

# SELP VInt Writing Assignment Specifications

Writing Type: Summary & Response

## Overview

In this assignment, students write a summary and response essay based on the article *Nearly Vegetarian? Go flexitarian*, by Sarah Rainey, 2013. (Approx. 500 wds.)

Students must read and annotate the above article and then summarize and respond to the content. The summary includes the key ideas while the response comprises a personal appraisal of those ideas.

## Content and Organization

Students should frame their text as a 4-paragraph essay as in chart below:

	Summary & Response
Para. 1	Introduction (summary/response thesis statement)
Para. 2	Article summary
Para. 3	Article response
Para. 4	Conclusion (restatement of thesis and closing comment)

### Introduction (paragraph 1):

- First students introduce the topic in general terms (1 or 2 sentences)
- Then students write the thesis statement, including:
  - Source information
  - Main idea
  - Main point for response
  - Controlling ideas
- Thesis statement example:
  - In "Health and Wellness" in Chapter 1 of *Canadian Fundamentals of Nursing* (2010), Reutter and Eastlick Kushner describe how health can be defined. This comprehensive overview of health definitions does an excellent job in building a description of health for the twenty-first century that underlines a positive definition, includes multiple aspects, and recognizes human potential.

Source information  
Main idea

Main point for response  
Controlling ideas

# SELP VInt Writing Assignment Specifications

## Summary (paragraph 2):

- Students write a summary of the main or key ideas from the article. The summary must be concise, including only the key information and avoiding exemplary or detailed information (roughly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the length of the original article).
- Students should present the information objectively (reserving commentary for the response paragraph).
- Students should be sure never to copy original sentences from the source article (unless in quotation marks); they should rather paraphrase and maintain their own voice throughout.

## Response (paragraph 3):

- Students write their response to the key ideas of the article as introduced in the thesis statement and expressed in the summary.
- In expressing their response, students should be subjective, relating the key ideas to their own experience, other texts, lectures, videos, or to their own knowledge of related issues in the world; in so doing, students should express their agreement or disagreement as appropriate.

## Conclusion (paragraph 4):

- Students conclude their essays by restating their thesis. This should include a sentence that addresses the principle idea/claim of the source article and their essential response.
- Finally, they should end their essays with a comment, proposal, or projection that synthesizes the article and its significance to the real world.

## Steps

**Note:** This assignment assumes a degree of instruction which precludes these specifications. This instruction could involve interactive PPs; practice articles along with annotation; practice summary/response tasks (addressed in groups or pairs); modeling; etc.

1. Prior to handing out the source article, engage the class in a brief discussion pertaining to the general topic. Explore terms like carnivore, herbivore, vegetarian, vegan, etc. In order to develop schema, try to gauge student understanding of the common issues surrounding diet and nutrition.
2. Hand out the source article, *Vegetarian? Go flexitarian*, by Sarah Rainey. Explain that their first step is to master the text—this involves skimming, questioning, annotating and note-taking. Annotations and notes should in part capture the main ideas that are later expressed in the summary portion of their essays.
3. Once students have completed their annotations and notes, they need to brainstorm what form their response will take. This can be done using various graphic organizers.

## SELP VInt Writing Assignment Specifications

4. When the above process is complete, students are ready to outline and write their first drafts. Review their outlines (making sure the thesis statement is present) and give them one class period to write their drafts.
5. Students should concentrate first on their summary, then response, then introduction, and finally conclusion. Although this process is clearly not a rule, following this order of attack will clarify the purpose or intent of the essay and allow for a more meaningful conclusion.
6. Collect the first drafts and return with feedback. Alternatively, you may wish to have students conduct some peer review before handing in.
7. With first drafts returned, students can now complete a final draft outside of class and hand in on your due date. They should hand in their first drafts along with the final to ensure continuity and to deter plagiarism. Alternatively, you could make copies of the first drafts and compare as needed when the final drafts are handed in.

### **Post note**

Instructors should follow the provided marking rubric for this assignment and promptly enter their marks into Sakai's gradebook. Marked assignments should be returned to students in due course.