Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Connecting Reading to Writing

**Discovering What You Think**

**Activity 15: Considering the Writing Task**

**Summarizing and Responding in a Letter to James McBride**

Now that you have considered the topic of hip hop and its global influence, you will write a summary and response in the format of a letter.

Your task is to compose a letter to James McBride with the purpose of letting him know what you think about the claims he makes about the importance and power of hip hop in his essay.

The first portion of the letter will be a summary where you show McBride that you understand the main points of his essay. The second portion of your letter will be a thoughtful and formal response to his ideas.

**Directions for the summary:**

Begin your letter with a one-paragraph summary of the essay following the steps below:

* In the first sentence, state which of his texts you read in “quotation marks” and the subject of the essay.
* Next, inform Mr. McBride that you understand what occasion may have made him want to write this essay.
* Follow this with two to three sentences summarizing the key ideas of the article.
* Your last sentence should state what you believe was his purpose for writing the essay and his intended audience.

**Reminders for the summary portion of your letter:**

* Address the author as Mr. McBride.
* Use your own words. Do not include quotations or direct sentences from the article.
* Keep your opinion out of the summary. A summary is not the place to agree or disagree.

**Directions for the response:**

Write a one-paragraph response to the essay following the order of the steps below:

* In the first sentence, state whether you agree or disagree that we have become a “hip hop planet.”
* Choose one to two main idea statements from McBride’s essay, and explain to him how you agree or disagree with the statements by providing reasons and examples from your own experiences and observations.
* Close your paragraph by stating whether McBride’s essay was strong or weak, and explain to him why he did or did not make his point.

**Reminder for the response portion of your letter:**

* Use words from your vocabulary scaffold as they pertain to your topic.

In pairs, complete the SOAPSTone chart to clarify the subject, occasion, audience, purpose, speaker, and tone for your own letter.

**SOAPSTone Chart for your Letter to McBride**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Text Component** | **Your Summarizing and**  **Responding Letter** |
| **Subject**  What is the subject or topic of your letter? What is it about? |  |
| **Occasion**  What event or occasion is causing you to write this letter? |  |
| **Audience**  To whom will you be writing? |  |
| **Purpose**  What is the purpose of your letter? |  |
| **Speaker**  Who is the speaker? |  |
| **Tone**  What kind of tone do you want to have? How do you want to present yourself so that he will listen to what you have to say about his ideas? |  |

**Activity 16: Getting Ready to Write and Gathering Evidence to Support Your Claims**

Much of your prewriting work for your letter has already been accomplished through the reading activities you have already completed.

Gather and review your various notes, quickwrites, and vocabulary activities to see what you might want to incorporate into your letter.

You may want to organize your support material into information appropriate for the summary portion of your letter and your ideas that would be appropriate for the response portion of the letter.

Writing Rhetorically

**Entering the Conversation**

**Activity 17: Composing a Draft of Your Summary**

Referring to the materials you have gathered from your previous work with McBride’s article and the directions for the summary on the writing assignment (and here again below), begin drafting the summary portion of your letter to McBride.

**Directions for the summary:**

* Begin your letter with a one-paragraph summary of the essay following the steps below:
* In the first sentence, state which of his texts you read in “quotation marks” and the subject of the essay.
* Next, inform Mr. McBride that you understand what occasion may have made him want to write this essay.
* Follow this with two to three sentences summarizing the key ideas of the article.
* Your last sentence should state what you believe was his purpose for writing the essay and his intended audience.

**Reminders for the summary portion of your letter:**

* Address the author as Mr. McBride.
* Use your own words. Do not include quotations or direct sentences from the article.
* Keep your opinion out of the summary. A summary is not the place to agree or disagree.

**Activity 18: Using the Words of Others—Preparing to Write Your Response**

Direct quotations and paraphrasing are two ways that you can use the words of others. When you directly quote a writer, you are using the writer’s exact words. Therefore, you must place the writer’s words in quotation marks. When you use a writer’s words and ideas, but you put them into your own words, you are paraphrasing. You must still make sure you let your readers know that the ideas are not your own.

