

# Unit I: Close & Critical Reading

## *Assignment 1: Rhetorical Summary Portfolio*

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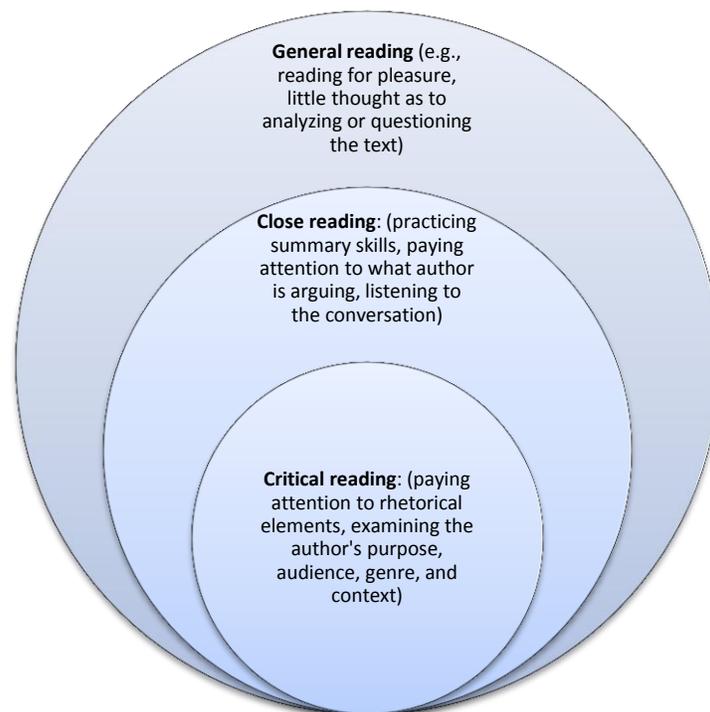
### Overview:

In this assignment, you will write rhetorical summaries for **two texts** related to our class theme to build a portfolio. More specifically:

- You will apply **close and critical reading skills** to two selected texts from the reader;
- You will provide **brief summaries** of each article and **explain important rhetorical elements** for each text.
- This assignment is worth 10% of your semester grade.
- We will use the following timeline for this assignment:
  - Workshop: Friday, September 8, 2017
  - Style and Convention Seminar: Monday, September 11, 2017
  - Final draft of A1 due: Wednesday, September 13, 2017

### Purpose and Focus:

- As we have discussed in class, effective summary writing is an important academic skill that enables us to carefully consider others' arguments. As academic writers, we need to take time to read closely and demonstrate our understanding of what others write by **paraphrasing** their writing in a **clear, concise, and accurate manner**.
- When we summarize *rhetorically*, we demonstrate critical reading by showing an understanding of the text's rhetorical context, including the author's affiliations/values, the specific intended audience for the article, what features of the text demonstrate that audience, the purpose of the text, and the genre of the text.
- Rhetorical summaries thus ask you to demonstrate both close reading and critical reading skills. Here is a way to distinguish between general reading, close reading, and critical reading:



- Using the reading and writing strategies discussed in class, you will read all **THREE** articles listed below, write rhetorical summaries for all three articles, workshop all three rhetorical summaries, and then submit your best **TWO** rhetorical summaries for a final grade:
  - "Farmland without Farmers" by Wendell Berry
  - "Golden Rice: Lifesaver?" by Amy Harmon
  - "Fighting Food Insecurity on Campus" by Christopher Nellum

## Development for Audience:

The **audience** for this assignment will be an academic audience who has not read the articles and is interested in their content. To best achieve your purpose with your audience, you'll need to:

- Closely read the selected text, understanding **WHAT** the author is saying;
- Critically read the selected text, identifying and exploring rhetorical elements;
- **Develop** the rhetorical summaries by:
  - Explaining the article title, the author, the publication, the date of publication, and the overall argument of the article in a single sentence;
  - Writing a brief key-point summary which includes the author's thesis and key points, leaving out details and your own opinion;
  - Signaling through author tags that you are always aware that you are summarizing someone else's ideas, not your own
  - Providing your reader with an explanation of the author's affiliation/values, the intended audience, and what features of the text you analyzed to draw connections between that audience, the purpose, and the genre of the text

## Genre and Organization:

The genre for this assignment will be a **180-200 word rhetorical summary** for EACH of two articles. You may go 10% over the maximum word count before losing points from your grade on the assignment.

The purpose is to inform your reader about the texts you have "listened" to; therefore, you will draw heavily from Chapters 1 & 3 in JTCR.

