethnicity we wish to maintain. I am not convinced of the inevitability of guilt over some loss of ethnicity, the sort that Mario Puzo depicted in *The Fortunate Pilgrim,* when he wrote, "They spoke with guilty loyalty of customs they themselves had trampled into dust." It is not that I am without sentimental feelings, but I cannot honestly wish that I or my family had remained immersed in our original language and ethnicity. We are immeasurably richer for having that background and for having added to it some of the achievements that American life offers. 6

▲ ▲ ▲

Certainly, Porter's experiences bear on her present-day opposition to bilingual and bicultural education. Porter believes that emphasizing a non-English-speaking student's native culture and native language "disables" the student, denying him or her "the knowledge and skills [necessary] to attain social and economic equality." If you were discussing her views on the subject in a paper,

HOW TO SUMMARIZE NARRATIVES

- Your summary will *not* be a narrative, but rather the synopsis of a narrative. Your summary will likely be a paragraph at most.
- You will want to name and describe the principal character(s) of the narrative and describe the narrative's main actions or events.
- You should seek to connect the narrative's characters and events: describe the significance of events for (or the impact of events on) the character.

you might want to refer to her narrative How would you do so? When you summarize a narrative, bear in mind a few additional principles, listed in the box.

To summarize events, reread the narrative and make a marginal note each time you see that an action advances the story from one moment to the next. The key here is to recall that narratives take place *in time*. In your summary, be sure to re-create for your reader a sense of time flowing Name and describe the characters as well (For our purposes, *character* refers to the person, real or fictional, about whom the narrative is written.) The trickiest part of the summary will be describing the connection between events and characters. Earlier (page 3) we made the point that summarizing any selection involves a degree of interpretation, and this is especially true of summarizing narratives. What, in the case of Porter, is the impact of the events described? An answer belongs in a summary of this piece, yet developing an answer is tricky. Five readers would interpret the narrative's significance in five distinct ways, would they not? Yes and no: yes, in the sense that these readers, given their separate experiences, will read from different points of view; no, in the sense that readers should be able to distinguish between the impact of events as seen from a main character's (i.e , Porter's) point of view and the impact of these same events as seen from their (the readers') points of view We should be able to agree that Porter was grateful for mandatory high school attendance. She felt liberated.

At times, you will have to infer from clues in a narrative the significance of events for a character; at other times, the writer will be more direct. In either case, remember that it is the narrative's main character, real or imaginary, whose perspective should be represented in the summary. Here is a one-paragraph summary of Porter's narrative (The draft is the result of two prior drafts.)

> In an excerpt from her book Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education, Rosalie Pedalino Porter relates how attending school and learning English allowed her to see beyond the confines of her Italian-American community. Mandatory schooling moved Porter from a culturally closed environment to an open, heterogeneous one that motivated her to succeed, both intellectually and materially. Her transition into American culture had its difficulties, though: Porter and women like her were expected to marry young, within the ethnic group, and remain close to home. Her desire, therefore, to move "beyond ethnicity" into America's middle class resulted in a painful clash of cultures. But Porter was able to forge a distinct and satisfying identity by developing those parts of her Italian heritage that she cherished and by adding "some of the achievements that American life offers."

SUMMARIZING FIGURES AND TABLES

In your reading in the sciences and social sciences, you will often find data and concepts presented in nontext forms—as figures and tables. Such visual devices offer a snapshot, a pictorial overview of material that is more quickly and clearly communicated in graphic form than as a series of (often complicated) sentences. The writer of a graph, which in an article or book is labeled as a numbered "figure," presents the quantitative results of research as points on a line or a bar, or as sections ("slices") of a pie Pie charts show relative proportions, or percentages Graphs, especially effective in showing patterns, relate one variable to another: for instance, income to years of education or a college student's grade point average to hours of studying.

In the following example, a graph relates enrollment in a bilingual program to test scores in mathematics for third-grade students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Over a five-year period, beginning in 1982–1983, a bilingual program was introduced in the Eastman Avenue School in Los Angeles. Study this graph (Figure 1.1) to distinguish the progress of students enrolled in the bilingual classes from those not enrolled.

Here is a summary of the information presented in this graph:

> When taught in bilingual classrooms, third graders with limited English proficiency (LEP) at the Eastman Avenue School showed steady progress on a statewide mathematics test. In the 1980–1982 school years, before the beginning of bilingual instruction, third-grade Eastman students performed below the district average in mathematics. After two years of bilingual instruction (in

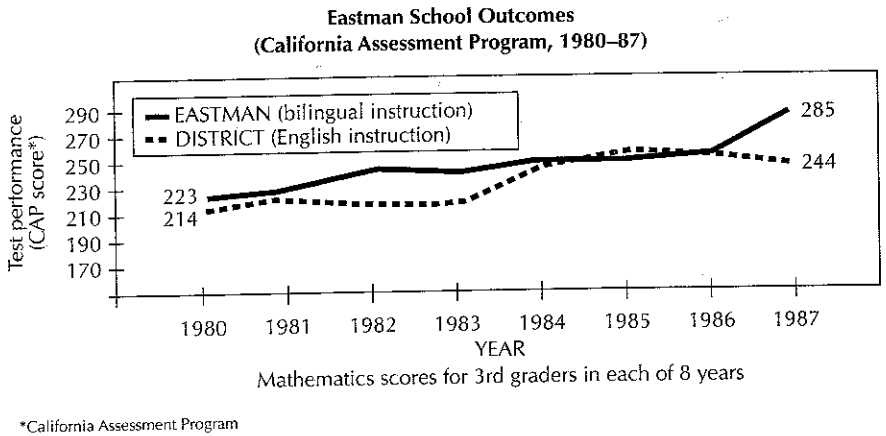

FIGURE 1.1 Eastman Bilingual Project

Source: *"Eastman School Outcomes: Math"* by James Crawford from *Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory, and Practice*, 2nd Edition (Los Angeles: Bilingual Education Services, 1991.) Reprinted by permission.

> the 1984–1985 academic year), LEP third graders taking the math test performed equally with their peers throughout the school district. After four years of bilingual instruction (kindergarten and grades 1–3), LEP third graders equaled or surpassed other district third graders in math.

In a second type of figure (see Figure 1.2), the writer presents a *conceptual overview*. Again the assumption is that a figure gives readers information more quickly and clearly than the same material in sentence form. In this next example, the author uses words, not numbers. Still, one variable is related to another: in this case, time (a three-year span) to the degree of instruction in a student's native language.

Here is a two-sentence summary of the "Transitional Bilingual Education Model":

> The "Transitional Bilingual Education Model" for non-English-speaking students seeks a gradual transition from native-language instruction to English-based instruction. In this model, non-native speakers of English initially learn academic subjects in their native language but within three years receive significant English-language instruction.

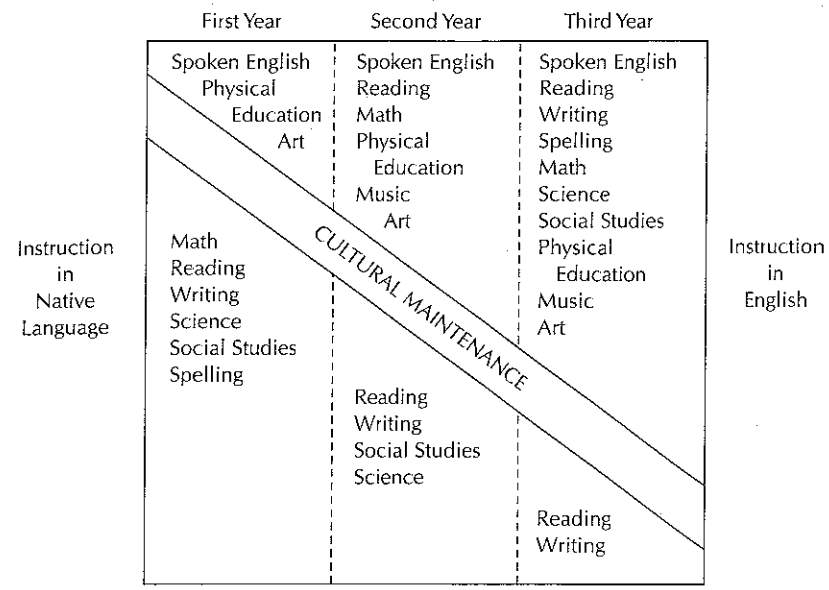

FIGURE 1.2 Transitional Bilingual Education Model: Instruction in Native Language and in English.

Source: From *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education* by Rosalie Pedalino Porter. Copyright © 1990 by Basic Books, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Basic Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

A *table* presents numerical data in rows and columns for quick reference. Tabular information can be incorporated into graphs, if the writer chooses. Graphs are preferable when the writer wants to emphasize a pattern or relationship; tables are used when the writer wants to emphasize numbers. The following example shows projections, through the year 2000, for numbers of minority students (the "N" column) with limited skills in English. The percentage ("%") column shows the percentage a particular language group represents of the total student population being studied.

Here is a summary of the table "Linguistic Minority Student Population with Limited English Proficiency, Aged 5–14."

