

## Summary vs. Analysis

- **Summary focuses on a text's plot**

“*Romeo and Juliet* is a play about two young lovers who cannot stay together because of a family feud. The two main characters fall in love at a party, marry in secret and commit suicide at the end of the play.”

- **Summary only requires remembering events in a text**

“Boxer, the hardworking horse in *Animal Farm*, helps build Napoleon's tower. After Napoleon destroys his own tower, Boxer helps rebuild it.”

- **Summary usually strings events in chronological order**

“In *The Great Gatsby*, protagonist Nick Carraway moves to the West Egg in Long Island, where he befriends Jay Gatsby, a millionaire with a mysterious past. Carraway eventually discovers that Gatsby is a bootlegger. Three characters die by the end of the novel.”

- **Summary makes no “higher-order” conclusions about a text, literature or life**

“*Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy is a powerful Victorian novel about an impoverished stone mason who wants to receive a university education.”

- **Analysis focuses on a text's ideas/concepts that a reader must discover**

“*Romeo and Juliet* explores conflict between an individual and surrounding social forces and structures, such as parents, customs and laws.”

- **Analysis requires serious and careful thought**

“Boxer, the hardworking horse in *Animal Farm*, represents the resilient but uneducated Russian proletariats who, like Boxer, lost their lives supporting a tyrant's cause.”

- **Analysis “connects the dots,” or uses evidence in a text to make a conclusion about what the text “means”**

“Gatsby's trail of destruction—a broken marriage, murder, and suicide—in *The Great Gatsby* highlights the indirect and direct consequences of early 20<sup>th</sup> century American greed and excess.”

- **Analysis makes “higher-order” conclusions about a text, life or literature**

“A reader can understand *Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy to be a critique against social institutions, such as universities and churches, that uphold class division.”

## Summary vs. Analysis Worksheet

Directions: Identify whether the following passages are summaries or analyses, and explain why.

*The play Hamlet is one of betrayal and death. In the beginning of the play Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, kills Hamlet's father with poison. He does this because he wants to be king, and he wants Gertrude, Hamlet's mother. Hamlet is very upset. He becomes even more upset when Claudius, his uncle, and his mother, Gertrude, announce they are to be married. Hamlet cannot believe that they would do this after such a short period of time. Hamlet then decides to kill his uncle to get revenge."*

*"Hamlet explores betrayal and death caused by physical, psychological and social poisoning. All of these poisons are intertwined on a psychological level. Hamlet was first affected by Claudius's physical poison—the poison that he had poured into the King's ear, killing him. After Claudius killed the King social poison spread throughout the kingdom like a disease."*

*"Mathilde's central character flaw is that she is withdrawn and uncommunicative, apparently unwilling or unable to form an intimate relationship."*