## Style and Conventions:

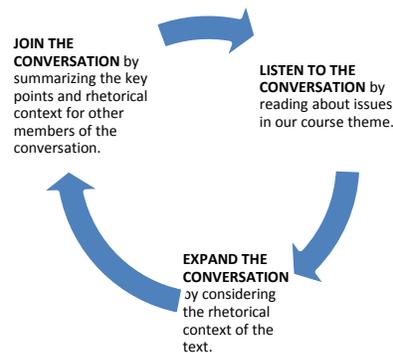
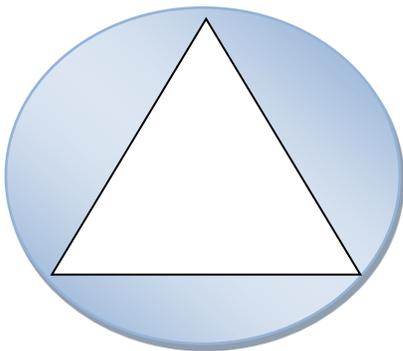
Since your rhetorical summary portfolio is an academic genre, the tone and style should be appropriate for an academic audience.

Your rhetorical summaries should be **grammatically correct** and you should pay close attention to all conventions of **standard, written English**—especially those discussed in the Style and Conventions Seminar. Additionally,

- Your portfolio should be typed and double-spaced, using Times New Roman, 12 pt font;
- You should have a header in the upper left-hand corner with your name, course, instructor, and date;
- Have your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page
- You should put your rhetorical summaries into a **SINGLE** Word document. (That is, don't save each rhetorical summary as its own file; rather, put your rhetorical summaries into a single file and turn in just one document).
- At the top of the first page of your assignment, be sure to include the CSU Honor Pledge: *I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on my assignment.*

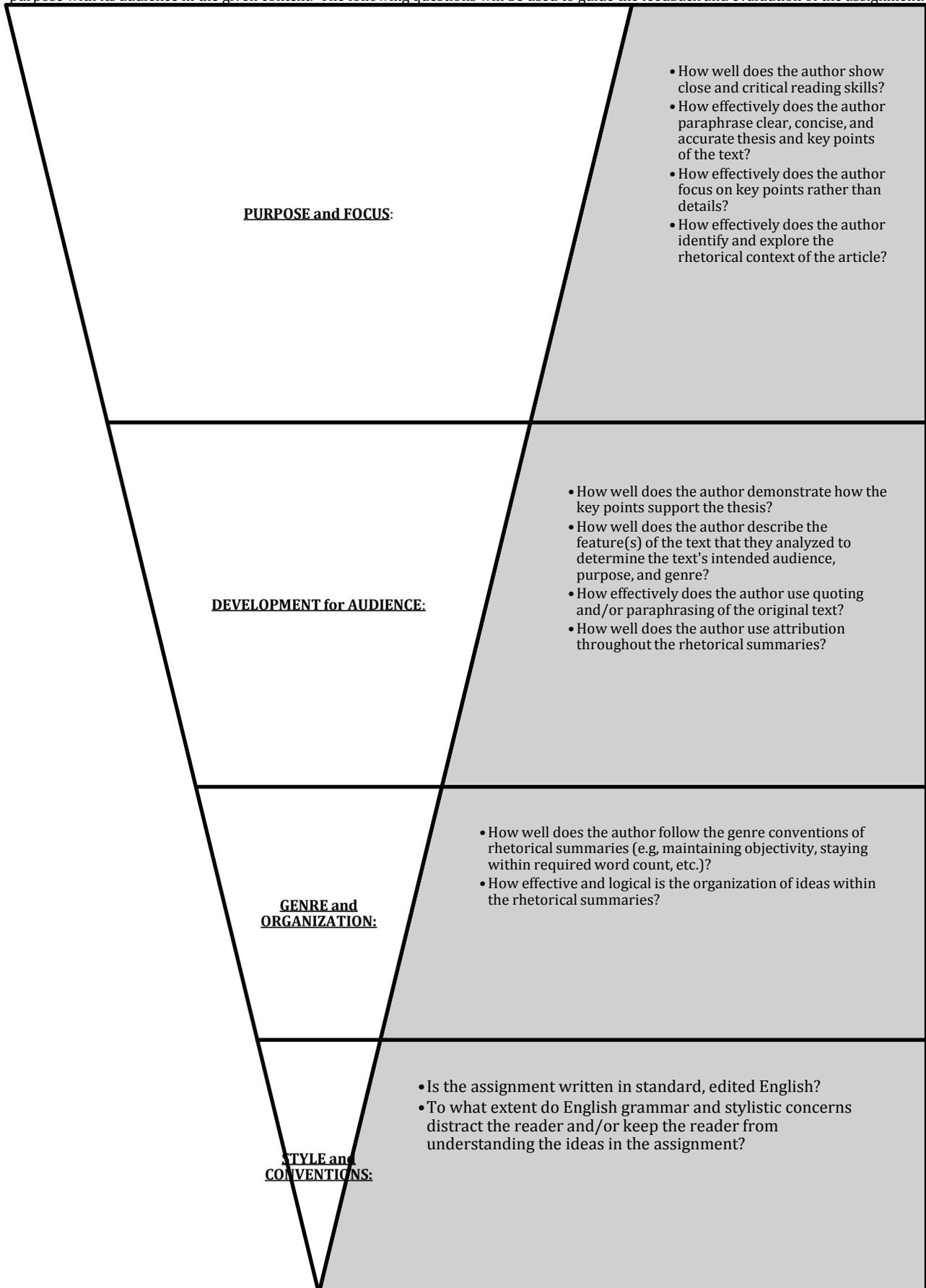
## Turn-In Directions:

