**Prècis Writing**

A prècis is short, concise analysis of a piece of writing. Prècis writing is an exercise in compression—it gives the reader an overview of a passage in as few words as possible. A prècis should give all essential points so that anyone reading it will be able to understand the idea expressed in the original passage. Think of it as turning a SOAPSTONE into a paragraph.

Name of the author, [optional: a phrase describing author], genre, title of the work, date in parentheses (additional publishing information in parentheses or note); a rhetorically accurate verb (such as “assert,” “argue,” “suggest,” “imply,” “claim,” etc.); and a “that” clause containing the major assertion (thesis statement) of the work.

**EXAMPLE: Charles S. Peirce's article, "The Fixation of Belief (1877), asserts that humans have psychological and social mechanisms designed to protect and cement (or "fix") our beliefs. Peirce backs this claim up with descriptions of four methods of fixing belief, pointing out the effectiveness and potential weaknesses of each method. Peirce's purpose is to point out the ways that people commonly establish their belief systems in order to jolt the awareness of the reader into considering how their own belief system may the product of such methods and to consider what Peirce calls "the method of science" as a progressive alternative to the other three. Given the technical language used in the article, Peirce is writing to a well-educated audience with some knowledge of philosophy and history and a willingness to other ways of thinking.**

A description of the intended audience (and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience) and a description of his or her tone.

A statement of the author’s apparent purpose followed by an “in order to” clause.

An explanation of how the author develops and/or supports the thesis, usually in chronological order.