The Assignment: Choose one of the following essays: “Becoming a Writer” (p.202), “How I Got Smart” (p.152), or “On Being 17, Bright, and Unable to Read” (p.196). You will write a summary paragraph and a response paragraph to that essay. Consider your audience to be someone who has not read the essay but is interested in these ideas.

Summary Paragraph: Write a well-developed summary paragraph (at least 8, but no more than about 11 sentences)
1. Your first sentence (topic sentence) should include the title, the author, and the main idea (stated in your own words). For example: In his essay, “What Is Intelligence, Anyway?,” Isaac Asimov asserts that there are many different types of intelligence, not just the one measured by standardized tests.
2. State the main supporting points.
3. Show how the writer supports the main points (Example: What examples does the author use to support the main points?). Find one quote (two maximum) from the essay that you can integrate into your summary.
4. Write a concluding sentence that sums up the writer’s conclusion. What point does the writer make at the end? Your last sentence should be written in your own words. Do not end with a quotation.

Response Paragraph: Write a well-developed paragraph (approx. 10-12 sentences) that responds in some way to the essay you’ve summarized.

1. Write a topic sentence that:
   • Provides a smooth transition between the summary paragraph and your response paragraph. This will help the reader understand when your writing moves from the summary of someone else’s ideas to your own ideas in response.
   • Provides a focus for this paragraph.
2. Develop your response to one of the above essays in the body of your paragraph. You have a number of possibilities for your response: (1) respond to the writing prompts in the “For Your Journal” section before each essay, (2) come up with your own idea, or (3) try one of the following writing prompts:

   “Becoming a Writer”: Reflect on a good or bad experience with writing. Recount the Story and explain how this experience may have shaped your current attitudes toward writing.

   “How I Got Smart”: What is the lesson about learning in this essay? How can you apply that lesson to your own life?

   “On Being 17, Bright, and Unable to Read”: How important is reading to you now? Narrate a recent instance that demonstrates your household’s behaviors and attitudes regarding reading.

3. Write a concluding sentence.
Summary/Response Checklist

Include the following items in your file folder when you turn in your final draft:

_____ 1. Writing exercise #1

_____ 2. First drafts of summary paragraph and response paragraph. (At least one first draft is absolutely required. I will not grade this assignment without it. There should be evidence of revision between the first draft(s) and the final draft.)

_____ 3. Final draft (Put your summary and response together to create a mini essay. Make sure you still indent each paragraph, and document your source at the end of the response. Review p.3 in your syllabus for format instructions)

_____ 4. Answers to the following writer’s reflection questions in complete sentences ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER

_____ 5. This checklist!

Writer’s Reflection questions: In about ½ page, single-spaced.
• Describe the process you went through to write this paper. Summarizing can be a difficult skill to master. Did it help to compose an outline before you wrote your summary?
• Describe any problems you had as you wrote either the summary or response.
• How did you solve this (these) problem (s)?
• If you were going to revise this summary/response, what would you change?