**(include any specific directions you have for turn-in here – e.g., uploading to Canvas, bringing a hard copy to class, putting in a two-pocket folder, etc.)**



# Hierarchy of Rhetorical Concerns for Feedback and Evaluation: Rhetorical Summary

Your assignment will be evaluated based on the following hierarchy of rhetorical concerns and the extent to which the assignment effectively achieves its purpose with its audience in the given context. The following questions will be used to guide the feedback and evaluation of the assignment.



## Grading Criteria

### An "A" (excellent) summary portfolio (90% +):

- will convince your reader that you have read the articles closely and critically by representing each argument accurately and fully and precisely describing the articles' rhetorical context.
- will accurately and objectively report the arguments, focusing on the theses and main ideas rather than small details;
- will demonstrate how the main ideas support the thesis.
- will demonstrate an understanding of rhetorical elements by explaining what features in the text demonstrate the audience, purpose, and genre.
- will rely mainly on effective paraphrasing but will quote key words, phrases and/or sentences effectively.
- will contain frequent and varied author tags.
- will organize ideas logically and follow the genre conventions of rhetorical summaries.
- will be clear and readable without distracting grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.

### A "B" (above average) summary portfolio (80% +):

- will show that you have read the articles closely and critically by representing the arguments well and describing the articles' rhetorical context.
- will report the theses and reasons of the arguments and identify rhetorical context but may have one of the following problems:
  - The writer may need to develop the thesis and reasons more effectively, showing a stronger connection between the main claim and how it is supported.
  - The description of rhetorical context may be slightly incomplete or slightly inaccurate.
  - The writer may need to develop the explanation of the rhetorical context more fully, explaining better the feature(s) of the text used to identify audience, purpose, and genre.
  - The summaries may be slightly long, contain one or two unnecessary details, need slight changes to organization, or have language that is not concise. Or, the summaries may be slightly short, omitting one supporting idea.
  - The summaries may need more work on balancing quoting and paraphrasing and/or attributing information. However, they will still have effective paraphrasing.
  - The writer may need to work on communicating information more effectively. The summaries will be generally clear with a few errors but may need further editing for grammatical errors.

### A "C" (average) summary portfolio (70% +)

- will show the writer is learning to read closely and critically but has more work to do fully achieve all the goals of the assignment.
- will be generally accurate, but may contain one or two the following problems:
  - The summaries have inaccurate or unclear theses, making it unclear how well the student understands the main argument of the article.
  - The description of rhetorical context may be inaccurate or largely missing
  - The summaries may contain subjective responses to the articles in addition to the objective information.
  - They may show an effort to focus on the argument, but may get sidetracked by giving too many details.
  - These summaries may need much stronger development to show how the arguments' reasons support their theses. They may list points, not showing how they connect.
  - These summaries may need much stronger development to show connections among rhetorical elements.
  - These summaries may have some problems with paraphrasing, either not paraphrasing enough, not using the writer's own language (rather than that of the text), or causing the reader to misunderstand the text.
  - The summaries may have organization that is sometimes illogical
- "C" summaries may also need more editing for readability.

### A "D" (below average) summary portfolio (60% +):

- will show an attempt toward the assignment goals that has fallen short.
- will show significant problems with close and critical reading and will not communicate effectively.
- will demonstrate the student does not understand the rhetorical underpinnings of the texts.
- may have serious paraphrasing and/or editing problems.

### An "F" (unsatisfactory) summary portfolio:

- ignores the assignment requirements.
- or is unreadable or nearly so due to language and coherence problems.
- or shows little to no understanding of the article, summarizing, or rhetorical context.
- or contains significant problems with academic integrity.
- or is submitted late without prior extension

*If your assignment receives a D or an F, you should schedule an appointment with your instructor to discuss it.*