**Summary Essay**

This assignment requires you to summarize in a few paragraphs the content of Postman's first two chapters, “The Medium is the Metaphor” and “Media as Epistemology.” The essay should be 500-600 words.

Please use *paraphrases* and *direct quotations* in your summary. In addition, please note that you need to use beginning and ending quotation marks and page numbers (in parentheses) following the direct quotations.

Do **not** include a list of sources at the end of the paper, as you have only one primary source for this paper. However, you will want to incorporate the name the source and the author in your first paragraph.

Your essay should have the following:

* + an **introductory paragraph with a thesis statement**.

* + at least **three body paragraphs**

Some tips on summarizing and paraphrasing are provided in *Writer’s Help* on the following pages:

* + - ***Summarizing a written or a visual text***

* + - ***Paraphrasing without plagiarizing***

* + a compelling **concluding paragraph**.

**Length:** 500-600 words

*See the next page…*

**Some strategies to consider when writing this essay:**

The following approach might be helpful for you when you write this assignment:

* 1. Read the entire text of both chapters, noting key points and main ideas.

* 1. Summarize in your own words what the single main idea of the two chapters taken together is.

* 1. Paraphrase three to five important supporting points for the main idea that come up in the two chapters.

* 1. Underline any words, phrases, or brief passages you believe should be quoted directly because the particular way they are worded contributes to the meaning.

* 1. Write an introductory paragraph that contains a thesis statement at its conclusion, containing the single main idea of the two chapters (see item 2 above)

* 1. Write topic sentences for the body paragraphs (three to five) that relate to the thesis and also incorporate the important supporting points.

* 1. Develop the content of each body paragraph by adding direct quotes (see information below on quotations).

* 1. Write a final draft, editing for smooth transitions and correctness.

* 1. Remember that quoting should be done only sparingly; be sure that you have a good reason to include a direct quotation when you decide to do so.

There are several ways to integrate quotations into your text. Often, a short quotation works well when integrated into a sentence. Longer quotations can stand alone.

***The following page provides some examples of summarizing and paraphrasing…***

**EXAMPLES OF SUMMARIZATION & PARAPHRASING**

**Example A** is a short example of summarization.

**Example B** shows two attempts at paraphrasing a paragraph. One is correct and one is not.

The examples are drawn from the Purdue OWL (Dana Lynn Driscoll, Allen Brizee, and Tony Cimasko):

**Example A**

**ORIGINAL:**  *Overall, the first two quarters of 2008 have been profitable to the company.  Nineteen of twenty departments report cutting costs at least twenty percent, and sales from fifteen departments have risen five percent, or about $5 million.  Despite these positive developments, most department heads believe that they will not be able to maintain these levels for the remainder of the year.*

**SUMMARY:**  *The first two quarters of 2008 have been profitable, but the rest of the year is not expected to be as good.*

Note that the level of detail in the summary is much less than in the original.

**Example B**

Take a look at the text below (excerpted from “Expert: Wikipedia Won't Go Away, So Learn How to Use It” by Maggie Morris) and then note the following two student attempts at paraphrasing.

***ORIGINAL****: The popularity of Wikipedia makes it important that users learn to use the online collaborative encyclopedia as a starting point for their research rather than as the final word, says a Purdue University communications expert. "Students are addicted to Wikipedia, and teachers fight it with stern grading policies and restrictions on its use," says Sorin A. Matei, an assistant professor in the Department of Communication. "But Wikipedia is here to stay and, despite penalties, people are likely to continue using it."*

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**Paraphrase 1:** *The popularity of Wikipedia makes it important that users learn to use the online collaborative encyclopedia as a starting point for their research. "Students are addicted to Wikipedia, and teachers fight it with stern grading policies and restrictions on its use," says Sorin A. Matei, an assistant professor in the Department of Communication (Morris).*

The paraphrase is not adequate, as it distorts the main idea of the text.

**Paraphrase 2:**  *Sorin A. Matei of Purdue University says that because students are "addicted to Wikipedia" and will continue to rely on it, it is important for teachers to help them to use Wikipedia as a place to begin research, rather than as a final source.  Matei also says that penalties are unlikely to be effective (Morris).*  
Version 2 is correct. Here the student combined her own paraphrasing with a quotation of striking language of the original text. She made certain her words and those taken directly from the source fit together; she quoted accurately and cited her source.  Some of the information is consolidated, and the specific kinds of penalties given by teachers—a minor detail—are left out.