

Name _____ Period _____

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE GREAT

Reading selection for this module: Colvin, Geoff. "What it takes to be great". CNNMoney.com 19 October 2006. Web 2 August 2010.

READING RHETORICALLY

Pre-Reading

ACTIVITY 1: Getting Ready to Read—Quick Write 1

Describe something—a hobby, activity, or academic skill—that you do pretty well and feel good about doing.

1. What do you enjoy about this hobby, activity, or academic skill?

2. How long did it take until you were good at doing the hobby, activity, or academic skill?

3. How did you wish to improve at completing this hobby, activity, or academic skill?

Describe something—a hobby, activity, or academic skill—that you wish to be better at completing?

4. Why would you want to execute this hobby, activity, academic skill better?

5. How do you believe you will get better at completing this hobby, activity, or skill?

ACTIVITY 2: Getting Ready to Read—Quick Write 2

Watch the youtube.com video clips of “Great People” who are recognized as being among the best in their particular fields.

- NADIA COMANECI
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4m2YT-PIkEc>
- RITA DOVE
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIT82Oy9U1Y>
- STEPHEN HAWKING
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geybTGQnF4s>
- VLADIMIR HOROWITZ
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZm7OW3ufbc&list=PL297F34F86E529FDA&index=83>
- MICHAEL JORDAN
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8M2NgjvicA>
- LUCIANO PAVAROTTI
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCFEk6Y8TmM&feature=related>

After watching these videos, respond to the following Quick Write Prompts:

By whom are you most amazed in the videos you just watched? Explain why.

List three other people whom you consider to have achieved greatness in any field: music, dance, art, sports, science, business, academics, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What made these people great in their field? What may have led to their greatness?

ACTIVITY 3: Deciding What You Think

Below are a number of statements related to the topic of improving performance and achieving greatness. On a scale of 1 to 5, note the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Afterward, share your answers with your small group.

STATEMENT

What do you believe on a SCALE of 1 to 5?

People are born great—you either got it or you don't.

1 2 3 4 5

You can make yourself great if you put in many hours of practice.

1 2 3 4 5

If you find your natural talent, you will be great from the first day, achieve fame and fortune.

1 2 3 4 5

People usually do get better when beginning a particular activity, but they stop making improvements fairly soon after.

1 2 3 4 5

ACTIVITY 4: Introducing Key Concepts

In the article, “What it Takes to be Great” by Geoff Colvin, the author presents new research on greatness. Learning words that are frequently used to discuss research will improve your understanding.

Below are a number of words that describe research. **In pairs**, fill in the first chart with words that seem similar in meaning to the words at the top of each column. In the second chart, work with your partner to fill in words that do not seem to be similar to the others.

Be ready to share why you grouped the words the way in which you did with another pair of students. As you do this activity, think about the relationship between these different parts of research.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| authors of study | findings | research |
| conclude | observations | researchers |
| conclusion | problem | scientific |
| evidence | publication | study |
| experts | question | |

	authors of study	conclusion	problem	research	evidence
Words SIMILAR in meaning	1.	1.	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.	2.	2.

Which words are **NOT SIMILAR** to any of the others?

1. _____

2. _____

ACTIVITY 5: Surveying the Text

Answer the following questions.

1. What does the title of Colvin’s article, “What it Takes to be Great”, hint about the essay’s topic?

2. What is the subtitle of the article? What does the subtitle tell you about the topic of the article?

3. What do you know about the article’s author? Where was the article published? Do you expect to find the author’s ideas believable? Why?

4. What can you tell about the article by looking at its length? The lengths of its paragraphs? The subheading throughout the article?

ACTIVITY 6: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Answer the following questions.

1. Read the first three paragraphs. Summarize what these paragraphs discuss.

2. Read the last paragraph. Colvin states, “But the striking, liberating news is that greatness isn’t reserved for a small few who—gifted with natural talent—were born to be great.” What do you believe this means?

3. From reading these few paragraphs, complete the following sentences:

I PREDICT THAT THE ARTICLE WILL BE ABOUT _____
_____.

I PREDICT THE AUTHOR WILL ARGUE THAT GREATNESS _____
_____.

ACTIVITY 7: Introducing Key Vocabulary

Throughout the article, Colvin uses many synonyms to refer to people who are the best in their fields. Look over the text quickly. **Scan** and **highlight** any of these words you find.

Now, **number the paragraphs** in the article.

