

# What It Takes to Be Great: Connecting Reading to Writing

## Activity 16: Considering the Writing Task

Your **first final assignment** is to write a summary of Geoff Colvin's article "What It Takes to Be Great." A summary of an essay helps someone who has not read an article to be able understand its major parts and its main ideas. A summary is not a review of the article stating your opinion about it.

To help you become familiar with summary writing, you will use a Summary Guide. Using the guide will help you to become more familiar with the language used in summary writing, the parts of an article to include, and ways to connect the different ideas of an article. It is important to read the parts and sentence frames of the Summary Guide carefully so that you complete all aspects of the assignment. With this practice, you will soon be able to write effective summaries without a Summary Guide.

You can use this Summary Guide as it is, change or expand it as you see necessary, or create a summary without using the Summary Guide. If you choose not to use the guide, make sure that you include in your summary each of the parts of Colvin's article, which are detailed in the Summary Guide's six sentences. **Note: the areas where there is support will need more sentences; plus, you will need to use documentation for paraphrased or quoted information.**

For this prewriting activity, do the following:

1. Read the Summary Guide—including its parts and structure, and the sentence frames—carefully.
2. Discuss the purpose of the assignment.
3. Ask necessary questions so that you have a solid understanding of the assignment.

### Summary Guide for Geoff Colvin's "What It Takes to Be Great"

#### The Parts and Structure of this Guided Summary

**Sentence One:** The author and title of article; when and where published; and the topic of the article

**Sentence Two:** An explanation of the question which first motivates the research into what it takes to be great

**Sentence Three:** A statement of the common belief as to what makes someone great AND Colvin's argument/ conclusion

**Sentence Four:** A statement of the major features of deliberate practice

**Sentence Five:** A brief explanation of the examples that Colvin offers to support his argument

**Sentence Six:** A statement of the author's apparent purpose

**NOTE:** Use your own paper and follow the fill-in-the-blank sentence frames for your first draft. Remember that you will need specific details and documentation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Colvin Article Summary Sentence Frames

### ***Sentence One***

The central focus of \_\_\_\_\_'s article, (author's first and last name)

\_\_\_\_\_, published \_\_\_\_\_, ("title of article" – in quotation marks) (where and when published)

is research on \_\_\_\_\_ (topic of the article)

\_\_\_\_\_.

### ***Sentence Two***

\_\_\_\_\_ notes that the researchers were (author's last name)

first curious why \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (the question researchers wanted to answer / the problem they wanted to solve)

and that led them to study \_\_\_\_\_. (who the researchers studied to answer their research question)

### ***Sentence Three***

While many believe that \_\_\_\_\_, (the common belief makes someone great)

the researchers and \_\_\_\_\_ conclude that greatness (author's last name)

\_\_\_\_\_ through deliberate practice. (Colvin's argument)

### ***Sentence Four***

Deliberate practice involves \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

and \_\_\_\_\_.

### ***Sentence Five***

To support his argument, \_\_\_\_\_ (author's last name)

shares \_\_\_\_\_ (an overview of the evidence Colvin offers)

\_\_\_\_\_.

### ***Sentence Six***

Ultimately, \_\_\_\_\_ presents this information (author's last name)

so that \_\_\_\_\_ (author's purpose)

\_\_\_\_\_.