Article Summary Assignment

Comp II: Natural Sciences and Health Professions

Magazines, web sites, institutions such as hospitals, labs, and universities, and businesses regularly publish summaries of recent scientific papers or research in progress for general audiences. These summaries help non-specialist readers understand the significance and relevance of work that otherwise might seem esoteric or inscrutably technical. They may also help institutions raise their profile among the larger public.

For our first major assignment, you will compose two summaries of one article from a peer-reviewed journal in your field (or a field you might be interested in if you haven’t chosen a major). One will be @250 words long and directed toward either Eurekalert or cnn.com, the other 600-800 words and directed toward *Popular Science* or *Discover*. Your summary must show an awareness of the audience of your intended publication venue and the style/format favored by that publication, both of which you will define in an audience profile you will complete for the project. If you wish, you may choose a different venue for either or both summaries.

Summaries must demonstrate the characteristics of the genre as described in class.

The sequence for completing this assignment is as follows:

1. By Tuesday, 1/15 you must have selected an article to summarize. On that day, each student will identify and describe the article he or she has chosen. It should be taken from a journal in your field and published within the last five years. Choose an article written at the highest level of technicality you can understand.

2. By Thursday, 1/17, you must complete an audience profile (guidelines will be discussed in class) identifying who you are writing for, through what venue (type of publication) you are reaching them and what your purpose is in communicating the research to that audience. The profile will count for 25% of the participation credit for this project. Upload your profile to the appropriate drop box on our blackboard site by class time on the 17h.

3. During the week of 1/21, each of you will have an individual conference with me about your summary project. You must bring complete drafts of both the shorter and longer summaries, as well as a copy of the article you are summarizing. The conference counts for 25% of the participation grade; in order to earn full credit you must bring all the required items. Class will not meet that week to accommodate conferences.

4. On Tues., 1/29, we will have a peer review of your summaries. Bring a hard copy draft of both *as well as a copy of the article you are summarizing*. This review will count for 50% of the participation credit for this project.

5. By class time on Thur., 1/31, upload revised versions of both summaries to the appropriate drop box on our blackboard site. Bring the hard copies you had peer reviewed to class and turn them in to me.