ACTIVITY 8: Assessing Key Vocabulary

The words listed in the vocabulary self-assessment chart below are important to understanding Colvin’s article. The chart will help you track whether these words are familiar. Review the list below and, before you read, note how well you understand each word’s meaning by marking the appropriate column:

- Know it well.
- Have an idea.
- Don’t know it.

***** There are additional columns on this chart that you will be asked to finish later.**

<i>Word</i>	<i>Paragraph(s) where the word appears</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Before Reading</i>			<i>During/After Reading</i>		
			<i>Know it Well</i>	<i>Have an Idea</i>	<i>Don't Know It</i>	<i>Know it Well</i>	<i>Have an Idea</i>	<i>Don't Know It</i>
discipline	¶3 & ¶17							
irrelevant	Subtitle & ¶3							
innate	¶4							

consistent, consistency	¶4, ¶6, & ¶14							
field(s)	¶4, ¶5, ¶6, ¶7, ¶8, ¶10, ¶12, ¶14, & ¶15							
crucial, critical, vital	¶14, ¶16, ¶20, & ¶24							
obsessive	¶16							
mindset	Heading ¶20 & ¶20							
sporadically	¶21							

What it takes to be great

Research now shows that the lack of natural talent is irrelevant to great success. The secret? Painful and demanding practice and hard work.

By **Geoffrey Colvin**, senior editor-at-large

What makes Tiger Woods great? What made Berkshire Hathaway Chairman Warren Buffett the world's premier investor? We think we know: Each was a natural who came into the world with a gift for doing exactly what he ended up doing. As Buffett told *Fortune* not long ago, he was "wired at birth to allocate capital." It's a one-in-a-million thing. You've got it - or you don't.

Well, folks, it's not so simple. For one thing, you do not possess a natural gift for a certain job, because targeted natural gifts don't exist. (Sorry, Warren.) You are not a born CEO or investor or chess grandmaster. You will achieve greatness only through an enormous amount of hard work over many years. And not just any hard work, but work of a particular type that's demanding and painful.

Buffett, for instance, is famed for his discipline and the hours he spends studying financial statements of potential investment targets. The good news is that your lack of a natural gift is irrelevant - talent has little or nothing to do with greatness. You can make yourself into any number of things, and you can even make yourself great.

Scientific experts are producing remarkably consistent findings across a wide array of fields. Understand that talent doesn't mean intelligence, motivation or personality traits. It's an innate ability to do some specific activity especially well. British-based researchers Michael J. Howe, Jane W. Davidson and John A. Sluboda conclude in an extensive study, "The evidence we have surveyed ... does not support the [notion that] excelling is a consequence of possessing innate gifts."

To see how the researchers could reach such a conclusion, consider the problem they were trying to solve. In virtually every field of endeavor, most people learn quickly at first, then more slowly and then stop developing completely. Yet a few do improve for years and even decades, and go on to greatness.

The irresistible question - the "fundamental challenge" for researchers in this field, says the most prominent of them, professor K. Anders Ericsson of Florida State University - is, Why? How are certain people able to go on improving? The answers begin with consistent observations about great performers in many fields.



PHOTO: DAVID STRICKREDUX

Born Winner?

Golf champ Tiger Woods (pictured at 3 years old) never stopped trying to improve.

Scientists worldwide have conducted scores of studies since the 1993 publication of a landmark paper by Ericsson and two colleagues, many focusing on sports, music and chess, in which performance is relatively easy to measure and plot over time. But plenty of additional studies have also examined other fields, including business.

No substitute for hard work

The first major conclusion is that nobody is great without work. It's nice to believe that if you find the field where you're naturally gifted, you'll be great from day one, but it doesn't happen. There's no evidence of high-level performance without experience or practice.

Reinforcing that no-free-lunch finding is vast evidence that even the most accomplished people need around ten years of hard work before becoming world-class, a pattern so well established researchers call it the ten-year rule.

What about Bobby Fischer, who became a chess grandmaster at 16? Turns out the rule holds: He'd had nine years of intensive study. And as John Horn of the University of Southern California and Hiromi Masunaga of California State University observe, "The ten-year rule represents a very rough estimate, and most researchers regard it as a minimum, not an average." In many fields (music, literature) elite performers need 20 or 30 years' experience before hitting their zenith.

So greatness isn't handed to anyone; it requires a lot of hard work. Yet that isn't enough, since many people work hard for decades without approaching greatness or even getting significantly better. What's missing?

Practice makes perfect

The best people in any field are those who devote the most hours to what the researchers call "deliberate practice." It's activity that's explicitly intended to improve performance, that reaches for objectives just beyond one's level of competence, provides feedback on results and involves high levels of repetition.