> By the year 2000, the number of five- to fourteen-year-old students in America with limited English proficiency (LEP) is projected to be 3.4 million, an increase of more than one million from 1980. Among these students, native speakers of Spanish constitute the overwhelming majority. In 1980, they were a projected 1,727,600

TABLE 1.1 Linguistic Minority Student Population with Limited English Proficiency, Aged 5–14 (in thousands)

	PROJECTIONS					
	1980		1990		2000	
LANGUAGE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spanish	1727.6	72.2	2092.7	74.8	2630.0	77.4
Italian	94.9	4.0	100.1	3.6	109.6	3.2
French	89.0	3.7	93.9	3.4	102.9	3.0
German	88.8	3.7	93.7	3.4	102.6	3.0
Filipino	33.2	1.4	35.0	1.2	38.3	1.1
Chinese	31.3	1.3	33.0	1.2	36.2	1.0
Greek	26.5	1.1	27.9	1.0	30.6	0.9
Vietnamese	24.9	1.0	26.2	0.9	28.7	0.8
Navajo	24.3	1.0	25.6	0.9	28.1	0.8
Polish	24.0	1.0	25.3	0.9	27.5	0.8
Portuguese	23.8	1.0	25.1	0.9	27.5	0.8
Yiddish	22.5	0.9	23.7	0.8	26.0	0.7
Japanese	13.3	0.6	14.0	0.5	15.3	0.4
Korean	12.2	0.5	12.8	0.4	14.1	0.4
Not accounted for and other	158.5	6.6	167.5	6.0	192.9	5.4
Total	2394.2		2795.9		3400.0	

Source: "Linguistic Minority Student Population with Limited English Proficiency" by Henry Treuba from *Raising Silent Voices*. Copyright © 1989 by Heinle & Heinle/Newbury House Publishers, Boston, MA. Reprinted by permission.

(72.2 percent of all LEPS); in 1990 they were a projected 2,092,700 (74.8 percent); and in 2000 they were projected to number 2,630,000 (77.4 percent). Other LEP students (e.g., Korean, Navajo, and German) show a projected increase in numbers of the same period; yet these other students constitute a decreasing percentage of total LEP students, as compared to native speakers of Spanish.

▼ PARAPHRASE

In certain cases, you may want to *paraphrase* rather than to summarize material. Writing a paraphrase is similar to writing a summary: it involves recasting a passage into your own words, and so it requires your complete understanding of the material. The difference is that while a summary is a shortened version of the original, the paraphrase is approximately the same length as the original.

Why write a paraphrase when you can quote the original? You may decide to offer a paraphrase of material written in language that is dense, abstract, archaic, or possibly confusing. For example, suppose you were writing a paper on some aspect of human progress and you came across the following passage by the Marquis de Condorcet, a French economist and politician, written in the late eighteenth century:

> If man can, with almost complete assurance, predict phenomena when he knows their laws, and if, even when he does not, he can still, with great expectation of success, forecast the future on the basis of his experience of the past, why, then, should it be regarded as a fantastic undertaking to sketch, with some pretense to truth, the future destiny of man on the basis of his history? The sole foundation for belief in the natural science is this idea, that the general laws directing the phenomena of the universe, known or unknown, are necessary and constant. Why should this principle be any less true for the development of the intellectual and moral faculties of man than for the other operations of nature?

You would like to introduce Condorcet's idea on predicting the future course of human history, but you don't want to slow down your narrative with this somewhat abstract quotation. You may decide to attempt a paraphrase, as follows:

The Marquis de Condorcet believed that if we can predict such physical events as eclipses and tides, and if we can use past events as a guide to future ones, we should be able to forecast human destiny on the basis of history. Physical events, he maintained, are determined by natural laws that are knowable and predictable. Since humans are part of nature, why should their intellectual and moral development be any less predictable than other natural events?

Each sentence in the paraphrase corresponds to a sentence in the original. The paraphrase is somewhat shorter, owing to the differences of style between eighteenth- and twentieth-century prose (we tend to be more brisk and efficient, although not more eloquent). But the main difference is that we have replaced the language of the original with our own language. For example, we have paraphrased Condorcet's "The general laws directing the phenomena of the universe, known or unknown, are necessary and constant" with "Physical events, he maintained, are determined by natural laws that are knowable and predictable." To contemporary readers, "knowable and predictable" might be clearer than "necessary and constant" as a description of natural (i.e., physical) laws. Note that we added the specific examples of eclipses and tides to clarify what might have been a somewhat abstract idea. Note also that we included two attributions to Condorcet within the paraphrase to credit our source properly.

When you come across a passage that you don't understand, the temptation is strong to skip over it. Resist this temptation! Use paraphrase as a tool for explaining to yourself the main ideas of a difficult passage. By translating

another writer's language into your own, you can clarify what you understand and what you don't Thus, the paraphrase becomes a tool for learning the subject

The following pointers will help you write paraphrases

HOW TO WRITE PARAPHRASES

- Make sure that you understand the source passage.
- Substitute your own words for those of the source passage; look for synonyms that carry the same meaning as the original words.
- Rearrange your own sentences so that they read smoothly. Sentence structure, even sentence order, in the paraphrase need not be based on that of the original. A good paraphrase, like a good summary, should stand by itself.

Let's consider some other examples If you were investigating the debate on bilingual education, you would eventually want to examine the law mandating that students who are not proficient in English be taught in their native languages. Here is an excerpt from that law:

PUBLIC LAW 93–380, AUG 21, 1974

BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Sec 105 (a) (1) Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is amended to read as follows:

"TITLE VII—BILINGUAL EDUCATION

"SHORT TITLE

Sec 701 This title may be cited as the "Bilingual Education Act"

"POLICY; APPROPRIATIONS

"Sec 702 (a) Recognizing—

"(1) that there are large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability;

"(2) that many of such children have a cultural heritage which differs from that of English-speaking persons;

"(3) that a primary means by which a child learns is through the use of such child's language and cultural heritage;

"(4) that, therefore, large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability have educational needs which can be met by the use of bilingual educational methods and techniques; and

"(5) that, in addition, children of limited English-speaking ability benefit through the fullest utilization of multiple language and cultural resources, the Congress declares it to be the policy of the United States, in order to establish equal educational opportunity for all children (A) to encourage the establishment and operation, where appropriate, of educational programs using bilingual educational practices, techniques, and methods, and (B) for that purpose, to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies, and to State educational agencies for certain purposes, in order to enable such local educational agencies to develop and carry out such programs in elementary and secondary schools, including activities at the preschool level, which are designed to meet the educational needs of such children; and to demonstrate effective ways of providing, for children of limited English-speaking ability, instruction designed to enable them, while using their native language, to achieve competence in the English language

Like most legal passages, this is somewhat forbidding to laypeople: it consists of one sentence more than two hundred words long, with typically impenetrable legal phrasing. You decide, for clarity's sake, to paraphrase the law for your lay audience. First, of course, you must understand the meaning of the passage, perhaps no small task. But having read the material carefully, you might eventually draft a paraphrase like this one:

> The federal guidelines for bilingual education are presented in Public Law 93-380 (Aug. 21, 1974), an amendment to Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The "Bilingual Education Act" (the short title) is premised on three assumptions: (1) that many children have limited ability to speak English; (2) that many come from ethnically diverse, non-English-speaking backgrounds; and (3) that native language and culture powerfully influence a child's learning. Based on these assumptions, Congress concluded that many children in the United States should be educated through programs in bilingual education. This approach makes full use of a student's native linguistic and cultural resources.
>
> Accordingly, Congress declared that in the interests of establishing equal educational opportunities for all children, the government would encourage the creation of bilingual programs in preschools and in elementary and secondary schools. Congress would fund such programs at the state and local levels with the understanding that these programs would enable students, "while using their native language, to achieve competence in the English language."

In our paraphrase of Congress's one long sentence, we have written six sentences arranged in two paragraphs. Our paragraphs follow the logic and structure of the original, which is presented in two parts. The first part consists of the five "recognizing that" clauses. We have taken these clauses and paraphrased them in two sentences: one dealing with the assumptions underlying the law and the other addressing the conclusions Congress reached

based on these assumptions The second part of the original—and of the paraphrase—presents Congress's two declarations Notice that we ended the paraphrase with a quotation From earlier reading on the debate over bilingual education, we knew that a student's eventual proficiency in English (or lack thereof) has become a contentious issue We therefore wanted to preserve in our paraphrase the exact language of the original Although our paraphrase is somewhat briefer than the original, it follows the original's logic and structure The paraphrase may not stand up in court, but it accurately conveys the sense of the law to the lay reader

Finally, let's consider a passage written by a fine writer that may, nonetheless, best be conveyed in paraphrase. In "Identify All Carriers," an article on AIDS, editor and columnist William F. Buckley makes the following statement:

> I have read and listened, and I think now that I can convincingly crystallize the thoughts chasing about in the minds of, first, those whose concern with AIDS victims is based primarily on a concern for them, and for the maintenance of the most rigid standards of civil liberties and personal privacy, and, second, those whose anxiety to protect the public impels them to give subordinate attention to the civil amenities of those who suffer from AIDS and primary attention to the safety of those who do not.

In style, Buckley's passage is more like Condorcet's than the legal extract: it is eloquent, balanced, and literate. Still, it is challenging. Here is another lengthy sentence, perhaps a bit too eloquent for some readers to grasp For your paper on AIDS, you decide to paraphrase Buckley. You might draft something like this:

> Buckley finds two opposing sides in the AIDS debate: those concerned primarily with the civil liberties and the privacy of AIDS victims, and those concerned primarily with the safety of the public.

Our paraphrases have been somewhat shorter than the original, but this is not always the case. For example, suppose you wanted to paraphrase this statement by Sigmund Freud:

> We have found out that the distortion in dreams which hinders our understanding of them is due to the activities of a censorship, directed against the unacceptable, unconscious wish-impulses.

If you were to paraphrase this statement (the first sentence in the Tenth Lecture of his *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*), you might come up with something like this:

> It is difficult to understand dreams because they contain distortions. Freud believed that these distortions arise from our internal censor, which attempts to suppress unconscious and forbidden desires.

Essentially, this paraphrase does little more than break up one sentence into two and somewhat rearrange the sentence structure for clarity.

