Course Learning Outcomes for Unit III

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Apply research strategies and methods for finding information.
   1.1 Explain research techniques.
   1.2 Explain why plagiarism should be avoided.

3. Apply the steps of the writing process and appropriate research and citation methods to write essays, literary analyses, and research papers with identifiable thesis statements.

Reading Assignment

_The Curious Researcher: A Guide to Writing Research Papers:_

Chapter 3: The Third Week

Unit Lesson

What exactly is note taking? What does it mean when someone asks you to take notes as they recite a lecture or as you read through a text? Does it merely just mean writing down verbatim sentences or facts that have been spurted out? How do you even know that these are facts? The truth is that you do not know that what you are being told is a verifiable fact. Socrates once said that the greatest lesson we will ever learn is that we know nothing. So how, then, are you supposed to take notes of statements and treat them as universal knowledge if these statements may not even be absolute truth? Your papers will not be merely a reiteration of facts that you have read, but they will be a dialogue between you and the sources you have found. If your papers are conversations consisting of your claims, the ideas of the sources, and your own unique thoughts, the process of writing will be all the more smooth. One particular type of note taking helps you do just that. In the Double Entry Journal method of note taking, you divide your note taking paper into two columns—one in which you jot down notes from the source directly, and in the other column you jot down your thoughts and ideas in response to those quotes and summaries. This will help you immensely because the use of sources in your papers requires analysis of those sources. Never integrate sources to take up space, as it will be fairly obvious to your audience. You must realize that true intellect is in knowing how to question and dissect, rather than spurting out facts that others have given out before. This idea must be demonstrated in your papers.

When we write our ideas and conclusions on paper or voice them out loud, we make self-discoveries along the way. Although the process can be stressful and at times confusing, the revelations that come about are worth the effort. This is true for everyone who has ever written something in the academic world. So much time and effort has been spent devising the final product. Imagine, however, if some of the discoveries of this author later showed up in someone else’s work but were stated in such a way that did not give any credit to the original author. How would that author feel? If you were not given any credit for your thoughts, ideas, or revelations, how would you feel? Plagiarism is a major offense in the academic world. Not only are you cheating the author of any credit for his or her thoughts and ideas, but you will be cheating yourself out of growing and discovering something new. You are cheating yourself out of finding your own voice.

One way to correctly integrate a source into your paper is to paraphrase it while using in-text citations. For example, if you were to paraphrase Hamlet’s soliloquy, you would state something similar to, “According to the protagonist in Shakespeare’s _Hamlet_, death may not be the end of the suffering that life invokes. He states that in death there is still the possibility of ‘dreaming…’” You would then go on to explain the rest of the
soliloquy, as paraphrases are generally as long as the original source. They are just put in your own words, of course.

Summarizing, on the other hand, is a reduction of the original work down to its overall basic idea. It is concise and to the point. Generally, you would begin with the thesis of the work and then move on to the main ideas. You would keep away from individual points. Summaries are great ways to remind yourself of the content of a source that you have found without having to go back and skim it. This will make it much easier for you to pick and choose which sources to use and which ones to throw out during the paper writing process.

Anyway, you have a lot of work this week. Your final papers will require at least four reliable sources, so get busy and find them!

**Learning Activities (Non-Graded)**

In *The Curious Researcher: A Guide to Writing Research Papers*, complete the following exercises:

- Exercise 3.2, pp. 104-107
- Exercise 3.3, pp. 115-117
- Exercise 3.4, pp. 137-140

Non-graded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study. You do not have to submit them. If you have questions, contact your instructor for further guidance and information.