

LITERARY CRITICISM/PRECIS ASSIGNMENT

PRECIS: a severe abridgement of the principal ideas or arguments advanced in a much longer work, retaining the order of the original. (Note: a précis is neither a paraphrase nor a summary of the work.) When writing a précis of literary criticism, the student should be sure to include 3 – 4 original points presented by the critic. Your précis must be **typed, single-spaced, and no longer than ½ page in length.**

1. Go to the library or access a library database to find a piece of literary criticism over *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The work **MUST** be from a peer-reviewed, scholarly source. Copy or print out the criticism, and be sure to copy down bibliographic information if you are copying the article from a book at the library. **Read, highlight, and annotate the article.**
2. To write a précis, begin with a thesis statement that reflects the critic's main idea and includes the title and author of the criticism. Next, determine and state the type of literary criticism by consulting the Major Schools of Literary Criticism handout; write this **in bold** (you may include more than one school if your critic takes multiple approaches). The remainder of the précis should reflect the **3 -4 key points** made by the critic (no quotations, no commentary).
3. On the same page below the précis, type a bibliographic entry for your literary criticism. This entry must **precisely** adhere to MLA format. Refer to the MLA Manual for the correct and definitive formats. **Double-space this entry and use hanging indentation.**

GRADING CRITERIA FOR LITERARY CRITICISM PACKET:

- Précis 45 points
 - Must have 3 – 4 points of insightful information gleaned from article
 - Must meet length requirement
- Bibliography – in MLA format 20 points
 - Minor error in format – minus 10 pts.
 - Missing information – minus 10 pts.
 - Major errors – no credit -- minus 20 pts.
- Copy of Criticism – highlighted and margin noted 35 points
 - **Please make your copy on 8 ½ x 11 paper and attach to the bottom of packet.
 - Not highlighted – minus 15 pts.
 - Not annotated – minus 15 pts.
 - Article too short or of poor quality – minus 15 pts.

SAMPLE BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRY for “a previously published article reprinted in a collection.”
(This includes **Contemporary Literary Criticism** and **TCLC**):

Simon, John. “Permanents and Transients.” New York Magazine 12 (14 May 1979): 75—6.

Rpt. in Contemporary Literary Criticism. Ed. Sharon R. Gunton and Laurie Lanzon

Harris. Vol. 15. Detroit: Gale, 1980. 399-402.

***Remember:** any source that comes from the Internet must have a URL address. Limit your address to one line. See MLA Manual for format.

Visit <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> for additional information regarding MLA format.