Like summaries, then, *paraphrases* are useful devices, both in helping you to understand source material and in enabling you to convey the essence of this source material to your readers When would you choose to write a summary instead of a paraphrase (or vice versa)? The answer to this question depends on your purpose in presenting your source material As we've said, summaries are generally based on articles (or sections of articles) or books. Paraphrases are generally based on particularly difficult (or important) paragraphs or sentences. You would seldom paraphrase a long passage, or summarize a short one, unless there were particularly good reasons for doing so (For example, a lawyer might want to paraphrase several pages of legal language so that his or her client, who is not a lawyer, could understand it.) The purpose of a summary is generally to save your reader time by presenting him or her with a brief and quickly readable version of a lengthy source. The purpose of a paraphrase is generally to clarify a short passage that might otherwise be unclear. Whether you summarize or paraphrase may also depend on the importance of your source. A particularly important source—if it is not too long—may rate a paraphrase. If it is less important, or peripheral to your central argument, you may choose to write a summary instead And, of course, you may choose to summarize only part of your source—the part that is most relevant to the point you are making In conclusion:

WHEN TO SUMMARIZE AND PARAPHRASE

Summarize:
- To present main points of a lengthy passage (article or book)
- To condense peripheral points necessary to discussion

Paraphrase:
- To clarify a short passage
- To emphasize main points

At times, you will want to *quote* a source, instead of summarizing or paraphrasing it You'll find a full discussion on quoting sources starting on page 39. In brief, though, you should quote sources when:

- Another writer's language is particularly memorable and will add interest and liveliness to your paper.
- Another writer's language is so clearly and economically stated that to make the same points in your own words would, by comparison, be ineffective
- You want the solid reputation of a source to lend authority and credibility to your own writing.

2

Thesis, Quotations, Introductions, and Conclusions

WRITING A THESIS

A thesis statement is a one-sentence summary of a paper's content. It is similar, actually, to a paper's conclusion but lacks the conclusion's concern for broad implications and significance. For a writer in the drafting stages, the thesis establishes a focus, a basis on which to include or exclude information. For the reader of a finished product, the thesis anticipates the author's discussion. *A thesis statement, therefore, is an essential tool for both writers and readers of academic material.*

This last sentence is our thesis for this section. Based on this thesis, we, as the authors, have limited the content of the section; and you, as the reader, will be able to form certain expectations about the discussion that follows. You can expect a definition of a thesis statement; an enumeration of the uses of a thesis statement; and a discussion focused on academic material. As writers, we will have met our obligations to you only if in subsequent paragraphs we satisfy these expectations.

The Components of a Thesis

Like any other sentence, a thesis includes a subject and a predicate, which consists of an assertion about the subject. In the sentence "Lee and Grant were different kinds of generals," "Lee and Grant" is the subject and "were different kinds of generals" is the predicate. What distinguishes a thesis statement from any other sentence with a subject and predicate is *that the thesis statement presents the controlling idea of the paper.* The subject of a thesis must present the right balance between the general and the specific to allow for a thorough discussion within the allotted length of the paper. The discussion might include definitions, details, comparisons, contrasts—whatever is needed to illuminate a subject and carry on an intelligent conversation. (If the sentence about Lee and Grant were a thesis, the reader would assume that the rest of the paper contained comparisons and contrasts between the two generals.)

Bear in mind when writing thesis statements that the more general your subject and the more complex your assertion, the longer your paper will be. For instance, you could not write an effective ten-page paper based on the following:

> Democracy is the best system of government.

Consider the subject of this sentence ("democracy") and the assertion of its predicate ("is the best system of government"). The subject is enormous in scope; it is a general category composed of hundreds of more specific subcategories, each of which would be appropriate for a paper ten pages in length. The predicate of our example is also a problem, for the claim that democracy is the best system of government would be simplistic unless accompanied by a thorough, systematic, critical evaluation of *every* form of government yet devised. A ten-page paper governed by such a thesis simply could not achieve the level of detail and sophistication expected of college students.

Limiting the Scope of the Thesis

To write an effective thesis and thus a controlled, effective paper, you need to limit your subject and your claims about it. Two strategies for achieving a thesis statement of manageable proportions are (1) to begin with a working thesis (this strategy assumes that you are familiar with your topic) and (2) to begin with a broad area of interest and narrow it (this strategy assumes that you are unfamiliar with your topic).

BEGIN WITH A WORKING THESIS

Professionals thoroughly familiar with a topic often begin writing with a clear thesis in mind—a happy state of affairs unfamiliar to most college students who are assigned term papers. But professionals usually have an important advantage over students: experience. Because professionals know their material, are familiar with the ways of approaching it, are aware of the questions important to practitioners, and have devoted considerable time to study of the topic, they are naturally in a strong position to begin writing a paper. Not only do professionals have experience in their fields, but they also have a clear purpose in writing; they know their audience and are comfortable with the format of their papers.

Experience counts—there's no way around it. As a student, you are not yet an expert and therefore don't generally have the luxury of beginning your writing tasks with a definite thesis in mind. Once you choose and devote time to a major field of study, however, you will gain experience. In the meantime, you'll have to do more work than the professional to prepare yourself for writing a paper.

But let's assume that you *do* have an area of expertise, that you are in your own right a professional (albeit not in academic matters). We'll assume that you understand your nonacademic subject—say, backpacking—and have been given a clear purpose for writing: to discuss the relative merits of backpack designs. Your job is to write a recommendation for the owner of a sporting-goods chain, suggesting which line of backpacks the chain should carry. The owner lives in another city, so your remarks have to be written. Since you already know a good deal about backpacks, you may already have some well-developed ideas on the topic before you start doing additional research.

Yet even as an expert in your field, you will find that beginning the writing task is a challenge, for at this point it is unlikely that you will be able to conceive a thesis perfectly suited to the contents of your paper. After all, a thesis statement is a summary, and it is difficult to summarize a presentation yet to be written—especially if you plan to discover what you want to say during the process of writing. Even if you know your material well, the best you can do at the early stages is to formulate a *working thesis*—a hypothesis of sorts, a well-informed hunch about your topic and the claim to be made about it. Once you have completed a draft, you can evaluate the degree to which your working thesis accurately summarizes the content of your paper.[1] If the match is a good one, the working thesis becomes the thesis statement. If, however, sections of the paper drift from the focus set out in the working thesis, you'll need to revise the thesis and the paper itself to ensure that the presentation is unified. (You'll know that the match between the content and thesis is a good one when every paragraph directly refers to and develops some element of the thesis.)

BEGIN WITH A SUBJECT AND NARROW IT

Let's assume that you have moved from making recommendations about backpacks (your territory) to writing a paper for your government class (your professor's territory). Whereas you were once the professional who knew enough about your subject to begin writing with a working thesis, you are now the student, inexperienced and in need of a great deal of information before you can begin to think of thesis statements. It may be a comfort to know that your government professor would likely be in the same predicament if asked to recommend backpack designs. He would need to spend several weeks, at least, backpacking to become as experienced as you; and it is fair to say that you will need to spend several hours in the library before you are in a position to choose a topic suitable for an undergraduate paper.

[1]Some writers work with an idea, committing it to paper only after it has been fully formed. Others begin with a vague notion and begin writing a first draft, trusting that as they write they'll discover what they wish to say. Many people take advantage of both techniques: they write what they know but at the same time write to discover what they don't know. As you'll see, we used both techniques in writing this section of the book.

Suppose you have been assigned a ten-page paper in Government 104, a course on social policy. Not only do you not have a thesis—you don't have a subject! Where will you begin? First, you need to select a broad area of interest and make yourself knowledgeable about its general features. What if no broad area of interest occurs to you? Don't despair—there's usually a way to make use of discussions you've read in a text or heard in a lecture. The trick is to find a topic that can become personally important, for whatever reason. (For a paper in your biology class, you might write on the digestive system because a relative has stomach troubles. For an economics seminar, you might explore the factors that threaten banks with collapse because your great-grandparents lost their life savings during the Great Depression.) Whatever the academic discipline, try to discover a topic that you'll enjoy exploring; that way, you'll be writing for yourself as much as for your professor. Some specific strategies to try if no topics occur to you: Review material covered during the semester, class by class if need be; review the semester's readings, actually skimming each assignment. Choose any subject that has held your interest, if even for a moment, and use that as your point of departure.

Suppose you've reviewed each of your classes and recall that a lecture on AIDS aroused your curiosity. Your broad subject of interest, then, will be AIDS. At this point, the goal of your research is to limit this subject to a manageable scope. Although your initial, broad subject will often be more specific than our example, "AIDS," we'll assume for the purposes of discussion the most general case (the subject in greatest need of limiting).

A subject can be limited in at least two ways. First, a general article like an encyclopedia entry may do the work for you by presenting the subject in the form of an outline, with each item in the outline representing a separate topic (which, for your purposes, may need further limiting). Second, you can limit a subject by asking several questions about it:

Who?
What aspects?
Where?
When?
How?

These questions will occur to you as you conduct your research and see the ways in which various authors have focused their discussions. Having read several sources and having decided that you'd like to use them, you might limit the subject "AIDS" by asking *who*—AIDS patients; and *which aspect*—civil rights of AIDS patients.

Certainly, "the civil rights of AIDS patients" offers a more specific focus than does "AIDS"; still, the revised focus is too broad for a ten-page paper in that a comprehensive discussion would obligate you to review numerous particular rights. So again you must try to limit your subject by posing a question. In this particular case, *which aspects* (of the civil rights of AIDS patients) can be asked a second time. Six aspects may come to mind:

- Rights in the workplace
- Rights to hospital care
- Rights to insurance benefits
- Rights to privacy
- Rights to fair housing
- Rights to education

Any *one* of these aspects could provide the focus of a ten-page paper, and you do yourself an important service by choosing one, perhaps two, of the aspects; to choose more would obligate you to too broad a discussion and you would frustrate yourself: Either the paper would have to be longer than ten pages or, assuming you kept to the page limit, the paper would be superficial in its treatment. In both instances, the paper would fail, given the constraints of the assignment. So it is far better that you limit your subject ahead of time, before you attempt to write about it. Let's assume that you settle on the following as an appropriately defined subject for a ten-page paper:

> the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace

The process of narrowing an initial subject depends heavily on the reading you do. The more you read, the deeper your understanding of a topic. The deeper your understanding, the likelier it will be that you can divide a broad and complex topic into manageable—that is, researchable—categories. In the AIDS example, your reading in the literature suggested that the civil rights of AIDS patients was an issue at the center of recent national debate. So reading allowed you to narrow the subject "AIDS" by answering the initial questions—the *who* and *which aspects*. Once you narrowed your focus to "the civil rights of AIDS patients," you read further and quickly realized that civil rights in itself was a broad concern that also should be limited. In this way, reading provided an important stimulus as you worked to identify an appropriate subject for your paper.

