Critical Reading Stories Requirements

Directions:

1. Read the article completely.
2. Answer Parts A-D and the author's approach questions.
   - Highlight (or underline or box) and write the questions' number where you found Part B's answers in the text.
3. Write any questions or confusions you had while reading the text in the margins.
4. Write an objective summary below of the article,
5. If this is not completed in class, then it is homework and due the next class period.

How Do You Write an Objective Summary?

- In your introductory sentence, the title and author (if available) of the text and explain the main (central) idea of the text.
- Next, identifying essential/key details that explain the main (central) idea of the text. Omit minor details that do not help the reader understand the main (central) idea. This should be 4-5 sentences long.
- Conclude your summary in one sentence by focusing on the end of the article. Does the writer ask or challenge the reader to do something (call for action)? Does the author give additional resources that the reader could read for further information? Is this a developing topic that an updated article may be written in the future? What is the author's tone regarding the subject?

Remember:

- The summary is written in your own words. You are not citing evidence in the summary.
- Do not include any opinions or personal thoughts.
- Your summary needs to be at least 5 well-written sentences long.
Medusa was one of the three Gorgons from Greek mythology. The Gorgons were sisters who, when gazed upon, could turn a person to stone. Medusa was the only one of the three who was mortal. This painting by Leonardo da Vinci is titled Head of Medusa.
The king's lips curled up into a cruel smile. King Polydectes, a mythical ruler in ancient Greece, was intensely pleased with himself. For a long time he had been trying to think of a way to kill a young man named Perseus. The king wanted to marry Perseus's beautiful mother, but he was afraid Perseus would stand in his way. Now, at last, he thought he had found a way to get rid of Perseus. He was confident that he had planned the perfect crime.

The king's plan was to ask Perseus to go on a mission to prove his courage and manliness. The mission would be to seek out and kill a monster named Medusa (muh-DOO-suh). Many men had tried to kill Medusa, but all had been destroyed by her. The king was sure that Perseus, too, would lose his life to the monster. The plan was perfect because Perseus would die but no one would accuse the king of being a murderer. Everyone would simply think that Perseus had gotten himself killed while trying to be a hero.

The wicked king summoned Perseus to his castle and pretended to be friendly. He put his arm around the young man's shoulders. "Perseus," he said, "at some point, all men must find a way to prove their courage. I have a challenge for you that will allow you to do this. Your challenge is to slay Medusa and bring me her head. Her head will be proof to everyone of your bravery."

When Perseus heard the king's challenge, he was frightened. He knew all about Medusa. She was the fiercest of all monsters. Once she had been a beautiful maiden. But she had angered the gods. In their wrath, they had turned her into a hideous monster. Now she had long, curved claws, powerful wings, and sharp fangs. For hair, she had a mass of hissing, snarling snakes that were constantly coiling and striking. But deadliest of all was her face. It was so full of evil that anyone who looked at it was instantly turned to stone. Although Perseus was nervous as he contemplated all this, he did not want to seem like a coward. He said bravely, "I will bring you Medusa's head." The king was delighted. His plan was working.

As Perseus set out on his mission, there was little chance that he would succeed. Luckily, Zeus, king of the gods, was aware of the king's scheme. Zeus called on the other gods to help Perseus. Hermes, swiftest of the gods, gave Perseus a pair of wings for his feet, so that he could travel quickly. The goddess Athena gave him a shield with a mirrorlike surface. "When you reach Medusa," Athena explained, "look only at her reflection in the shield. If you gaze directly at her, you will be turned to stone."

Aimed with the wings and the shield, Perseus quickly made his way to the land where Medusa lived. Along the last few
Perseus's heart pounded as the monster approached. He stood with his legs spread wide, braced for action. With one hand he held up his shield. In the other he gripped his sword. Soon Medusa was so close that Perseus could feel her hot breath on his neck. Still he stood his ground. He waited until her mouth was about to clamp down on him. Then he swept his sword around behind him in a slashing blow. He felt the cutting edge bite into Medusa's neck. There was a terrible cry. Then there was silence.

Perseus surveyed the dead monster's reflection. He did not turn to look at it with his own eyes. The gods had warned him that even in death Medusa's gaze would turn a person to stone. Carefully Perseus reached behind him and picked up the snake-covered head. He dropped it into a sack and began his return journey.

When Perseus arrived home, he found his mother in tears. She had been forced to agree to a marriage with King Polydectes. Perseus was furious. He went straight to the king's castle to confront him. When the king saw the young man, he was shocked. He had been sure that Perseus would not return. As Polydectes watched, Perseus turned his head away and reached into his sack. Seeing that Perseus wasn't looking, the king grabbed a sword. Before he could strike, however, Perseus pulled the head of Medusa from the sack, and the king was instantly turned to stone.