For example: Simply hitting a bucket of balls is not deliberate practice, which is why most golfers don't get better. Hitting an eight-iron 300 times with a goal of leaving the ball within 20 feet of the pin 80 percent of the time, continually observing results and making appropriate adjustments, and doing that for hours every day - that's deliberate practice.

Consistency is crucial. As Ericsson notes, "Elite performers in many diverse domains have been found to practice, on the average, roughly the same amount every day, including weekends."



Woods (pictured in 2001) devoted hours to practice and even remade his Swing twice, because that's what it took to get better.

Evidence crosses a remarkable range of fields. In a study of 20-year-old violinists by Ericsson and colleagues, the best group (judged by conservatory teachers) averaged 10,000 hours of deliberate practice over their lives; the next-best averaged 7,500 hours; and the next, 5,000. It's the same story in surgery, insurance sales, and virtually every sport. More deliberate practice equals better performance. Tons of it equals great performance.

The skeptics

Not all researchers are totally onboard with the myth-of-talent hypothesis, though their objections go to its edges rather than its center. For one thing, there are the intangibles. Two athletes might work equally hard, but what explains the ability of New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to perform at a higher level in the last two minutes of a game?

Researchers also note, for example, child prodigies who could speak, read or play music at an unusually early age. But on investigation those cases generally include highly involved parents. And many prodigies do not go on to greatness in their early field, while great performers include many who showed no special early aptitude.

Certainly some important traits are partly inherited, such as physical size and particular measures of intelligence, but those influence what a person doesn't do more than what he does; a five-footer will never be an NFL lineman, and a seven-footer will never be an Olympic gymnast. Even those restrictions are less severe than you'd expect: Ericsson notes, "Some international chess masters have IQs in the 90s." The more research that's done, the more solid the deliberate-practice model becomes.

Real-world examples

All this scholarly research is simply evidence for what great performers have been showing us for years. To take a handful of examples: Winston Churchill, one of the 20th century's greatest orators, practiced his speeches compulsively. Vladimir Horowitz supposedly said, "If I don't practice for a day, I know it. If I don't practice for two days, my wife knows it. If I don't practice for three days, the world knows it." He was certainly a demon practitioner, but the same quote has been attributed to world-class musicians like Ignace Paderewski and Luciano Pavarotti.

Many great athletes are legendary for the brutal discipline of their practice routines. In basketball, Michael Jordan practiced intensely beyond the already punishing team practices. (Had Jordan possessed some mammoth natural gift specifically for basketball, it seems unlikely he'd have been cut from his high school team.)

In football, all-time-great receiver Jerry Rice - passed up by 15 teams because they considered him too slow - practiced so hard that other players would get sick trying to keep up.

Tiger Woods is a textbook example of what the research shows. Because his father introduced him to golf at an extremely early age - 18 months - and encouraged him to practice intensively, Woods had racked up at least 15 years of practice by the time he became the youngest-ever winner of the U.S. Amateur Championship, at age 18. Also in line with the findings, he has never stopped trying to

improve, devoting many hours a day to conditioning and practice, even remaking his swing twice because that's what it took to get even better.

The business side

The evidence, scientific as well as anecdotal, seems overwhelmingly in favor of deliberate practice as the source of great performance. Just one problem: How do you practice business? Many elements of business, in fact, are directly practicable. Presenting, negotiating, delivering evaluations, deciphering financial statements - you can practice them all.

Still, they aren't the essence of great managerial performance. That requires making judgments and decisions with imperfect information in an uncertain environment, interacting with people, seeking information - can you practice those things too? You can, though not in the way you would practice a Chopin etude.

Instead, it's all about how you do what you're already doing - you create the practice in your work, which requires a few critical changes. The first is going at any task with a new goal: Instead of merely trying to get it done, you aim to get better at it.

Report writing involves finding information, analyzing it and presenting it - each an improvable skill. Chairing a board meeting requires understanding the company's strategy in the deepest way, forming a coherent view of coming market changes and setting a tone for the discussion. Anything that anyone does at work, from the most basic task to the most exalted, is an improvable skill.

Adopting a new mindset

Armed with that mindset, people go at a job in a new way. Research shows they process information more deeply and retain it longer. They want more information on what they're doing and seek other perspectives. They adopt a longer-term point of view. In the activity itself, the mindset persists. You aren't just doing the job, you're explicitly trying to get better at it in the larger sense.