MAKE AN ASSERTION

Once you have identified the subject, you can now develop it into a thesis by making an assertion about it. If you have spent enough time reading and gathering information, you will be knowledgeable enough to have something to say about the subject, based on a combination of your own thinking and the thinking of your sources. If you have trouble making an assertion, try writing your topic at the top of a page and then listing everything you now know and feel about it. Often from such a list you will discover an assertion that you then can use to fashion a working thesis. A good way to gauge the reasonableness of your claim is to see what other authors have asserted about the same topic. In fact, keep good notes on the views of others; the notes will prove a useful counterpoint to your own views as you write, and you may want to use them in your paper.

Next, make three assertions about your topic, in order of increasing complexity

1. During the past few years, the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace have been debated by national columnists.
2. Several columnists have offered convincing reasons for protecting the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace.
3. The most sensible plan for protecting the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace has been offered by columnist Anthony Jones.

Keep in mind that these are *working thesis statements*. Because you haven't written a paper based on any of them, they remain *hypotheses* to be tested. After completing a first draft, you would compare the contents of the paper to the thesis and make adjustments as necessary for unity. The working theses is an excellent tool for planning broad sections of the paper, but—again—don't let it prevent you from pursuing related discussions as they occur to you.

Notice how these three statements differ from one another in the forcefulness of their assertions. The third thesis is *strongly argumentative*. "Most sensible" implies that the writer will explain several plans for protecting the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace. Following the explanation would come a comparison of plans and then a judgment in favor of Anthony Jones. Like any working thesis, this one helps the writer plan the paper. Assuming the paper follows the three-part structure we've inferred, the working thesis would become the final thesis, on the basis of which a reader could anticipate sections of the essay to come.

The first of the three thesis statements, by contrast, is *explanatory*:

> During the past few years, the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace have been debated by national columnists.

In developing a paper based on this thesis, the writer would assert only the existence of a debate, obligating himself merely to a summary of the various positions taken. Readers, then, would use this thesis as a tool for anticipating the contours of the paper to follow. Based on this particular thesis, a reader would *not* expect to find the author strongly endorsing the views of one or another columnist. The thesis does not require the author to defend a personal opinion.

The second thesis statement *does* entail a personal, intellectually assertive commitment to the material, although the assertion is not as forceful as the one found in statement 3:

> Several columnists have offered convincing reasons for protecting the rights of AIDS patients in the workplace

Here we have an *explanatory, mildly argumentative* thesis that enables the writer to express an opinion. We infer from the use of the word *convincing* that the writer will judge the various reasons for protecting the rights of AIDS patients; and, we can reasonably assume, the writer himself believes in pro-

tecting these rights. Note the contrast between this second thesis and the first one, where the writer committed himself to no involvement in the debate whatsoever. Still, the present thesis is not as ambitious as the third one, whose writer implicitly accepted the general argument for safeguarding rights (an acceptance he would need to justify) and then took the additional step of evaluating the merits of those arguments in relation to each other.

As you can see, for any subject you might care to explore in a paper, you can make any number of assertions—some relatively simple, some complex. It is on the basis of these assertions that you set yourself an agenda in writing a paper—and readers set for themselves expectations for reading. The more ambitious the thesis, the more complex will be the paper and the greater will be the readers' expectations.

Using the Thesis

Different writing tasks require different thesis statements. The *explanatory thesis* is often developed in response to short-answer exam questions that call for information, not analysis (e.g., "List and explain proposed modifications to contemporary American democracy"). The *explanatory but mildly argumentative thesis* is appropriate for organizing reports (even lengthy ones), as well as essay questions that call for some analysis (e.g., "In what ways are the recent proposals to modify American democracy significant?"). The *strongly argumentative thesis* is used to organize papers and exam questions that call for information, analysis, *and* the writer's forcefully stated point of view (e.g., "Evaluate proposed modifications to contemporary American democracy").

The strongly argumentative thesis, of course, is the riskiest of the three, since you must unequivocally state your position and make it appear reasonable—which requires that you offer evidence and defend against logical objections. But such intellectual risks pay dividends, and if you become involved enough in your work to make challenging assertions, you will provoke challenging responses that enliven classroom discussions. One of the important objectives of a college education is to extend learning by stretching, or challenging, conventional beliefs. You breathe new life into this broad objective, and you enliven your own learning as well, every time you adopt a thesis that sets a challenging agenda both for you (as writer) and for your readers. Of course, once you set the challenge, you must be equal to the task. As a writer, you will need to discuss all the elements implied by your thesis.

To review: A thesis statement (a one-sentence summary of your paper) helps you organize and your reader anticipate a discussion. Thesis statements are distinguished by their carefully worded subjects and predicates, which should be just broad enough and complex enough to be developed within the length limitations of the assignment. Both novices and experts in a field typically begin the initial draft of a paper with a working thesis—a statement that provides writers with structure enough to get started but with latitude enough to discover what they want to say as they write. Once you have completed a first draft, you should test the "fit" of your thesis with the paper that follows. Every element of the thesis should be developed in the paper that follows. Discussions that drift from your thesis should be deleted, or the thesis changed to accommodate the new discussions.

▼ QUOTATIONS

A *quotation* records the exact language used by someone in speech or in writing. A *summary*, in contrast, is a brief restatement in your own words of what someone else has said or written. And a *paraphrase* is also a restatement, although one that is often as long as the original source. Any paper in which you draw upon sources will rely heavily on quotation, summary, and paraphrase. How do you choose among the three?

Remember that the papers you write should be your own—for the most part, your own language and certainly your own thesis, your own inferences, and your own conclusions. It follows that references to your source materials should be written primarily as summaries and paraphrases, both of which are built on restatement, not quotation. You will use summaries when you need a *brief* restatement, and paraphrases, which provide more explicit detail than summaries, when you need to follow the development of a source closely. When you quote too much, you risk losing ownership of your work: more easily than you might think, your voice can be drowned out by the voices of those you've quoted. So *use quotations sparingly*, as you would a pungent spice.

Nevertheless, *quoting just the right source at the right time can significantly improve your papers*. The trick is to know when and how to use quotations.

Choosing Quotations

You'll find that there are several situations in which using quotations can be particularly helpful.

WHEN TO QUOTE

- Use quotations when another writer's language is particularly memorable and will add interest and liveliness to your paper.
- Use quotations when another writer's language is so clear and economical that to make the same point in your own words would, by comparison, be ineffective.
- Use quotations when you want the solid reputation of a source to lend authority and credibility to your own writing.

QUOTING MEMORABLE LANGUAGE

Assume you're writing a paper on Napoleon Bonaparte's relationship with the celebrated Josephine. Through research you learn that two days after their marriage Napoleon, given command of an army, left his bride for what was to be a brilliant military campaign in Italy. How did the young general respond to leaving his wife so soon after their wedding? You come across the following, written from the field of battle by Napoleon on April 3, 1796:

> I have received all your letters, but none has such an impact on me as the last. Do you have any idea, darling, what you are doing, writing to me in those terms? Do you not think my situation cruel enough without intensifying my longing for you, overwhelming my soul? What a style! What emotions you evoke! Written in fire, they burn my poor heart![2]

A summary of this passage might read as follows:

> On April 3, 1796, Napoleon wrote to Josephine, expressing how sorely he missed her and how passionately he responded to her letters

You might write the following as a paraphrase of the passage:

> On April 3, 1796, Napoleon wrote to Josephine that he had received her letters and that one among all others had had a special impact, overwhelming his soul with fiery emotions and longing.

How feeble this summary and paraphrase are when compared with the original! Use the vivid language that your sources give you. In this case, quote Napoleon in your paper to make your subject come alive with memorable detail:

> On April 3, 1796, a passionate, lovesick Napoleon responded to a letter from Josephine; she had written longingly to her husband, who, on a military campaign, acutely felt her absence. "Do you have any idea, darling, what you are doing, writing to me in those terms? . . . What emotions you evoke!" he said of her letters. "Written in fire, they burn my poor heart!"

