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


- Article summary (abstract): *Old Testament Abstracts*

William F. Albright
“dirt” archaeologist

Julius Wellhausen
textual archaeologist
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