**The Thoughtful Citizen Project – Summary Writing**

For this project, you will be required to write summaries of articles in your chosen area. Follow the steps below to assist you in the process.

Each summary should be 300 words long, which equals about 1 page, typed, double-spaced in 12 font Times New Roman (you will have to change your computer’s settings).

All summaries will follow MLA format, meaning you properly create a header, title, and works cited. I will provide examples.

**Summary Writing 101**

1. **Read with the Writer’s Purpose in Mind**

* Read the article carefully, making no notes or marks and looking only for what the writer is saying.
* After you’re finished reading, write down in one sentence the point that is made about the subject.
* Now, find the writer’s thesis and underline it.

1. **Underline with Summarizing in Mind**

* Once you clearly understand the writer’s major point (or purpose) for writing, read the article again. This time underline the major points supporting the thesis; these should be words or phrases here and there rather than complete sentences.
* In addition, underline key transitional elements, which show how parts are connected. Omit specific details, examples, description, and unnecessary explanations. **Note**: You may need to go through the article several times.

1. **Write your summary**

* Start with a sentence naming the writer and article title and stating the essay’s main idea. Now, build the introduction by stating the author’s thesis and main ideas.
* Body paragraphs should elaborate on the main ideas. You should include supporting details, statistics, and quotes. Only include what is necessary.
* Conclude with a final statement reflecting the significance of the article – not from your point of view, but from the author’s.
* Note: Your summary should not include your opinion. Your job is to summarize what the writer has to say about the topic.

1. **Revise your summary**

* After you’ve completed a draft, read your summary and check for accuracy.
* Does your summary make the same point as the article?
* Have you omitted anything important?
* Does your summary read smoothly with all parts clearly related?
* Ask someone to read it – Can that person understand the point of the original article?

1. **Edit your summary**

* Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors, looking particularly for those common in your writing.
* Use spell and grammar checks.
* Revise as necessary and prepare the final copy.