

ANNOTATION SENTENCE SEQUENCE

This template is derived from a genre called the “rhetorical précis.” The method is designed to foster one’s ability to read critically—which is to say, read analytically and rhetorically. Although relatively short at 4 sentences, the précis is challenging, and will help you develop reading and writing skills not only for this project, but many other projects, in school and out.

» **SENTENCE 1.** Name the author, their credentials, the genre and title of the work, then use an accurate, dynamic verb (such as argues, asserts, claims, suggests, implies, etc.) and a “that” clause which articulates the text’s central argument or primary claim.

Example: “Charles S. Peirce’s article “The Fixation of Belief” (1877) asserts that humans have psychological and social mechanisms designed to protect and cement (or ‘fix’) our beliefs.”

» **SENTENCE 2.** Explain how the author supports their central argument.

Example: “Peirce backs this claim up with descriptions of four methods of fixing belief, pointing out the effectiveness and potential weaknesses of each method.”

» **SENTENCE 3.** State the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order to” phrase that identifies the *why* of that purpose.

Example: “Peirce’s purpose is to point out the ways that people commonly establish their belief systems in order to jolt the awareness of the reader into considering how their own belief system may be the product of such methods.”

» **SENTENCE 4.** Describe the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

Example: “Given the technical language used in the article, Peirce is writing to a well-educated audience with some knowledge of philosophy and history and a willingness to consider other ways of thinking.”

ANNOTATION TEMPLATE

» 1. _____, _____ in his/her
(author's credentials) (author's first and last name)

(genre: article, book chapter, essay, etc.) (title of text appropriately punctuated with italics or quotes)

argues [or another accurate, dynamic verb, like claims, asserts, suggests, contends, defends, implies, etc.]

that _____
(central argument / thesis statement of the text)

» 2. She/he supports [or backs up, develops, proves, justifies, evidences, substantiates, establishes, etc.]

his/her claim by first _____
(illustrating, demonstrating, comparing, contrasting, defining, etc.)

_____, then _____

and finally _____

» 3. _____'s purpose is to _____
(author's last name) (persuade, explain, criticize, reveal, warn, recommend, propose, etc.)

_____ in order to

(accomplish what?)

» 4. She/he _____ a(n) _____ tone
(adopts, establishes, creates, etc.) (candid, sarcastic, formal, hopeful, objective, etc.)

for _____
(intended audience)