**Critical Reading for Summary**

* ***Examine the context*.** Note the author’s credentials, occupation, and previous publications, and identify the original source of publication. This helps you identify the writer’s point-of-view on the topic.
* ***Note the title and any subtitles*.** The meanings of some titles are clear, while others may require you to read the article for a greater understanding. The title typically reveals the subject matter and the author’s attitude towards it.
* ***Identify the main point.*** Do not assume that the claim/thesis will be the last sentence of the initial paragraph. That might be true for some writings, but others may build up to the main point and reveal it later.
* ***Identify the subordinate points***. Notice the subpoints that collectively form the main point; how do they relate to the main point? If you encounter a subpoint that seems to be an anomaly, you may need to reconsider what you believe is the purpose of the writing.
* ***Divide the writing into sections***. Note which paragraphs form the introduction, body, and conclusion. Then, break up the body paragraphs into sections that address the writer’s subpoints.
* ***Distinguish between points, examples, and counterarguments.*** In other words, do not merely focus on what the writer is doing but also on what the writer is saying. If the writer quotes someone or offers an example, what is the purpose? Is it to support a point, or does it introduce a counterargument?
* ***Watch for transitions both within and between paragraphs.*** Transitions allow the reader to logically follow the writer’s argument. In addition, they also delineate points, from examples and counterarguments.
* ***Read actively with a pen/pencil in hand and be prepared to reread.***  Active reading is not a linear progression from the beginning to the end. Instead, read as though you are engaged in a discussion with the writer. Ask questions, paraphrase x 3 confusing points, make notes in the margin, underline or circle key ideas, place question marks by areas that are confusing, use check marks or exclamation points to indicate areas you find particularly interesting or exciting. Once you finish reading, revisit the points and move back and forth through the text to fully understand not only what the writer says but also what she implies.