

Writing Session: Writing a Summary

- LATTE: Graded Written Assignments
- 3 page Comparative Essay (due 3/11)
- Short writing assignments due the next two Thursdays (2/5 and 2/12)

Summaries - 1

- M. P. Maidman,
“Historiographic
Reflection on Israel’s
Origins: The Rise and
Fall of the Patriarchal
Age,” *Eretz-Israel* 27
(2003): 120-128
- Article summary
(abstract): *Old*
Testament Abstracts



William F.
Albright
“dirt”
archaeologist



Julius
Wellhausen
textual
archaeologist

Summaries - 2

What is a summary?

Summary/abstract of Maidman:

- Structure?
- What's included?
- Not included?
- Effective?

Writing a Summary - 1

- We compose summaries everyday:
 - relating a conversation to someone
 - filling someone in on an episode of a TV show



- They share both similarities and differences to academic summaries

Writing a Summary - 2

Everyday vs. Academic

Concise descriptions of something larger

Similarities:

- Logical flow: transitions
- Avoids quotations, but uses key words
- Avoids minute details—relays main points

Writing a Summary - 3

Everyday vs. Academic

Differences:

- Self-contained
- Intro/Body/Conclusion (think mini-paper)
- Chronological
- Descriptive, not evaluative! (word choice—Be careful)

Compare: “The author **attempts to show** that...” versus
“The author **argues** that...”

“The author **proves** that ...” versus
“The author **proposes** that ...”

A Closer Look



Summary/abstract of
Maidman's article (*Old
Testament Abstracts*)

Summing up Summaries:

An effective summary

- is unified, coherent, concise, and able to stand on its own.
- uses an intro/body/conclusion structure which presents the larger work's purpose, method, results, and conclusions.
- follows strictly the chronology of the larger work.
- provides logical connections (or transitions) between the information included.
- adds no new information—it reports without comment or evaluation.
- doesn't rely on the way material was phrased in the larger work but summarizes information in a new way.
- is understandable to a wide audience.

Next Class

Ten Plagues: Source-Critical Analysis



- Sources in the plague narratives
- How many plagues in each source?
- Comparison to plagues in Psalms