Quotations can be direct or indirect. A *direct* quotation is one in which you record precisely the language of another, as we did with the sentences from Napoleon's letter. In an *indirect* quotation, you report what someone has said, although you are not obligated to repeat the words exactly as spoken (or written):

Direct quotation: Franklin D. Roosevelt said: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Indirect quotation: Franklin D. Roosevelt said that we have nothing to fear but fear itself

The language in a direct quotation, which is indicated by a pair of quotation marks (" "), must be faithful to the language of the original passage. When using an indirect quotation, you have the liberty of changing words (although not changing meaning). For both direct and indirect quotations, *you must credit your sources,* naming them either in (or close to) the sentence that includes the quotation or in a footnote

[2]Francis Mossiker, trans., *Napoleon and Josephine* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964

QUOTING CLEAR AND CONCISE LANGUAGE

You should quote a source when its language is particularly clear and economical—when your language, by contrast, would be wordy. Read this passage from a text on biology:

> The honeybee colony, which usually has a population of 30,000 to 40,000 workers, differs from that of the bumblebee and many other social bees or wasps in that it survives the winter. This means that the bees must stay warm despite the cold. Like other bees, the isolated honeybee cannot fly if the temperature falls below 10°C (50°F) and cannot walk if the temperature is below 7°C (45°F). Within the wintering hive, bees maintain their temperature by clustering together in a dense ball; the lower the temperature, the denser the cluster. The clustered bees produce heat by constant muscular movements of their wings, legs, and abdomens. In very cold weather, the bees on the outside of the cluster keep moving toward the center, while those in the core of the cluster move to the colder outside periphery. The entire cluster moves slowly about on the combs, eating the stored honey from the combs as it moves.[3]

A summary of this paragraph might read as follows:

> Honeybees, unlike many other varieties of bee, are able to live through the winter by "clustering together in a dense ball" for body warmth

A paraphrase of the same passage would be considerably more detailed:

> Honeybees, unlike many other varieties of bee (such as bumblebees), are able to live through the winter. The 30,000 to 40,000 bees within a honeybee hive could not, individually, move about in cold winter temperatures. But when "clustering together in a dense ball," the bees generate heat by constantly moving their body parts. The cluster also moves slowly about the hive, eating honey stored in the combs. This nutrition, in addition to the heat generated by the cluster, enables the honeybee to survive the cold winter months

In both the summary and the paraphrase we've quoted Curtis's "clustering together in a dense ball," a phrase that lies at the heart of her description of wintering honeybees. For us to describe this clustering in any language other than Curtis's would be pointless since her description is admirably brief and precise.

[3]"Winter Organization" in Patricia Curtis, *Biology,* 2nd ed. New York: Worth, 1976 pp. 822–823

QUOTING AUTHORITATIVE LANGUAGE

You will also want to use quotations that lend authority to your work. When quoting an expert or some prominent political, artistic, or historical figure, you elevate your own work by placing it in esteemed company. Quote respected figures to establish background information in a paper, and your readers will tend to perceive that information as reliable. Quote the opinions of respected figures to endorse some statement that you've made, and your statement becomes more credible to your readers. For example, in an essay that you might write on the importance of reading well, you could make use of a passage from Thoreau's *Walden*:

> Reading well is hard work and requires great skill and training. It "is a noble exercise," writes Henry David Thoreau in *Walden*, "and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent . . . Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written."

By quoting a famous philosopher and essayist on the subject of reading, you add legitimacy to your discussion. Not only do *you* regard reading to be a skill that is both difficult and important; so too does Henry David Thoreau, one of our most influential thinkers. The quotation has elevated the level of your work.

You can also quote to advantage well-respected figures who've written or spoken about the subject of your paper. Here is a discussion of space flight. Author David Chandler refers to a physicist and a physicist–astronaut:

> A few scientists—notably James Van Allen, discoverer of the Earth's radiation belts—have decried the expense of the manned space program and called for an almost exclusive concentration on unmanned scientific exploration instead, saying this would be far more cost-effective.
>
> Other space scientists dispute that idea. Joseph Allen, physicist and former shuttle astronaut, says, "It seems to be argued that one takes away from the other. But before there was a manned space program, the funding on space science was zero. Now it's about $500 million a year."

Note that in the first paragraph Chandler has either summarized or used an indirect quotation to incorporate remarks made by James Van Allen into the discussion on space flight. In the second paragraph, Chandler directly quotes his next source, Joseph Allen. Both quotations, indirect and direct, lend authority and legitimacy to the article, for both James Van Allen and Joseph Allen are experts on the subject of space flight. Note also that Chandler has provided brief but effective biographies of his sources, identifying both so that their qualifications to speak on the subject are known to all:

> James Van Allen, *discoverer of the Earth's radiation belts* . . .
> Joseph Allen, *physicist and former shuttle astronaut* . . .

The phrases in italics are called *appositives*. Their function is to rename the nouns they follow by providing explicit, identifying detail. Any information about a person that can be expressed in the following sentence pattern can be made into an appositive phrase:

> James Van Allen is *the discoverer of the Earth's radiation belts*
> He has decried the expense of the manned space program.
>
> ↓
>
> James Van Allen, *discoverer of the Earth's radiation belts,* has decried the expense of the manned space program

Use appositives to identify authors whom you quote.

Incorporating Quotations into Your Sentences

QUOTING ONLY THE PART OF A SENTENCE OR PARAGRAPH THAT YOU NEED

We've said that a writer selects passages for quotation that are especially *vivid and memorable, concise, or authoritative*. Now put these principles into practice. Suppose that while conducting research on college sports you've come across the following, written by Robert Hutchins, former president of the University of Chicago:

> If athleticism is bad for students, players, alumni and the public, it is even worse for the colleges and universities themselves. They want to be educational institutions, but they can't. The story of the famous halfback whose only regret, when he bade his coach farewell, was that he hadn't learned to read and write is probably exaggerated. But we must admit that pressure from trustees, graduates, "friends," presidents and even professors has tended to relax academic standards. These gentry often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit. Recruiting, subsidizing and the double educational standard cannot exist without the knowledge and the tacit approval, at least, of the colleges and universities themselves. Certain institutions encourage susceptible professors to be nice to athletes now admitted by paying them for serving as "faculty representatives" on the college athletic board.[4]

Suppose that in this entire paragraph you find a gem, a sentence with quotable words that will enliven your discussion. You may want to quote part of the following sentence:

> These gentry often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit

INCORPORATING THE QUOTATION INTO THE FLOW OF YOUR OWN SENTENCE

Once you've selected the passage you want to quote, work the material into your paper in as natural and fluid a manner as possible. Here's how we would quote Hutchins:

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[4]Robert Hutchins. "Gate Receipts and Glory." *The Saturday Evening Post* December 3, 1983.

> Robert Hutchins, a former president of the University of Chicago, asserts that "a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit."

Note that we've used an appositive to identify Hutchins. And we've used only the part of the paragraph—a single clause—that we thought memorable enough to quote directly.

AVOIDING FREESTANDING QUOTATIONS

A quoted sentence should never stand by itself—as in the following example:

> Various people associated with the university admit that the pressures of athleticism have caused a relaxation of standards. "These gentry often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit." But this kind of thinking is bad for the university and even worse for the athletes.

Even if it includes a parenthetical citation, a freestanding quotation would have the problem of being jarring to the reader. Introduce the quotation by attributing the source not in a parenthetical citation, but in some other part of the sentence—beginning, middle, or end. Thus, you could write:

> According to Robert Hutchins, "These gentry often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit."

A variation:

> "These gentry," asserts Robert Hutchins, "often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit."

Another alternative is to introduce a sentence-long quotation with a colon:

> But Robert Hutchins disagrees: "These gentry often overlook the fact that a college should not be interested in a fullback who is a half-wit."

Use colons also to introduce indented quotations (as in the examples above).

When attributing sources, try to vary the standard "states," "writes," "says," and so on. Other, stronger verbs you might consider: "asserts," "argues," "maintains," "insists," "asks," and even "wonders."

USING ELLIPSIS MARKS

Using quotations is made somewhat complicated when you want to quote the beginning and end of a passage but not its middle—as was the case when we quoted Henry David Thoreau. Here's part of the paragraph in *Walden* from which we quoted a few sentences:

> To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object. Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written.[5]

And here was how we used this material:

> Reading well is hard work and requires great skill and training. It "is a noble exercise," writes Henry David Thoreau in *Walden*, "and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent . . . Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written."

Whenever you quote a sentence but delete words from it, as we have done, indicate this deletion to the reader by placing an ellipsis mark, three spaced periods, in the sentence at the point of deletion. The rationale for using an ellipsis mark is that a direct quotation must be reproduced *exactly* as it was written or spoken. When writers delete or change any part of the quoted material, readers must be alerted so they don't think the changes were part of the original. Ellipsis marks and brackets serve this purpose.

If you are deleting the middle of a single sentence, use an ellipsis in place of the deleted words:

> "To read well . . . is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem."

If you are deleting the end of a quoted sentence, or if you are deleting entire sentences of a paragraph before continuing a quotation, add a period before the ellipsis:

> "It requires a training such as the athletes underwent . . . Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written."

If you begin your quotation of an author in the middle of a sentence, you need not indicate deleted words with an ellipsis. Be sure, however, that the syntax of the quotation fits smoothly with the syntax of your sentence:

> Reading "is a noble exercise," writes Henry David Thoreau

USING BRACKETS

Use square brackets whenever you need to add or substitute words in a quoted sentence. The brackets indicate to the reader a word or phrase that does not appear in the original passage but that you have inserted to avoid confusion. For example, when a pronoun's antecedent would be unclear to readers, delete the pronoun from the sentence and substitute an identifying word or phrase in brackets. When you make such a substitution, no ellipsis marks are needed. Assume that you wish to quote the underlined sentence in the following passage:

> Golden Press's *Walt Disney's Cinderella* set the new pattern for America's Cinderella. This book's text is coy and condescending. (Sample: "And her best

[5]Henry David Thoreau, "Reading" in *Walden*. New York: Signet Classic, 1960. p. 72.

> friends of all were—guess who—the mice!") The illustrations are poor cartoons And Cinderella herself is a disaster. She cowers as her sisters rip her homemade ball gown to shreds (Not even homemade by Cinderella, but by the mice and birds) She answers her stepmother with whines and pleadings She is a sorry excuse for a heroine, pitiable and useless. She cannot perform even a simple action to save herself, though she is warned by her friends, the mice. She does not hear them because she is "off in a world of dreams " Cinderella begs, she whimpers, and at last has to be rescued by—guess who—the mice![6]

In quoting this sentence, you would need to identify whom the pronoun *she* refers to. You can do this inside the quotation by using brackets:

> Jane Yolen believes that "[Cinderella] is a sorry excuse for a heroine, pitiable and useless "

If the pronoun begins the sentence to be quoted, as it does in this example, you can identify the pronoun outside of the quotation and simply begin quoting your source one word later:

> Jane Yolen believes that Cinderella "is a sorry excuse for a heroine, pitiable and useless."