A summary restates the points of a text. A response asks you to provide your opinions regarding the text, its main points, its arguments, and its use of reasons and examples. To make your response clear, you need to use the author’s words and ideas. You can refer to things McBride says by paraphrasing his words and making sure you note that they are his ideas. Or, you can directly quote McBride.

Select and write down one or two quotations from McBride’s essay which best represent the main ideas you are most interested in responding to in the response portion of your letter.

1. “ ” (paragraph #).
2. “ ” (paragraph #).

Work with the sentence frames below to introduce, integrate, and/or paraphrase direct quotations in your response:

* Mr. McBride, you claim that “ ” (paragraph #).
* When you explain how “ ,” it makes me wonder about… (paragraph #).
* According to you, “ ,” (paragraph #).
* With all due respect, I wonder what you mean when you say,“

” (paragraph #).

To help you paraphrase and respond to McBride’s ideas, use the following sentence frames:

* In the paragraph, you discuss how…
* When you say , you claim that , but I think…
* When you say , you claim that , and I also think…

It seems as if you believe that…

To help you agree or disagree using your own ideas, use one of the following sentence frames:

* Like you, I believe…
* Though I see your perspective, I believe…

**Activity 19:** **Composing a Draft of Your Response**

Referring to the materials you have gathered from your previous work with McBride’s article and the directions for the response on the writing assignment (and here again below), begin drafting the summary portion of your letter to McBride.

**Directions for the response:**

Write a one-paragraph response to the essay following the order of the steps below:

* In the first sentence, state whether you agree or disagree that we have become a “hip hop planet.”
* Choose one to two main idea statements from McBride’s essay, and explain to him how you agree or disagree with the statements by providing reasons and examples from your own experiences and observations.
* Close your paragraph by stating whether McBride’s essay was strong or weak, and explain to him why he did or did not make his point.

**Reminder for the response portion of your letter:**

* + Use words from your vocabulary scaffold as they pertain to your topic.

**Revising and Editing**

**Activity 20:** **Revising and Editing by Giving, Receiving, and Responding to Feedback**

Good writing is rewriting. Before submitting your final letter, exchange your letter with a classmate. Using the Essay Summary and Response Rubric below, offer feedback to assist your classmate in improving his or her letter. In the right hand column, note with a “+,” “,” or “–” how effectively you think your classmate’s letter fulfills the various requirements of the writing task.

**Peer Feedback**

**Summary and Response Rubric**

[+ = good;  = satisfactory; — = developing or absent]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Requirements** | **Mark**  **+  –** |
| ***Summary Paragraph*** | |
| * + Includes title in quotation marks, the author’s full name |  |
| * + Includes a statement which notes McBride’s occasion for writing |  |
| * + Includes a concise summary of McBride’s key ideas and purpose |  |
| * + Does NOT include opinion |  |
| ***Response Paragraph*** | |
| * + States whether he or she agrees or disagrees with McBride that we have become “a hip hop planet” |  |
| * + Introduces, integrates, and/or paraphrases specific passages from McBride’s essay |  |
| * + Includes reasons and examples from his or her own experiences and observations to explain why he or she agrees or disagrees with McBride’s ideas which were quoted or paraphrased |  |
| * + Ends by stating whether McBride’s point was strong or weak, and explaining why his point was or was not convincing |  |
| ***Overall*** | |
| * + Grammar and mechanics |  |
| * + Clarity and focus on writing task |  |

The best thing about my classmate’s letter is…

The aspect of my classmate’s letter that—if improved—would most strengthen the letter is…

**Acting on Feedback**

Review and consider the feedback you received from your classmate. Make final improvements to your letter.

**Activity 21: Reflecting on Your Writing Process**

Now that you have completed your letter, please respond to the following questions:

1. What do you think are the strengths of your letter to James McBride?
2. What aspects of your letter, if any, could be stronger?
3. In your own words, what do you think this letter writing assignment intended to teach you about writing? What did you learn about the writing process from writing this letter?
4. Were there any stages leading up to your final letter that you found to be the most helpful and would consider using when you write future letters or papers in this or other classes? Explain.