Weekly Writing Assignment

Each week, you will be expected to complete roughly 30-50 pages of readings for class. Midterm and Final exams will be largely based on these readings. In order to help you keep up and prepare you for these exams, you must complete a short writing assignment.

This assignment requires you to write a <u>summary or analysis</u> of all the readings for that week**. In a single sentence of no more than 50 words, write a summary of the arguments, narratives, or discussions you read.** The fifty-first word will meet a terrible fate!

These sentences should <u>summarize or analyze</u> the week's readings. Please do not provide criticism of the text—we'll save that for class.

What's the difference between a summary and analysis? A summary offers a short <u>description</u> of the topics or positions discussed and offered by the authors of the texts. An analysis seeks to find a common thread among the texts and shows their relation to one another. It may seem at first that a summary is easier to write than an analysis, but don't be fooled! Both are equally difficult, especially when you're limited to 50 words.

Writing assignments must be submitted no later than 11:59pm the night before a set of readings is due. If the schedule is interrupted, the rule still applies: writing is still due no later than the night before we discuss a reading. The MIT Server site will lock you out if you try to submit your work after that time. Late assignments are not accepted.

Twice this semester, you may take the option of writing a 50-word statement about a guest speaker's presentation or another student's analysis presentation.

Weekly writings will be assessed by the class and the instructor. Each week, we'll choose a "winner," whose prize will be a free pass in a future week. All other writing will be evaluated based on their accuracy and clarity. Because work will be submitted publicly, students are required to read each other's work for help and guidance primarily, but also to help determine that week's winner!