Again, research shows that this difference in mental approach is vital. For example, when amateur singers take a singing lesson, they experience it as fun, a release of tension. But for professional singers, it's the opposite: They increase their concentration and focus on improving their performance during the lesson. Same activity, different mindset.

Feedback is crucial, and getting it should be no problem in business. Yet most people don't seek it; they just wait for it, half hoping it won't come. Without it, as Goldman Sachs leadership-development chief Steve Kerr says, "it's as if you're bowling through a curtain that comes down to knee level. If you don't know how successful you are, two things happen: One, you don't get any better, and two, you stop caring." In some companies, like General Electric, frequent feedback is part of the culture. If you aren't lucky enough to get that, seek it out.

Be the ball

Through the whole process, one of your goals is to build what the researchers call "mental models of your business" - pictures of how the elements fit together and influence one another. The more

you work on it, the larger your mental models will become and the better your performance will grow.

Andy Grove could keep a model of a whole world-changing technology industry in his head and adapt Intel as needed. Bill Gates, Microsoft's founder, had the same knack: He could see at the dawn of the PC that his goal of a computer on every desk was realistic and would create an unimaginably large market. John D. Rockefeller, too, saw ahead when the world-changing new industry was oil. Napoleon was perhaps the greatest ever. He could not only hold all the elements of a vast battle in his mind but, more important, could also respond quickly when they shifted in unexpected ways.

That's a lot to focus on for the benefits of deliberate practice - and worthless without one more requirement: Do it regularly, not sporadically.

Why?

For most people, work is hard enough without pushing even harder. Those extra steps are so difficult and painful they almost never get done. That's the way it must be. If great performance were easy, it wouldn't be rare. Which leads to possibly the deepest question about greatness. While experts understand an enormous amount about the behavior that produces great performance, they understand very little about where that behavior comes from.

The authors of one study conclude, "We still do not know which factors encourage individuals to engage in deliberate practice." Or as University of Michigan business school professor Noel Tichy puts it after 30 years of working with managers, "Some people are much more motivated than others, and that's the existential question I cannot answer - why."

The critical reality is that we are not hostage to some naturally granted level of talent. We can make ourselves what we will. Strangely, that idea is not popular. People hate abandoning the notion that they would coast to fame and riches if they found their talent. But that view is tragically constraining, because when they hit life's inevitable bumps in the road, they conclude that they just aren't gifted and give up.

Maybe we can't expect most people to achieve greatness. It's just too demanding. But the striking, liberating news is that greatness isn't reserved for a preordained few. It is available to you and to everyone.

From the October 30, 2006 issue

<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune>

READING RHETORICALLY

Reading

ACTIVITY 9: First Reading

You have read the first three paragraphs and the conclusion. Now read the rest of the article silently. As you read, think about the predictions you made before you read the article. Then, answer the following questions.

1. Of your original predictions, which were correct?

2. Which predictions changed as you read the entire article?

3. What was surprising or most interesting to you?

4. What part of the text or idea from the text would you like to understand better?

ACTIVITY 10: Looking Closely at Language

Revisit the Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart that you completed before you read this article. Now, fill in the “During/After Reading” Columns in the chart. Write a Definition for each word. If you are not sure what a word means, use context clues. Find the paragraph where the word appears in the article and re-read. Notice the context of each word—look at the words that surround that word in the sentence. Look also at how the word is used in the article. Context clues help you better understand a word. If any words are still unclear, look them up in the dictionary to write their definitions.

ACTIVITY 11: Re-Reading the Text

Now that you have read Colvin’s article, “What it Takes to be Great”, re-read it. Use a highlighter to label the following in the article:

1. **Highlight** and **Label** where you believe the article’s **introduction ends**.
2. **Highlight** and **Label** where Colvin notes the **questions** researchers wanted answered (or the problem they sought to solve) by studying the great performers.
3. **Highlight** and **Label** where Colvin shares the researchers’ **findings** and **conclusions**.
4. **Highlight** and **Label** the “elite performers” Colvin includes as **evidence**.
5. **Highlight** and **Label** where you believe the article’s **conclusion begins**.

After you have Highlighted and Labeled:

- Exchange your copy of “What it Takes to be Great” with a partner.
 - Read your partner’s highlighted and labeled marks.
 - Discuss with your partner why you chose to mark that section for each of numbers 1-6 above.
 - Compare and contrast your highlights and labels.
 - Take back your own copy of the article.
 - Change any of your own markings in the text if you believe need corrections.
-

ACTIVITY 12: Considering the Structure of the Text

Good topic sentences are a necessary part of good writing. They let the reader know what is upcoming in the text, as well as link the paragraph with the ones that came before.

