

Draft #1

College Writing 100
Abt-Perkins
Response Paper: Waiting for Superman

To write an effective response paper, you must do the following well:

1. Summarize the text, including analyzing its key points and/or positions and purpose
2. Respond with your own analysis/interpretation about the text

In class, we will discuss strategies and techniques for writing this paper.

Remember:

- To distinguish between summary and response.
- To have the summary and the response be coherent. In other words, have the summary provide the background or basis for the response.
- Use the analytic strategies from our text, *Writing Analytically*, to develop the response.

Length: 2-3 pages

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:05 AM

Comment [1]: This portion could be more specific about the kind of content each section requires. Most freshmen will only have a vague idea of what the difference between analysis, interpretation, and summary is, so including definitions and references might help them when they are drafting or working with a Writing Center tutor.

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:05 AM

Comment [2]: In this first draft, the texts the students are supposed to be analyzing are not yet fully clear/identifiable. While the response paper is about *Waiting for Superman*, there are other texts that the students should use to gather evidence that are not mentioned in this assignment.

Draft #2

College Writing 100

Abt-Perkins

Response Paper: Waiting for Superman

When faculty assign response papers, they are looking for more than just your first thoughts and personal reflections on a text. Instead, they expect you to “join a conversation” that is already underway. Sometimes that is a conversation that is taking place in your class, guided by theoretical frameworks and analytical strategies. Sometimes the conversation is taking place in the texts you are reading **in addition** to the text that you are expected to “respond” to.

To write an effective response paper, you must do the following well:

1. Summarize the text, including analyzing its key points and/or positions and purpose
2. Analyze the text within the “conversation” that I mention earlier
3. Respond with your own ideas about the text within the confines of the conversation

In this paper, I want you to respond to the movie, *Waiting for Superman*. I want you to join the conversation that is provided in the following three texts:

1. “No More Waiting for School Reform: With the Documentary “Waiting for Superman” Generating Buzz, Governor Elect Walker Should Act Boldly to Transform Wisconsin’s Schools.”
2. “Review of Waiting for Superman” by Elizabeth Dutro for the National Policy Research Center.
3. “What Superman Got Wrong: Point by Point,” by Rick Ayers.

In class, we will discuss strategies and techniques for writing this paper.

Length: 2-3 pages

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:07 AM

Comment [3]: This section of the assignment could potentially lead to confusion. The difference between the three sections is not clearly stated (i.e. ‘analysed’ used in the summary portion), and the correspondence of different texts to different portions of the response paper is not explicit.

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:08 AM

Comment [4]: Also, there is no due date—a small omission that can cause a lot of headaches.

Draft #3

College Writing 100

Abt-Perkins

Response paper: *Waiting for Superman*

When faculty assign response papers, they are looking for more than just your first thoughts and personal reflections on a text. Instead, they expect you to “join a conversation” that is already underway. Therefore, to write a successful response paper, you must do three things:

- **Summarise** the text. Note that a good summary should include key points and the author’s position on the text. Summaries should not include your opinion or views on the text or topic.
- **Analyse** the main themes of text. In *Writing Analytically*, Rosenwasser and Stephen explain that “analysis finds questions where there seemed not to be any, and it makes connections that might not have been evident at first” (4). Use the Five Analytical Moves (pages 4-10) to guide you.
- **Interpret** an element of the text that interested you. Ask yourself the “so what” question. What does your analysis of that element imply? What kinds of conclusions or deeper grounds of analysis can you formulate from your interpretation?



For this response paper, start by summarizing *Waiting for Superman* using your notes from last week’s showing. Then, analyse common themes from the three articles posted on Moodle:

- Elizabeth Duto’s “Review of *Waiting for Superman*”
- Rick Ayers’ “What ‘Superman’ got wrong, point by point”
- “No more waiting for school reform” (Editorial)

Finally, interpret a particular theme or topic of your own choosing to help narrow down your focus.

In class, we will discuss strategies and techniques you might use to write this paper.

Length: 2-3 pages

Formatting: use APA for all citation.

Due date:

02/15 – Reading-to-write notes

02/17 – Final draft

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:17 AM

Comment [5]: While this assignment explains the concepts and uses them in an assignment questions, it should work on integrating the concepts into the assignment rather than creating separate sections.