If the pronoun you want to identify occurs in the middle of the sentence to be quoted, then you'll need to use brackets Newspaper reporters do this frequently when quoting sources, who in interviews might say something like the following:

> After the fire they did not return to the station house for three hours

If the reporter wants to use this sentence in an article, he or she needs to identify the pronoun:

> An official from City Hall, speaking on the condition that he not be identified, said, "After the fire [the officers] did not return to the station house for three hours."

You also will need to add bracketed information to a quoted sentence when a reference essential to the sentence's meaning is implied but not stated directly Read the following paragraphs from Robert Jastrow's "Toward an Intelligence Beyond Man's":

> These are amiable qualities for the computer; it imitates life like an electronic monkey As computers get more complex, the imitation gets better Finally, the line between the original and the copy becomes blurred In another 15 years or so—two more generations of computer evolution, in the jargon of the technologists—we will see the computer as an emergent form of life.
>
> The proposition seems ridiculous because, for one thing, computers lack the drives and emotions of living creatures. But when drives are useful, they can be programmed into the computer's brain, just as nature programmed them into our ancestors' brains as a part of the equipment for survival. For example, computers,

[6]Jane Yolen, ' America's 'Cinderella.' " APS Publications, Inc in *Children s Literature in Education* 8. 1977. pp. 21–29.

> like people, work better and learn faster when they are motivated Arthur Samuel made this discovery when he taught two IBM computers how to play checkers. They polished their game by playing each other, but they learned slowly. Finally, Dr. Samuel programmed in the will to win by forcing the computers to try harder—and to think out more moves in advance—when they were losing Then the computers learned very quickly One of them beat Samuel and went on to defeat a champion player who had not lost a game to a human opponent in eight years.[7]

If you wanted to quote only the underlined sentence, you would need to provide readers with a bracketed explanation; otherwise, the words "the proposition" would be unclear. Here is how you would manage the quotation:

> According to Robert Jastrow, a physicist and former official at NASA's Goddard Institute, "The proposition [that computers will emerge as a form of life] seems ridiculous because, for one thing, computers lack the drives and emotions of living creatures."

Remember that when you quote the work of another, you are obligated to credit—or cite—the author's work properly; otherwise, you may be guilty of plagiarism. See pages 182–98 for guidance on citing sources.

▼ WRITING INTRODUCTIONS

A classic image: The writer stares glumly at a blank sheet of paper—or, in the electronic version, a blank screen Usually, however, this is an image of a writer who hasn't yet begun to write Once the piece has been started, momentum often helps to carry it forward, even over the rough spots, which can always be fixed later. As a writer, you've surely discovered that getting started when you haven't yet warmed to your task *is* a problem What's the best way to approach your subject? With high seriousness, a light touch, an anecdote? How best to engage your reader?

Many writers avoid such agonizing choices by putting them off—productively. Bypassing the introduction, they start by writing the body of the piece; only after they're finished the body do they go back to write the introduction There's a lot to be said for this approach. Because you have presumably spent more time thinking about the topic itself than about how you're going to introduce it, you are in a better position to begin directly with your presentation. And often, it's not until you've actually seen the piece on paper and read it over once or twice that a "natural" way of introducing it becomes apparent Even if there is no natural way to begin, you are generally in better psychological shape to write the introduction after the major task of writing is behind you and you know exactly what you're leading up to.

[7]Excerpt from "Toward an Intelligence Beyond Man's" from *Time* February 20, 1978. Copyright © 1978 Time Inc. Reprinted by permission

Perhaps, however, you can't operate this way. After all, you have to start writing *somewhere,* and if you have evaded the problem by skipping the introduction, that blank page may loom just as large whenever you do choose to begin. If this is the case, then go ahead and write an introduction, knowing full well that it's probably going to be flat and awful. Set down any kind of pump-priming or throat-clearing verbiage that comes to mind, as long as you have a working thesis. Assure yourself that whatever you put down at this point (except for the thesis) "won't count" and that when the time is right, you'll go back and replace it with something that's fit for eyes other than yours. But in the meantime, you'll have gotten started.

The *purpose* of an introduction is to prepare the reader to enter the world of your essay. The introduction makes the connection between the more familiar world inhabited by the reader and the less familiar world of the writer's particular subject; it places a discussion in a context that the reader can understand.

There are many ways to provide such a context. We'll consider just a few of the most common.

Quotation

Here is an introduction to a paper on democracy:

> "Two cheers for democracy" was E. M. Forster's not-quite-wholehearted judgment. Most Americans would not agree. To them, our democracy is one of the glories of civilization. To one American in particular, E. B. White, democracy is "the hole in the stuffed shirt through which the sawdust slowly trickles . . . the dent in the high hat . . . the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time" (915). American democracy is based on the oldest continuously operating written constitution in the world—a most impressive fact and a testament to the farsightedness of the founding fathers. But just how farsighted can mere humans be? In *Future Shock,* Alvin Toffler quotes economist Kenneth Boulding on the incredible acceleration of social change in our time: "The world of today . . . is as different from the world in which I was born as that world was from Julius Caesar's" (13). As we move toward the twenty-first century, it seems legitimate to question the continued effectiveness of a governmental system that was devised in the eighteenth century; and it seems equally legitimate to consider alternatives.

The quotations by Forster and White help set the stage for the discussion of democracy by presenting the reader with some provocative and well-phrased remarks. Later in the paragraph, the quotation by Boulding more specifically prepares us for the theme of change that will be central to the essay as a whole.

Historical Review

In many cases, the reader will be unprepared to follow the issue you discuss unless you provide some historical background. Consider the following introduction to an essay on the film-rating system:

> Sex and violence on the screen are not new issues. In the Roaring Twenties there was increasing pressure from civic and religious groups to ban depictions of "immorality" from the screen. Faced with the threat of federal censorship, the film producers decided to clean their own house. In 1930, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America established the Production Code. At first, adherence to the Code was voluntary; but in 1934 Joseph Breen, newly appointed head of the MPPDA, gave the Code teeth. Henceforth all newly produced films had to be submitted for approval to the Production Code Administration, which had the power to award or withhold the Code seal. Without a Code seal, it was virtually impossible for a film to be shown anywhere in the United States, since exhibitors would not accept it. At about the same time, the Catholic Legion of Decency was formed to advise the faithful which films were and were not objectionable. For several decades the Production Code Administration exercised powerful control over what was portrayed in American theatrical films. By the 1960s, however, changing standards of morality had considerably weakened the Code's grip. In 1968, the Production Code was replaced with a rating system designed to keep younger audiences away from films with high levels of sex or violence. Despite its imperfections, this rating system has proved more beneficial to American films than did the old censorship system.

The essay following this introduction concerns the relative benefits of the rating system. By providing some historical background on the rating system, the writer helps readers to understand his arguments. Notice the chronological development of details.

Review of a Controversy

A particular type of historical review is the review of a controversy or debate. Consider the following introduction:

> The *American Heritage Dictionary*'s definition of civil disobedience is rather simple: "the refusal to obey civil laws that are regarded as unjust, usually by employing methods of passive resistance." However, despite such famous (and beloved) examples of civil disobedience as the movements of Mahatma Gandhi in India and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., in the United States, the question of whether or not civil disobedience should be considered an asset to society is hardly clear cut. For instance, Hannah Arendt, in her article "Civil Disobedience," holds that "to think of disobedient minorities as rebels and truants is against the letter and spirit of a constitution whose framers were especially sensitive to the dangers of unbridled majority rule." On the other hand, a noted lawyer, Lewis Van Dusen, Jr., in his article "Civil Disobedience: Destroyer of Democracy," states that "civil disobedience, whatever the ethical rationalization, is still an assault on our democratic society, an affront to our legal order and an attack on our constitutional government." These two views are clearly incompatible. I believe, though, that Van Dusen's is the more convincing. On balance, civil disobedience is dangerous to society.[8]

[8]Michele Jacques, "Civil Disobedience: Van Dusen vs. Arendt." [Unpublished paper. Used by permission.]

The negative aspects of civil disobedience, rather than Van Dusen's essay, are the topic of this essay But to introduce this topic, the writer has provided quotations that represent opposing sides of the controversy over civil disobedience, as well as brief references to two controversial practitioners By focusing at the outset on the particular rather than the abstract aspects of the subject, the writer hoped to secure the attention of her readers and to involve them in the controversy that forms the subject of her essay.

From the General to the Specific

Another way of providing a transition from the reader's world to the less familiar world of the essay is to work from a general subject to a specific one. The following introduction to a discussion of the 1968 massacre at My Lai, Vietnam, begins with general statements and leads to the particular subject at hand:

> Though we prefer to think of man as basically good and reluctant to do evil, such is not the case Many of the crimes inflicted on humankind can be dismissed as being committed by the degenerates of society at the prompting of the abnormal mind But what of the perfectly "normal" man or woman who commits inhumane acts simply because he or she has been ordered to do so? It cannot be denied that such acts have occurred, either in everyday life or in war-time situations. Unfortunately, even normal, well-adjusted people can become cruel, inhumane, and destructive if placed in the hands of unscrupulous authority Such was the case in the village of My Lai, Vietnam, on March 16, 1968, when a platoon of American soldiers commanded by Lt. William Calley massacred more than 100 civilians, including women and children

From the Specific to the General: Anecdote, Illustration

Consider the following paragraph:

> In late 1971 astronomer Carl Sagan and his colleagues were studying data transmitted from the planet Mars to the earth by the Mariner 9 spacecraft. Struck by the effects of the Martian dust storms on the temperature and on the amount of light reaching the surface, the scientists wondered about the effects on earth of the dust storms that would be created by nuclear explosions Using computer models, they simulated the effects of such explosions on the earth's climate. The results astounded them Apart from the known effects of nuclear blasts (fires and radiation), the earth, they discovered, would become enshrouded in a "nuclear winter " Following a nuclear exchange, plummeting temperatures and pervading darkness would destroy most of the Northern Hemisphere's crops and farm animals and would eventually render much of the planet's surface uninhabitable The effects of nuclear war, apparently, would be more catastrophic than had previously been imagined. It has therefore become more urgent than ever for the nations of the world to take dramatic steps to reduce the threat of nuclear war

The previous introduction went from the general (the question of whether or not man is basically good) to the specific (the massacre at My Lai); this one goes from the specific (scientists studying data) to the general (the urgency of

reducing the nuclear threat). The anecdote is one of the most effective means at your disposal of capturing and holding your reader's attention. For decades, speakers have begun their general remarks with a funny, touching, or otherwise appropriate story; in fact, there are plenty of books that are nothing but collections of such stories, arranged by subject.