Perseus became a hero in his kingdom. He had saved his mother from a marriage to a tyrant. He had freed the people from the rule of the evil Polydectes. And he had killed the fierce Medusa.
**A Finding the Main Idea**

One statement below expresses the main idea of the article. One statement is too general, or too broad. The other statement explains only part of the article; it is too narrow. Label the statements using the following key:

M—Main Idea  B—Too Broad  N—Too Narrow

1. Perseus, with the help of the gods, killed Medusa and saved his mother from the evil king Polydectes.
2. The evil king Polydectes tried to do away with Perseus by having him go after the terrible Medusa.
3. Perseus proved his courage when he fought with the monster Medusa.

Score 15 points for a correct M answer.
Score 5 points for each correct B or N answer.

Total Score: Finding the Main Idea

**B Recalling Facts**

How well do you remember the facts in the article? Put an X in the box next to the answer that correctly completes each statement about the article.

1. Polydectes told Perseus that slaying the monster would
   □ a. prevent the king's marriage to Perseus's mother.
   □ b. rid the kingdom of an evil force.
   □ c. prove Perseus's courage and manliness.

2. The hollow where Medusa lived was surrounded by
   □ a. stone figures of men.
   □ b. snakes.
   □ c. Greek gods.

3. Medusa was awakened by
   □ a. the writhing of the snakes on her head.
   □ b. a clattering stone.
   □ c. the reflection from Perseus's shiny shield.

4. When Perseus beheaded Medusa, she was
   □ a. above him.
   □ b. behind him.
   □ c. below him.

5. Perseus arrived home to find his mother
   □ a. married to Polydectes.
   □ b. dead of a broken heart.
   □ c. about to marry Polydectes.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

Total Score: Recalling Facts
**C Making Inferences**

When you combine your own experience and information from a text to draw a conclusion that is not directly stated in that text, you are making an inference. Below are five statements that may or may not be inferences based on information in the article. Label the statements using the following key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C—Correct Inference</th>
<th>F—Faulty Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Perseus was a god.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>When Perseus set out to slay Medusa, he did not know that Polydectes wanted to marry his mother.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Without the help of the gods, Perseus could not have killed Medusa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Medusa had no fear of any human.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>When Perseus had killed Medusa, all those who had been turned to stone came back to life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

**Total Score: Making Inferences**

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**D Using Words Precisely**

Each numbered sentence below contains an underlined word or phrase from the article. Following the sentence are three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the underlined word. One definition is opposite or nearly opposite. Label those two definitions using the following key. Do not label the remaining definition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C—Closest</th>
<th>O—Opposite or Nearly Opposite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>He was <strong>confident</strong> that he had planned the perfect crime.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. afraid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. sure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. uncertain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Although Perseus was nervous he <strong>contemplated</strong> all of this, he did not want to seem like a coward.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. asked about</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. ignored</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. studied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>King Polydectes, a mythical ruler in ancient Greece, was <strong>intensely</strong> pleased with himself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. slightly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. strongly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. understandably</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Looking into his shield, Perseus could see her rise into view, her jaws <strong>agape</strong> and her terrible eyes flashing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. wide open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. bleeding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. shut tight</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
5. In their wrath, they had turned her into a hideous monster.
   a. fear
   b. anger
   c. calm cheerfulness

Author's Approach
Put an X in the box next to the correct answer.

1. The author uses the first paragraph of the article to
   a. tell the reader that the king is happy.
   b. describe the character of the king.
   c. compare the king and Perseus.

2. From the statements below, choose those that you believe the author would agree with.
   a. King Polydectes was popular with his people.
   b. Perseus was a brave young man.
   c. If Medusa had killed Perseus, Polydectes would have been responsible for the young man's death.

3. What does the author imply by saying “When at last he reached the hollow where the monster lived, Perseus saw that the ground was covered with petrified figures”?
   a. The petrified figures were men who had looked at Medusa and been turned to stone.
   b. The figures were men who had been badly frightened by Medusa.
   c. The ground was covered with the old bones of those who had tried to kill Medusa.

Enter the four total scores in the spaces below, and add them together to find your Reading Comprehension Score. Then record your score on the graph on page 73.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Lesson 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finding the Main Idea</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recalling Facts</td>
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<td>Making Inferences</td>
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<td>Using Words Precisely</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading Comprehension Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of correct answers
Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on page 74.
Objective Summary of a Critical Reading Article

- First sentence should include title and main idea (answer to Part A)

In the article "Medusa,"

- Write chronologically--beginning, then middle, and then the end

- Answer the 5 Ws and H questions (you do not need to answer all or in order)(use Part B)

Who is this about? When did this happen? Where did this happen? Why was this happening? What happened? How was the conflict resolved (if it was)?

- Use transitions

  - First, next, last, meanwhile, at the same time, during
  - In conclusion, In summary, Lastly, At the end of the article,

NO OPINIONS! MUST BE AT LEAST 5 SENTENCES AND NO LONGER THAN THE LINES GIVEN TO YOU!