Find a topic sentence from the article and copy it down here:

Why is it effective?

Now, locate another effective topic sentence in the article.

Why is it effective?

How does this topic sentence help the reader to prepare for the ideas that follows?

How does the topic sentence help the reader understand the information or ideas that came before?

READING RHETORICALLY

Post-Reading

ACTIVITY 13: Thinking Critically

With your group, you will answer the assigned questions. Everyone must record answers; write down the responses to the questions as they are reported from your classmates.

Be prepared to share your group’s answers with the class.

1. Colvin’s article begins in some ways like a rollercoaster. He states that Warren Buffett is the world’s best investor, then asks what made Buffett the best. Then he writes that “We think we know” and shares the common explanation. Next, he provides a quote from Buffett, which confirms this reasoning. He declares, “Well, folks, it is not so simple.” He suggests that the reasoning is inaccurate. Colvin then offers another explanation as to what makes people great in any field. Finally, he shows that this explanation (rather than Buffett’s explanation) explains Buffett’s success.

What were you thinking when you read through these ‘turns’ in his opening paragraphs?

Why do you think Colvin began his article in such a way?

2. In paragraphs 12 through 21, Colvin explains deliberate practice. What does he say?

Look at paragraphs 13 and 20; Colvin provides two specific examples of deliberate practice. What are they?

A

B

What are the most important characteristics of deliberate practice?

3. What do you believe is the purpose of the article?

What information, insight or other knowledge does Colvin hope his readers will walk away with?

How might this article affect readers?

4. Why does Colvin say that it is good news that “your lack of a natural gift is irrelevant” (in paragraph 3)?

Is it good news to you?

Why or Why not?

5. In your own words, what question or problem motivates researchers to want to study great performers?

Why were the researchers trying to find out what makes people become great in their fields?

6. What evidence does Colvin provide to support the argument in “What it Takes to be Great”?

What evidence is the most convincing in supporting the argument? Why?

ACTIVITY 14: Revisiting Key Vocabulary

You have read and re-read the article. Also, you have analyzed the research as well as the argument that Colvin presents regarding performance. Now, it is time to look again at vocabulary. These are words you may wish to use in your final assignments.

Fill in the blanks with the following words:

concludes	disciplined	innate	obsessive
consistently	elite	irrelevant	practice
critical	evidence	mindset	researchers
deliberate	fields	observations	sporadic

- 1) Considering both the recent research and his own _____ of top performers, Geoff Colvin _____ that greatness is “available to you and to everyone”.
- 2) Athletes like Michael Jordan and Jerry Rice may have had _____ talent, but Geoff Colvin emphasizes that their _____ and practically _____ training was more _____ in making them the very best in their respective sports.
- 3) Interested in discovering what it takes to be great, _____ studied _____ performers in a variety of _____.
- 4) _____ practice won’t cut it, Colvin tells his readers. Top performers must practice _____ and have the right _____.
- 5) All the _____ Colvin provides demonstrates the idea that deliberate practice is the key to improving performance.
- 6) It seems hard to believe that natural talent is _____; but study after study does suggest that _____ is what leads to becoming great.

WRITING RHETORICALLY

Pre-Writing

ACTIVITY 15: Reading the Assignment

One of your final assignments is to write a SUMMARY of Geoff Colvin’s article, “What it Takes to be Great”. A summary of an article or essay helps someone who has not read an article to be able to understand its major parts and main ideas. A summary is not a review of the article where you state your opinion. Use the SUMMARY GUIDE to help you become familiar with the language used in SUMMARY writing, the elements of the article to include, and how to connect the different ideas of the article into your summary. With this practice, you will write effective summaries without using the guide. It is important to read carefully.

Summary Guide Parts and Structure of the Guided Summary:

SENTENCES:

- 1) Name the author, title of the article, and topic of the article.

- 2) An explanation of the question, which first motivated the research into what it takes to be great.

- 3) A statement of the common belief as to what makes someone great AND Colvin’s argument/conclusion.

- 4) A statement of the major features of deliberate practice.

- 5) A brief explanation of the examples that Colvin offers to support his argument.

- 6) A statement of the author’s apparent purpose.

Summary Frame:

The central focus of _____'s article, _____
_____, is research on the topic _____
_____.
_____ notes that the researchers were first curious about why _____
_____ and that led them to study _____
_____. While many believe that _____
_____, the researchers and _____
_____ conclude that greatness _____
_____ through deliberate practice. Deliberative practice
involves _____,
_____, and _____. To support
his argument, _____ shares _____
_____.
Ultimately, _____ presents this information so that _____
_____.