Question

Frequently, you can provoke the reader's attention by posing a question or a series of questions:

> Are gender roles learned or inherited? Scientific research has established the existence of biological differences between the sexes, but the effect of biology's influence on gender roles cannot be distinguished from society's influence According to Michael Lewis of the Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children, "As early as you can show me a sex difference, I can show you the culture at work." Social processes, as well as biological differences, are responsible for the separate roles of men and women [9]

Opening your essay with a question can be provocative, since it places the reader in an active role: He or she begins by considering answers. *Are* gender roles learned? *Are* they inherited? In this active role, the reader is likely to continue reading with interest

Statement of Thesis

Perhaps the most direct method of introduction is to begin immediately with the thesis:

> Computers are a mixed blessing The lives of Americans are becoming increasingly involved with machines that think for them "We are at the dawn of the era of the smart machine," say the authors of a cover story on the subject in *Newsweek,* "that will change forever the way an entire nation works," beginning a revolution that will be to the brain what the industrial revolution was to the hand. Tiny silicon chips already process enough information to direct air travel, to instruct machines how to cut fabric—even to play chess with (and defeat) the masters One can argue that development of computers for the household, as well as industry, will change for the better the quality of our lives: computers help us save energy, reduce the amount of drudgery that most of us endure around tax season, make access to libraries easier. Yet there is a certain danger involved with this proliferation of technology

This essay begins with a challenging assertion: that computers are a mixed blessing It is one that many readers are perhaps unprepared to consider, since they may have taken it for granted that computers are an unmixed blessing The advantage of beginning with a provocative (thesis) statement is that it forces the reader to sit up and take notice—perhaps even to begin protesting.

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[9]Tammy Smith, "Are Sex Roles Learned or Inherited?" [Unpublished paper. Used by permission.]

The paragraph goes on to concede some of the "blessings" of computerization but then concludes with the warning that there is "a certain danger" associated with the new technology—a danger, the curious or indignant reader has a right to conclude, that will be more fully explained in the paragraphs to follow.

One final note about our model introductions: They may be longer than introductions you have been accustomed to writing. Many writers (and readers) prefer shorter, snappier introductions. This is largely a matter of personal or corporate style: there is no rule concerning the correct length of an introduction. If you feel that a short introduction is appropriate, use one. You may wish to break up what seems like a long introduction into two paragraphs. (Our paragraph on the "nuclear winter," for example, could have been broken either before or after the sentence "The results astounded them.")

▼ WRITING CONCLUSIONS

One way to view the conclusion of your paper is as an introduction worked in reverse, a bridge from the world of your essay back to the world of your reader. A conclusion is the part of your paper in which you restate and (if necessary) expand on your thesis. Essential to any conclusion is the summary, which is not merely a repetition of the thesis but a restatement that takes advantage of the material you've presented. *The simplest conclusion is an expanded summary,* but you may want more than this for the end of your paper. Depending on your needs, you might offer a summary and then build onto it a discussion of the paper's significance or its implications for future study, for choices that individuals might make, for policy, and so on. You might also want to urge the reader to change an attitude or to modify behavior. Certainly, you are under no obligation to discuss the broader significance of your work (and a summary, alone, will satisfy the formal requirement that your paper have an ending); but the conclusions of better papers often reveal authors who are "thinking large" and want to connect the particular concerns of their papers with the broader concerns of society.

Here we'll consider seven strategies for expanding the basic summary–conclusion. But two words of advice are in order. First, no matter how clever or beautifully executed, a conclusion cannot salvage a poorly written paper. Second, by virtue of its placement, the conclusion carries rhetorical weight. It is the last statement a reader will encounter before turning from your work. Realizing this, writers who expand on the basic summary–conclusion often wish to give their final words a dramatic flourish, a heightened level of diction. Soaring rhetoric and drama in a conclusion are fine as long as they do not unbalance the paper and call attention to themselves. Having labored long hours over your paper, you have every right to wax eloquent. But keep a sense of proportion and timing. Make your points quickly and end crisply.

Statement of the Subject's Significance

One of the more effective ways to conclude a paper is to discuss the larger significance of what you have written, providing readers with one more reason to regard your work as a serious effort. When using this strategy, you move from the specific concern of your paper to the broader concerns of the reader's world. Often, you will need to choose among a range of significances: A paper on the Wright brothers might end with a discussion of air travel as it affects economies, politics, or families; a paper on contraception might end with a discussion of its effect on sexual mores, population, or the church. But don't overwhelm your reader with the importance of your remarks. Keep your discussion well focused.

The following paragraphs conclude a paper on George H. Shull, a pioneer in the inbreeding and crossbreeding of corn:

> Thus, the hybrids developed and described by Shull 75 years ago have finally dominated U S corn production.
>
> The adoption of hybrid corn was steady and dramatic in the Corn Belt. From 1930 through 1979 the average yields of corn in the U S. increased from 21.9 to 95.1 bushels per acre, and the additional value to the farmer is now several billion dollars per year.
>
> The success of hybrid corn has also stimulated the breeding of other crops, such as sorghum hybrids, a major feed grain crop in arid parts of the world. Sorghum yields have increased 300 percent since 1930. Approximately 20 percent of the land devoted to rice production in China is planted with hydrid seed, which is reported to yield 20 percent more than the best varieties. And many superior varieties of tomatoes, cucumbers, spinach, and other vegetables are hybrids. Today virtually all corn produced in the developed countries is from hybrid seed. From those blue bloods of the plant kingdom has come a model for feeding the world.[10]

The first sentence of this conclusion is a summary, and from it the reader can infer that the paper included a discussion of Shull's techniques for the hybrid breeding of corn. The summary is followed by a two-paragraph discussion on the significance of Shull's research for feeding the world.

Call for Further Research

In the scientific and social scientific communities, papers often end with a review of what has been presented (as, for instance, in an experiment) and the ways in which the subject under consideration needs to be further explored. If you raise questions that you call on others to answer, however, make sure you know that the research you are calling for hasn't already been conducted.

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[10]From "Hybrid Vim and Vigor" by William L. Brown from pp. 77–78 in *Science 80–85.* November 1984. Copyright 1984 by the AAAS. Reprinted by permission.

This next conclusion comes from a sociological report on the placement of elderly men and women in nursing homes.

> Thus, our study shows a correlation between the placement of elderly citizens in nursing facilities and the significant decline of their motor and intellectual skills over the ten months following placement What the research has not made clear is the extent to which this marked decline is due to physical as opposed to emotional causes The elderly are referred to homes at that point in their lives when they grow less able to care for themselves—which suggests that the drop-off in skills may be due to physical causes. But the emotional stress of being placed in a home, away from family and in an environment that confirms the patient's view of himself as decrepit, may exacerbate—if not itself be a primary cause of—the patient's rapid loss of abilities Further research is needed to clarify the relationship between depression and particular physical ailments as these affect the skills of the elderly in nursing facilities There is little doubt that information yielded by such studies can enable health care professionals to deliver more effective services.

Notice how this call for further study locates the author in a large community of researchers on whom she depends for assistance in answering the questions that have come out of her own work The author summarizes her findings (in the first sentence of the paragraph), states what her work has not shown, and then extends her invitation

Solution/Recommendation

The purpose of your paper might be to review a problem or controversy and to discuss contributing factors. In such a case, it would be appropriate, after summarizing your discussion, to offer a solution based on the knowledge you've gained while conducting research If your solution is to be taken seriously, your knowledge must be amply demonstrated in the body of the paper

> . . . The major problem in college sports today is not commercialism—it is the exploitation of athletes and the proliferation of illicit practices which dilute educational standards
>
> Many universities are currently deriving substantial benefits from sports programs that depend on the labor of athletes drawn from the poorest sections of America's population It is the responsibility of educators, civil rights leaders, and concerned citizens to see that these young people get a fair return for their labor both in terms of direct remuneration and in terms of career preparation for a life outside sports
>
> Minimally, scholarships in revenue-producing sports should be designed to extend until graduation, rather than covering only four years of athletic eligibility, and should include guarantees of tutoring, counseling, and proper medical care At institutions where the profits are particularly large (such as Texas A & M, which can afford to pay its football coach $280,000 a year), scholarships should also provide salaries that extend beyond room, board, and tuition The important thing is that the athlete be remunerated fairly and have the opportunity to gain skills from a university environment without undue competition from a physically and psychologically demanding full-time job. This may well require that scholarships be extended over five or six years, including summers
>
> Such a proposal, I suspect, will not be easy to implement The current amateur system, despite its moral and educational flaws, enables universities to hire their athletic labor at minimal cost But solving the fiscal crisis of the universities on the backs of America's poor and minorities is not, in the long run, a tenable solution. With the support of concerned educators, parents, and civil rights leaders, and with the help from organized labor, the college athlete, truly a sleeping giant, will someday speak out and demand what is rightly his—and hers—a fair share of the revenue created by their hard work.[11]

In this conclusion, the author summarizes his article in one sentence: "The major problem in college sports today is not commercialism—it is the exploitation of athletes and the proliferation of illicit practices which dilute educational standards." In paragraph 2, he continues with an analysis of the problem just stated and follows with a general recommendation—that "concerned educators, parents, and civil rights leaders" be responsible for the welfare of college athletes In paragraph 3, he makes a specific proposal, and in the final paragraph, he anticipates resistance to the proposal He concludes by discounting this resistance and returning to the general point, that college athletes should receive a fair deal.

