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## Rhetorical Precis Template (Fill-in-the-Blank)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course / Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### What Is a Rhetorical Precis?

A **rhetorical precis** is a **four-sentence paragraph** that explains:

- What an author argues
- How the argument is developed
- Why the author wrote the text
- Who the intended audience is

### Important Rules

- Exactly **4 sentences**
  - Written in **third person**
  - Written in **present tense**
  - **No personal opinions**
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### Rhetorical Precis – Fill-in Template

#### Sentence 1: Author + Text + Main Argument

[Author's full name], in [his/her] [type of text], "[title of the work]" ([year]),  
[rhetorical verb] that [main argument or claim].

#### Examples of rhetorical verbs:

argues, asserts, claims, suggests, proposes, demonstrates, explains, reveals

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#### Sentence 2: How the Argument Is Developed

[Author's last name] develops this argument by [method or strategy 1], by [method or strategy 2], and by [method or strategy 3].

### Examples of methods:

- citing statistics
  - providing real-world examples
  - comparing and contrasting ideas
  - using expert testimony
  - narrating historical events
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### Sentence 3: Author's Purpose

[Author's last name]'s purpose is to [what the author wants to do] in order to [desired effect on the audience].

#### Helpful purpose verbs:

to persuade, to inform, to explain, to challenge, to expose, to convince

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### Sentence 4: Intended Audience and/or Tone

[Author's last name] writes for [intended audience] and adopts a [tone adjective] tone to [reason or effect].

#### Tone examples:

formal, analytical, urgent, critical, informative, persuasive, objective

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### Final Rhetorical Precis (Write Below)

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(Exactly **four sentences**)

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### Common Mistakes to Avoid

-  Adding a fifth sentence
-  Writing a summary instead of rhetorical analysis

- ❌ Using “I think” or personal opinions
  - ❌ Using weak verbs like *talks about* or *discusses*
  - ❌ Forgetting the audience or purpose
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#### Checklist Before Submission

- ☐ Exactly four sentences
  - ☐ Present tense
  - ☐ Third person
  - ☐ Includes argument, methods, purpose, and audience
  - ☐ Clear rhetorical verb used
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#### Citation (If Required)

Write the full citation below (APA / MLA / Chicago as instructed):

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#### ✓ Tip for Students

If you can answer **What? How? Why? Who?** — you are doing it right.

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