**ACTIVE READING REPORT (AR)**

**Rhetorical Situation**

You are in a formal setting, writing a report for a group of college students who have not read your selected text. Your purpose is to summarize and analyze key points contained in this text.

**Task**

Select a non-fiction book (at least 150 pages) that addresses a global issue, international event, or foreign figure. After your text has been approved by your instructor, you should section your text and create a reading plan. Use your knowledge of active reading to take notes as you read and reread your selected text. Your report will not assume the paragraph structure typical of a formal academic paper; instead, you will follow the adapted structure presented below. In this report, you may follow a bulleted structure or write a paragraph for each analysis section, as long as your tone is formal and your report is clear, clean, and consistent.

**Structure**

1. **Background**

**Look at the text. Identify the genre.** (What type of book is it? A memoir, biography, autobiography, collaboration, etc.) **If possible, conduct research on the bias, credibility, and expertise of the source.** (Is the author a scholar in the field? A layperson? Does the writer’s personal history suggest a possible bias toward his/her subject?)

1. **Big Picture**

**Read or skim the text. Selectively underline main ideas.** (When working with a larger text, you may want to read the table of contents, preface, introduction, and the back of the book to get a general sense of the content.)

***\*\*\*Write notes on the text as a whole (see prompts a, b, c).***

1. **Identify the audience.** (Was the text written for the general public or a specialized segment of the population? What can be inferred about the educational level and/or average age of the audience? Is the imagined audience likely to be receptive or hostile to the content of this message?)
2. **Infer the purpose.** (What motived the author to write this text? Is the author trying to persuade readers? Inform them? Entertain them? Is the author exploring a topic? Offering a reflection?)
3. **Write a single-sentence summary of the text.** (What is the “big-picture” idea?)
4. **Sectioning**

**Break the reading into smaller pieces. Number each section. Devise a reading plan that includes page numbers and completion dates.** (Your plan should be at least five sections.)

1. **Analysis**

**Reread the text SLOWLY. *\*\*\*Write notes for each numbered section.***

(You need not answer every question for every numbered section; focus on what you think is significant.)

* **What voice is this writer projecting?** (Think about the writer's sentence structure and word choice. Note charged language and/or dramatic examples, as these rhetorical choices provide clues about the biases/beliefs of the author.)
* **What persuasive points and/or interesting observations are contained in this section?** (Be specific.)
* **Are there places where the text becomes vague and/or confusing?** (If yes, note the problem spots and explain why.)
* **Does the author make any points that can be disproved? If so, what are they?** (Be specific.)
* **What kind of evidence does the author use? Is this evidence persuasive?** (Justify your evaluation.)
* **Does the author refer to any outside sources? If so, do these sources seem credible?** (State the reasons behind your assessment.)

**Logistics**

* See syllabus for due dates; see syllabus for policy on late papers
* MLA format (double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins; MLA heading, pagination, in-text citations)
* 5-7 pages (because your text has been approved by your instructor, you do not need a work cited page)

**Grading Note: My goal is to understand your ideas within the context of this assignment. Because I consider macro issues (e.g., structure and content) to be of greater concern than sentence-level editing, I will not "red pen" your paper with notes about grammatical errors. Instead, the overall strengths and weaknesses of your paper can be gauged by your point breakdown on the rubric. In most cases, a low grade means that a writer's work is not yet finished (not that the person is a "bad" writer). Many of the best writers revise extensively, and oftentimes it's a willingness to revise that makes a writer's work shine. If you have a specific question, or would benefit from an extended discussion of your work, please arrange to meet with me.** (\*REMINDER: *You're always welcome to request advance feedback on a draft of your paper before it's due.*)

**Rubric**

1. **LAYOUT, FORMAT, LENGTH:** Does your report adhere to the structural guidelines for this assignment? (I. Background, II. Big Picture, III. Sectioning, IV. Analysis) Is your report formatted in MLA style (utilizing the correct layout for heading, title, pagination, font, margins, and in-text citations)? Is your report at least five pages in length?

* \_\_\_\_\_out of 20 points

1. **CLARITY, CONSISTENCY, AND TONE:** Does your writing clearly and grammatically express your ideas? Is your document design clear and consistent? Do you respond to the rhetorical situation by maintaining a formal, academic tone?
   * \_\_\_\_\_out of 20 points

1. **“SOURCE” NOTES (Part I):** Do you correctly identify the genre of the text? Do you conduct background research on the author (his/her bias, credibility, expertise)?

* \_\_\_\_\_out of 10 points

1. **“BIG PICTURE” NOTES (Part II):** Do you (a.) identify the audience, (b.) infer the purpose, (c.) write a single-sentence summary of the text?

* \_\_\_\_\_out of 10 points

1. **“SECTIONING” NOTES (Part III):** Do you break the reading into smaller sections (minimum of five)? Do you number each section and devise a reading plan that includes page numbers and completion dates?

* \_\_\_\_\_out of 10 points

1. **“ANALYSIS” NOTES (Part IV):** Do you demonstrate critical thinking in your analysis notes for each numbered section?
   * \_\_\_\_\_out of 30 points

* **­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­ \_\_ out of 100 points**