Developing the Writing Process:  
Summary and Analysis Assignment

**Due Date:**  
The assignment is due in the second section of week 2 (either Jan. 14th or 15th) unless otherwise specified by your TA.

**Overview:**  
There are two common forms of academic writing that you will be asked to develop at UCSD. They are called by many names, but they usually are identified as summary and analysis. A written summary generally condenses the main ideas from a longer text into a shorter form. From the humanities to the natural sciences, it is common for researchers and scholars to summarize important arguments, evidence, and research in writing. Sometimes these pieces are called “literature reviews” or “research summaries,” (among other names). Perhaps the most important writing that researchers do is when they analyze the evidence used in experiments, policy papers, and literary studies. A written analysis breaks down longer texts into smaller parts by making a claim and defending that claim with evidence and explanation. In your DOC 2 papers this quarter, you will be asked to develop both of these writing skills.

**Directions:**  
To complete this assignment, choose one (1) text from week 1 of your 2016 DOC 2 course reader.

Write two paragraphs about your chosen text. The first paragraph should summarize the text. The second paragraph should analyze one part of the text. Your assignment should be approximately 1-2 pages.

Successful assignments will be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins and 12 point font, and will be stapled if necessary.

The assignment will count toward your final “Section Assignments and Participation Grade.”

**Late Policy:**  
Papers submitted to TAs after the assigned due date will be considered late, and will have their grades lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., B to B-). The penalty will increase accordingly for each additional day late. Any student turning in a late paper should consult his/her TA to discuss the situation.

**Student Writing Tips:**  
For students who took DOC 1, your summary and analysis might resemble Writing Assignment 3 from last quarter.

When writing, it can be helpful to imagine the primary reader of your paper is a friend or family member who is not attending this class (rather than your professor or TA).
Developing Your Assignment

How to Write a Summary:
A summary is a condensed, shortened version of something—often a longer piece of writing, or even a movie or television show, a situation, or an event. In writing a summary, you provide readers with only the main points and the key support. And, you write it all in your own words. If it is necessary to quote material, that quotation should be as brief as possible. Summarizing a reading, film, article or court case is an important exercise in capturing the main point of a piece of writing.

Here is a sample student summary paragraph taken a previous “Summary and Analysis” assignment:

In Ronald Takaki’s A Different Mirror, Takaki provides the example of the unjust 1854 California Supreme Court decision, People v. Hall to make the point that Chinese immigrants experienced unjust forms of legal discrimination in the 19th century United States. The case was based on the trial of George Hall, a white man California who was accused of murdering Ling Sing, a Chinese immigrant miner. When the case went to trial, one white man and three Chinese-American witnesses testified against Hall, and Hall was found guilty of murder based on this testimony. However, Hall’s lawyer appealed the case. He argued that an existing California law provided that “no black or mulatto person, or Indian, shall be permitted to give evidence in favor of, or against, any white person” (189). The judges agreed with Hall’s attorney and Hall was set free. When Hall was set free, Ling Sing’s murder remained unpunished, and the statute established a new form of legal racial discrimination against Chinese immigrants in California. According to Takaki, this case contributed to a long period of discrimination against Chinese immigrants in the United States. This period is known as the era of “Chinese Exclusion,” and is named for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Discussion Questions:
1) What are the elements of the summary? What information is provided in the first few sentences? In the middle? In the last few sentences? How would the summary read if you removed any of these elements?
2) How does the writer transition between each part?
3) Is the quotation necessary for the summary?
4) As a reader of this summary, do you possess the main facts of the case, even if you did not read Ronald Takaki’s description of it?
5) What strategies could you borrow for writing your own summary paragraph?

How to Write an Analysis Paragraph:
In contrast, an analysis breaks down the points or parts of a piece of writing and considers how they work together to convey a main point. This involves critical thinking: e.g., raising questions, challenging assumptions, and identifying contradictions in your reading—all skills that you worked to develop in DOC 1.

There are usually at least four parts to an analytical piece of writing—1) a topic sentence or main claim that you want to make about the text; 2) evidence or examples that support the claim you are trying to make; 3) explanatory sentences in which you attempt to unpack your examples and show readers how they support the claim you are trying to make; and 4) a conclusion sentence that attempts to convey the significance or the “so what?” of your analysis for readers.

In DOC 2, a strong written analysis of a text will often draw on the DOC “tools” that were introduced in DOC 1. These are all tools that can be used to examine the social and political structures of law and justice (NOTE: Students are strongly advised to consult the “List of Key Words” in the front of the DOC 2 Course Readers to re-familiarize themselves with these concepts).
Here is the second paragraph of the student writing sample that was referenced above:

One reason the People v. Hall is an unjust ruling is because it justifies a racial hierarchy that ranks Chinese immigrants as inferior to those who were considered “white” citizens in California in the 19th century. For example, in their ruling, the California Court argued that Chinese immigrants were “a race of people whom nature has marked as inferior, and who are incapable of progress or intellectual development beyond a certain point, as their history has shown” (People v. Hall). In this argument the Court uses the language of “nature” to validate the notion of racial hierarchy. According to the Court, a person’s appearance can “mark” them on a racial hierarchy of superior/inferior human beings based on intellect. Specifically, the Court claims that because Chinese immigrants were intellectually inferior to white people, they could not be relied upon to give proper legal testimony against them. In using this kind of reasoning, the Court advances the notion of scientific racism, which was becoming more established in the nineteenth century, to argue that Ling Sing was racially different and inferior to Hall, his white counterpart. The long-term consequences of the case are significant. It is a strong example of how the ideology of white supremacy became established in the California legal system. It socially constructed whiteness as superior to “Chinese” and implied that those who were classified as “white” could commit crimes such as murder and could receive the protection of the legal system. Conversely, those who were considered “other” (in this case, Chinese) could not depend on the courts for protection from injustice. The classification of “other” placed these men and women in a subordinate position in the racial hierarchy of the era and opened the doors to new other forms of injustice, such as job discrimination and mob violence, which continued for the next one hundred years.

Discussion Questions:

1) Does the paragraph begin with a claim/ topic sentence? Is it fact or argument? How would the paragraph read if this topic sentence were removed? If this paragraph were included in a longer paper about the case, can you predict what the thesis statement of the overall paper might be?

2) Does the paragraph include supporting details? How can you identify them? What transition phrase is used? Why do you think the writer chose these details? Are they well-chosen?

3) Does the paragraph explain or analyze the supporting details/example? How many sentences are used? How would the paragraph appear if the paragraph ended after the quotation? What does this suggest about the importance of explaining the supporting details/example?

4) How does the paragraph conclude? Is it an effective conclusion?

5) Evaluate the overall argument. Does the paragraph make a strong and clear case that the case was unjust? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

6) What strategies from this paragraph could you use in your own paragraphs?