

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b046p4nc>

Below is an example of the essay writing assignment of this semester. The summary is based on the podcast as shown above. You are expected to have at least three major parts in your essay - introduction, summary of the podcast, and your personal opinion (on the topic, argument for/against the author's points, your personal experience that's related to the podcast in question, etc.).

Pay particular attention to plagiarism - it will lead to a nonnegotiable zero in this course.

Example

Today I'd like to share with you a podcast that I recently listened to from BBC Point of View Podcast program. This podcast deals with an old yet forever popular issue - gossiping. The speaker talked about this issue in a rather reflective moon, and this is well illustrated in the various layers of her arguments over the issue of gossiping.

What triggered the speaker's discussion is this recent experience, where her whereabouts served as the raw material for someone's gossip. The speaker's has very mixed feeling over her "misfortune"- for one thing, she

sneered at the dumbness of her gossip, as...For another thing, she felt rather relieved as nothing serious happened that treated to sully her image. However, she was in the same time disappointed and sad, for the obvious fact that her life is too full to sparkle up any other gossip besides her address...While others' lips are becoming chapped due to too much small talk, the speaker started to seriously reflect on gossip and its effect on interpersonal relationship: at first sight, gossip distorted relationship and the way in which the speaker views human beings (as vicious tippers), which is probably the reason for which philosophers counsel against gossiping. Similarly, general opinion turns a cold eye on gossiping. As the old saying suggests : who gossips with you will gossip of you. Unfortunately, we continue the practice without any discrimination, for reasons that are too good to be lost sight of - first, gossiping can be useful. As we cohabit in a social group, gossiping does serve sometimes a useful source of handy information. The example of its role against pickpocket was well illustrated. Another deeper imperative is that in order to bond with other human beings, we do need gossiping, as we are not more happy primates, who could be easily satisfied by the simple gesture of searching each other's fur for fleas. This duality of gossiping was also discussed by ancient linguists. Such argument can date back to...when negative gossiping got a foothold. To drag ourselves back to the modern time, gossiping is often the source of stress at workplace, as it is poisoning and demeaning. At school, it is the magical stick for witch-like kids to gang up against the less strong...Additionally, it also takes the form of publication,

or simple words-of-mouth. All of this lead to a spiteful social atmosphere, a new age of gossiping. People are so used to gossiping, that it is wildly accepted these days as a simple common practice to spice things up by mass media. the stereotypes are such that teenagers are always in trouble, married people are always cheating on each other and rich people always have skeleton in their closets. With downpouring of dirty water on a daily basis, no wonder the modern society is full of hatred, where even kids are used to online insult. Gossiping also sells well as it is purely economical. With free information, who would still care about real authentic news? The example of Tony Blair's make up bill perfectly illustrated this point. We are so distracted by gossip that we can no more distinguish the line between the essential and the irrelevant. In conclusion, based on all of the arguments as mentioned earlier, the speaker took her stance against gossip and gave her final verdict - gossip obscure the truth and sours our relationship.

Personally, I agree with the speaker in general though I have certain reservation. For example, ...(up to you to talk about your personal experience or point of view for this part).