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Response paper: *Waiting for Superman*

When faculty assign response papers, they are looking for more than just your first thoughts and personal reflections on a text. Instead, they expect you to “join a conversation” that is already underway. Therefore, to write a successful response paper, you must do three things in this order:

- **Summarize** the text. Note that a good summary should include key points and the author’s position on the text. Summaries should not include your opinion or views on the text or topic. The key to a good summary is focus. We will discuss this in class as we review *They Say/I Say* chapter 2 that is dedicated to summarizing. Key points to remember when summarizing: You should not be able to tell whether you agree or disagree with the idea you are summarizing (p. 31, *They Say/I Say*). A good summary requires balancing what the original author is saying with the writer’s own focus. (p. 31, *They Say/I Say*). A good summary has a focus or spin that allows that summary to fit with your own agenda while still being true to the text you are summarizing (p. 34, *They Say/I Say*). Be sure the “they say” and the “I say” are well matched (p. 35). Focus the author’s points around a larger overall claim (p. 35).
- Prewriting exercise to help with writing summaries: The Believing-Doubting Game
 - Generate a list of main ideas of the text
 - Organize those ideas under headings or claims or foci (commonalities)
 - Do a focused freewrite where you generate all of the ways in which you “believe” the author or understand and support the author for EACH claim/heading/ or foci.
 - Do a focused freewrite where you generate all the concerns, questions, reasons to doubt the author for EACH claim/heading/ or foci.
 - Evaluate what you generated. Which claim/heading/ or foci generated the most writing? Where do you have the most to say? Choose that topic as the focus of the summary.
 - Begin your draft with an overview statement (topic sentence) about the text, *Waiting for Superman*. What is it? What was its purpose/ intent in general and what is your particular focus?
 - Describe the ways in which the movie addressed your chosen focus.
 - Concluding sentence: Why is a focus on this area worthwhile?
- Analyze the conversation that is taking place about *Waiting for Superman*. Given the focus you established in the summary, what are others saying

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:25 AM

Comment [6]: This kind of information could be distributed in a handout, rather than with the assignment itself. Because it is within the assignment sheet, students might believe that the freewriting exercise should be included in the draft.

about this aspect of *Waiting for Superman*? Doing this across three sources is tricky. You will need to “read to write” or read for your particular focus and establish the positions others are taking on it. They may not take up your focus directly. So you will need to analyze the articles for possible connections. You will need to compare/contrast what different sources have to say. Then you will need to select evidence to quote or paraphrase. To these ends, you will create a “reading-to-write” note chart that we will demonstrate in class.

- Interpret an element of the text that interested you. Ask yourself the “so what” question. What does your analysis imply? What are the implications of what was said and what was not fully or accurately addressed in the documentary?

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:26 AM

Comment [7]: Proportionally, the analytical and interpretative portions are much shorter than the summary. This imbalance might lead students to believe that the summary part is the bulk of the paper.

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:29 AM

Comment [8]: Although this assignment is much more detailed, its length alone could cause a lot of confusion. From my experience as a tutor, students are more likely to successfully read and carry out an assignment when it is concise.

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- **Summarize** the text. Note that a good summary should include key points and the author’s position on the text. Summaries should not include your opinion or views on the text or topic; however, the key to a good summary is to have a focus. Key points to remember when summarizing from *They Say/I Say* (p. 31-35): You should not be able to tell whether you agree or disagree with the idea you are summarizing. A good summary has a focus or spin that allows that summary to fit with your own agenda while still being true to the text you are summarizing. Use the “believing/doubting game” prewriting strategy to help you here (see class notes).
- Join the conversation. **Analyze** the reviews you have read for *Waiting for Superman*. Given the focus you established in the summary, what are others saying about this aspect of *Waiting for Superman*? Doing this across three sources is tricky. To these ends, you will create “reading-to-write” note chart that we will demonstrate in class.

Review #1: “No More Waiting for School Reform” (editorial from Milwaukee Journal distributed in class)

Review #2: Rick Ayers’ “What ‘Superman’ got wrong, point by point” (on moodle; hyperlinked web text)

Review #3: “Review of Waiting For Superman” by Elizabeth Dutro (on moodle) (downloadable word document)

- **Interpret** the success of the movie in relation to the reviews. Ask yourself the “so what” question. What does your analysis imply? What are the consequences or possible outcomes of what was not fully or accurately addressed in the documentary? Is the documentary effective or ineffective in addressing this concept/idea/focus?

Length: 2-4 pages, APA style

Due dates: 2/15 Reading-to-Write notes

2/17 Final draft

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:35 AM

Comment [9]: This assignment maintains some of the detail of Draft#4, but still manages to keep the assignment short and balanced. While it mentions in-class strategies, it does not expand on them (rather, they were moved to a class handout), thus keeping the focus on the actual paper.

Irene Ruiz Dacal 2/22/11 11:40 AM

Comment [10]: Formatting criteria and deadlines should always be on the assignment.