Anecdote

An anecdote is a briefly told story or joke, the point of which in a conclusion is to shed light on your subject. The anecdote is more direct than an allusion. With an allusion, you merely refer to a story ("Too many people today live in Plato's cave . . . "); with the anecdote, you actually retell the story The anecdote allows readers to discover for themselves the significance of a reference to another source—an effort most readers enjoy because they get to exercise their creativity.

The following anecdote concludes an article on homicide. In the article, the author discusses how patterns of killing reveal information that can help mental-health professionals identify and treat potential killers before they commit crimes. The author emphasizes both the difficulty and the desirability of approaching homicide as a threat to public health that, like disease, can be treated with preventive care.

> In his book, *The Exploits of the Incomparable Mulla Nasrudin,* Sufi writer Idries Shah, in a parable about fate, writes about the many culprits of murder:
>
> "What is Fate?" Nasrudin was asked by a scholar.
>
> "An endless succession of intertwined events, each influencing the other "
>
> "That is hardly a satisfactory answer. I believe in cause and effect "
>
> "Very well," said the Mulla, "Look at that " He pointed to a procession passing in the street

[11]From Mark Naison, "Scenario for Scandal," *Commonweal* 109 *(16),* September 24. 1982 Reprinted by permission

"That man is being taken to be hanged. Is that because someone gave him a silver piece and enabled him to buy the knife with which he committed the murder; or because someone saw him do it; or because nobody stopped him?"[12]

The writer chose to conclude the article with this anecdote. She could have developed an interpretation, but this would have spoiled the dramatic value for the reader. The purpose of using an anecdote is to make your point with subtlety, so resist the temptation to interpret. Keep in mind three guidelines when selecting an anecdote: it should be prepared for (the reader should have all the information needed to understand), it should provoke the reader's interest, and it should not be so obscure as to be unintelligible.

Quotation

A favorite concluding device is the quotation—the words of a famous person or an authority in the field on which you are writing. The purpose of quoting another is to link your work to theirs, thereby gaining for your work authority and credibility. The first criterion for selecting a quotation is its suitability to your thesis. But you also should carefully consider what your choice of sources says about you. Suppose you are writing a paper on the American work ethic. If you could use a line by comedian David Letterman or one by the current secretary of labor to make the final point of your conclusion, which would you choose and why? One source may not be inherently more effective than the other, but the choice certainly sets a tone for the paper. Here's an example of a conclusion that employs quotation:

> There is no doubt that machines will get smarter and smarter, even designing their own software and making new and better chips for new generations of computers. . . . More and more of their power will be devoted to making them easier to use—"friendly," in industry parlance—even for those not trained in computer science. And computer scientists expect that public ingenuity will come up with applications the most visionary researchers have not even considered. One day, a global network of smart machines will be exchanging rapid-fire burst of information at unimaginable speeds. If they are used wisely, they could help mankind to educate its masses and crack new scientific frontiers. "For all of us, it will be fearful, terrifying, disruptive," says SRI's Peter Schwartz. "In the end there will be those whose lives will be diminished. But for the vast majority, their lives will be greatly enhanced." In any event, there is no turning back: if the smart machines have not taken over, they are fast making themselves indispensable—and in the end, that may amount to very much the same thing.[13]

Notice how the quotation is used to position the writer to make one final remark.

Particularly effective quotations may themselves be used to end an essay, as in the following example. Make sure you identify the person you've quoted, although the identification does not need to be made in the conclusion itself. For example, earlier in the paper from which the following conclusion was taken, Maureen Henderson was identified as an epidemiologist exploring the ways in which a change in diet can prevent the onset of certain cancers.

> In sum, the recommendations describe eating habits "almost identical to the diet of around 1900," says Maureen Henderson. "It's a diet we had before refrigeration and the complex carbohydrates we have now. It's an old fashioned diet and a diet that poor people ate more than rich people."
>
> Some cancer researchers wonder whether people will be willing to change their diets or take pills on the chance of preventing cancer, when one-third of the people in the country won't even stop smoking. Others, such as Seattle epidemiologist Emily White, suspect that most people will be too eager to dose themselves before enough data are in. "We're not here to convince the public to take anything," she says. "The public is too eager already. What we're saying is, 'Let us see if some of these things work.' We want to convince ourselves before we convince the public."[14]

There is a potential problem with using quotations: If you end with the words of another, you may leave the impression that someone else can make your case more eloquently than you can. The language of the quotation will put your own prose into relief. If your own prose suffers by comparison—if the quotations are the best part of your paper—you'd be wise to spend some time revising. The way to avoid this kind of problem is to make your own presentation strong.

Question

Questions are useful for opening essays, and they are just as useful for closing them. Opening and closing questions function in different ways, however. The introductory question promises to be addressed in the paper that follows. But the concluding question leaves issues unresolved, calling on the readers to assume an active role by offering their own solutions:

> How do we surmount the reaction that threatens to destroy the very gains we thought we had already won in the first stage of the women's movement? How do we surmount our own reaction, which shadows our feminism and our femininity (we blush even to use that word now)? How do we transcend the polarization between women and women and between women and men to achieve the new human wholeness that is the promise of feminism, and get on with solving the concrete, practical, everyday problems of living, working and loving as equal persons? This is the personal and political business of the second stage.[15]

Perhaps you will choose to raise a question in your conclusion and then answer it, based on the material you've provided in the paper. The answered

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[12]From "The Murder Epidemic" by Nikki Meredith from pp. 42–48 in *Science 80–85*. December 1984. Copyright by AAAS. Reprinted by permission of the author.

[13]From "And Man Created the Chip." *Newsweek*, June 30, 1980. Copyright © 1980 by Newsweek, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission.

[14]Reprinted by permission. From the September issue of *Science 84*. Copyright © 1984 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

[15]Betty Friedan, "Feminism's Next Step" in *The Second Stage*. New York: Summit Books, 1981.

question challenges a reader to agree or disagree with your response and thus also places the reader in an active role. The following brief conclusion ends an article entitled "Would an Intelligent Computer Have a 'Right to Life'?"

> So the answer to the question "Would an intelligent computer have the right to life?" is probably that it would, but only if it could discover reasons and conditions under which it would give up its life if called upon to do so—which would make computer intelligence as precious a thing as human intelligence [16]

Speculation

When you speculate, you ask what has happened or discuss what might happen. This kind of question stimulates the reader because its subject is the unknown.

The following paragraph concludes "The New Generation Gap" by Neil Howe and William Strauss. In this essay, Howe and Strauss discuss the differences among Americans of various ages, including the "GI Generation" (born between 1901 and 1924), the "Boomers" (born 1943–1961), the "Thirteeners" (born 1961–1981), and the "Millennials" (born 1981–2000):

> If, slowly but surely, Millennials receive the kind of family protection and public generosity that GIs enjoyed as children, then they could come of age early in the next century as a group much like the GIs of the 1920s and 1930s—as a stellar (if bland) generation of rationalists, team players, and can-do civic builders. Two decades from now Boomers entering old age may well see in their grown Millennial children an effective instrument for saving the world, while Thirteeners entering midlife will shower kindness on a younger generation that is getting a better deal out of life (though maybe a bit less fun) than they ever got at a like age. Study after story after column will laud these "best damn kids in the world" as heralding a resurgent American greatness. And, for a while at least, no one will talk about a generation gap [17]

Thus, Howe and Strauss conclude an essay concerned largely with the apparently unbridgable gaps of understanding between parents and childen with a hopeful speculation that generational relationships will improve considerably in the next two decades.

[16]Robert E. Mueller and Eric I. Mueller, 'Would an Intelligent Computer Have a 'Right to Life'?" *Creative Computing* August 1983

[17]Excerpt from "The New Generation Gap" by Neil Howe and William Strauss. Originally appeared in *Atlantic*. Dcember 1992. Reprinted by permission of Raphael Sagalyn, Inc.

3

Critical Reading and Critique

CRITICAL READING

When writing papers in college, you are often called on to respond critically to source materials. Critical reading requires the abilities to both summarize and evaluate a presentation. As you have seen, a *summary* is a brief restatement in your own words of the content of a passage. An *evaluation* is a more difficult matter. In your college work, you read to gain and *use* new information; but as sources are not equally valid or equally useful, you must learn to distinguish critically among sources by evaluating them.

There is no ready-made formula for determining validity. Critical reading and its written analogue—the *critique*—require discernment, sensitivity, imagination, and, above all, a willingness to become involved in what you read. These skills cannot be taken for granted and must be developed through repeated practice. You must begin somewhere, though, and we recommend that you start by posing two broad categories of questions about passages, articles, and books that you read: (1) What is the author's purpose in writing? Does he or she succeed in this purpose? (2) To what extent do you agree with the author?

Question Category 1: What Is the Author's Purpose in Writing? Does He or She Succeed in This Purpose?

All critical reading *begins with an accurate summary*. Before attempting an evaluation, you must be able to locate an author's thesis and identify the selection's content and structure. You must understand the author's *purpose*. Authors write to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. A given piece may be *primarily informative* (a summary of the reasons for the rapid spread of AIDS), *primarily persuasive* (an argument on why the government must do something about poverty), or *primarily entertaining* (a play about the frustrations of young lovers), or it may be all three (as in John Steinbeck's novel *The*