**WRT 105 | Rhetorical** [**Précis**](http://www.howjsay.com/index.php?word=precis&submit=Submit)

A ***rhetorical précis*** is a highly focused tool that allows to us to analyze the literacy / reading situation of a written argument. For our purposes, the précis is snapshot summary of the how and what for a source we may use for the essay assignment—a way to sum up, quickly, how the big six (purpose, persona, context, audience, medium, and genre) inform and affect the argument the source presents.

Note, though, that ***the rhetorical précis is more detailed*** than the material entered on the source information form; instead, the précis requires that we identify the major claims and arguments that the source presents. The précis makes clear the specific claims that bear directly upon our issue-based question and its thesis cluster while also identifying how things like genre and medium and audience shape that argument.

So, the ***rhetorical précis*** is in part a description and a summary, a way of helping us to see how the particular source exists in conversation with our other sources and our ideas on the issue we are writing about.

**Format:**

The ***rhetorical précis*** is a five-six (5-6) sentence ¶ that records the essential elements of the rhetorical situation for a given source / composition, and generally takes the following form and covers these elements:

**Name of Source**

1. The ***context /situation*** in which the argument is delivered; this section also address issues of ***genre and medium***—a scholarly article in favor of childhood vaccination operates differently than a grass-roots pamphlet encouraging new parents to adhere to a regular immunization schedule for their newborn.
2. The major assertion / argument itself***, in specific detail, with*** ***attention to what rhetorical strategies the source uses to make its claims—***a scholarly argument may lay out, using charts, maps, and quantitative data, how a disease like measles spreads more quickly, and farther, among unimmunized groups of children than among those who are immunized.
3. The ***purpose*** and ***persona*** driving the argument, with attention to what rhetorical strategies the source uses to make its claims—the scholar may be an epidemiologist with the World Health Organization who studies the impact (time away from school /ability to study while ill ) of childhood disease on toddler learning ability through years 2-9, and advocates in favor of immunization.
4. An explanation of ***how the source engages its audience***—issues of tone (formal / informal /mixed) the type of appeal the argument uses (ethos / pathos / logos).