

The Structure of a Rhetorical Précis

Sentence One: Name of the author, genre, and title of work, date in parentheses; a rhetorically active verb; and a THAT clause containing the major assertion or thesis in the text.

Sentence Two: An explanation of how the author develops and supports the thesis.

Sentence Three: A statement of the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order to” phrase.

Sentence Four: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

Rhetorical Précis Sentence Starters

Sentence One (What?)

_____ in the _____, _____,

(Author) (A) (Title)

_____ that _____

(B)

Sentence Two (How?)

_____ supports his/her _____ by _____

(Author’s Last Name) (B) (C)

Sentence Three (Why?)

The author’s purpose is to _____

(D)

_____ in order to / so that _____

Sentence Four (To Whom?)

The author writes in a _____ tone for _____

(E) (audience)

A	B	C	D	E
article, book review, essay, column, editorial	argues, argument, asserts, assertion, suggests, suggestion, claims, questions, explains, explanation	comparing, contrasting telling, explaining, illustrating, demonstrating, defining, describing, listing	show point out suggest inform persuade convince	formal informal sarcastic humorous contemptuous

The Rhetorical Précis Format

- 1)** In a single coherent sentence give the following:
 - name of the author, title of the work, date in parenthesis;
 - a rhetorically accurate verb (such as "assert," "refute")
 - containing the major claim (thesis statement) of the work.

- 2)** In a single coherent sentence give an explanation of how the author develops and supports the major claim (thesis statement).

- 3)** In a single coherent sentence give a statement of the author's purpose, followed by an "in order" phrase.

- 4)** In a single coherent sentence give a description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.