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

Student Name: _____

Course / Class: _____

Instructor: _____

Date: _____

📌 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**

📝 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

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

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

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

Final Rhetorical Precis (Write Below)

(Exactly **four sentences**)

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

Checklist Before Submission

- Exactly four sentences
- Present tense
- Third person
- Includes argument, methods, purpose, and audience
- Clear rhetorical verb used

Citation (If Required)

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

Tip for Students

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