ACTIVITY 16: Getting Ready to Write

Now that you understand your assignment, here are some steps to take before you begin a SUMMARY.

- 1) Review the work you have already completed.
- 2) Look at your notes and record important information you may want to add to your SUMMARY.
- 3) Paraphrase Colvin's article in your own words.

ACTIVITY 17: Composing a Draft

Reviewing the notes that you have made in the previous activity, the following steps will help you to begin to write a draft of your SUMMARY GUIDE.

Working with one part of the summary at a time, review the information you have gathered in previous activities:

- 1) Name the author, title of the article, and topic of the article.
- 2) An explanation of the question, which first motivated the research into what it takes to be great.
- 3) A statement of the common belief as to what makes someone great AND Colvin's argument/conclusion.
- 4) A statement of the major features of deliberate practice.
- 5) A brief explanation of the examples that Colvin offers to support his argument.
- 6) A statement of the author's apparent purpose.

Write a draft of your summary. As you write a draft, remember that you may use the SUMMARY GUIDE as it is, or you may expand on it. Be sure to include all of the major elements of Colvin's article, which are detailed in the 6 elements above.

ACTIVITY 18: Revising the Draft

Writing is a process. Now that you have completed a draft, make your work as effective as it can be.

Answer the following questions:

1. Have I responded to the assignment?

2. Does my summary include all six parts of the summary guide?

3. What extra information should I keep?

4. What information is most effective?

5. What should I add?

6. Where do I need more details or specifics?

7. What could I get delete?

8. Did I use details that don't need to be included or are irrelevant?

9. Do I repeat myself?

10. What should I change?

11. Are parts of my summary confusing?

12. How can I explain my ideas more clearly?

13. How is the tone of my summary?

ACTIVITY 19: Editing the Draft

Now that you have revised your summary, work with the grammar and mechanics of your draft. Make sure that your use of language is effective and follows the guidelines of standard written English.

Editing Guidelines for Individual Work

- Read your summary out loud so you can hear your errors.
- Focus on individual words and sentences. Take a sheet of paper and cover everything except the line you are reading.
- Use the dictionary to check spelling.
- Make sure you are using the correct words for your purpose.
- Be sure to capitalize proper names such as Geoff Colvin and the title of the article.
- Make sure the title of the article is in quotation marks.
- If you use Colvin's exact words from the article, make sure to use quotation marks.

ACTIVITY 20: Reflecting on the Writing of Your Summary

When you have completed your own essay, answer these questions:

1. What was most difficult about this assignment? _____

2. What was the easiest about this assignment? _____

3. What did you learn about summary writing by completing this assignment? _____

4. What do you think are the strengths of your summary? Place a star by the parts of your summary that you feel are excellent. _____
5. What are the weaknesses, if any? Place an X by parts of the Summary you would like help with. _____

6. What did you learn from this assignment? _____

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

PREWRITING

ACTIVITY 21: Your Final Assignment

Apply Colvin’s concept of “DELIBERATE PRACTICE”. To deepen your familiarity with deliberate practice, you will complete the concept organizer below:

CONCEPT: deliberate practice

DEFINITION: Activities that have been designed specifically to improve one’s current level of performance; a highly structured activity, the goal of which is to get better at completing the activity

EXAMPLE SENTENCES:

“More deliberate practice equals better performance.”

“The best people in any field are those who devote the most hours to what the researchers call ‘deliberate practice’.”

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Requires a particular attitude: not just getting something done, but doing the activity to get better
 - Involves setting goals and objectives beyond one’s current ability
 - Involves high levels of repetition
 - Involves carefully observing the results of the deliberate practice
 - Look at the feedback and adjust approach to improve
-

EXAMPLES:

NON-EXAMPLES:

MY SENTENCE:

ACTIVITY 22: Reading the Assignment

Prepare and give a **SPEECH**—with another classmate—which gives advice to help someone improve his or her performance on a specific activity.

In this assignment, you will show that you understand and can apply Geoff Colvin’s idea of **DELIBERATE PRACTICE**.

For this **PREWRITING** activity:

- Read the assignment carefully.
- Discuss the purpose of the assignment.
- Ask the necessary questions so that you have a solid understanding of the assignment.

GENERAL ASSIGNMENT

A SPEECH: “What does it take to be great? Advice to an aspiring _____”

BACKGROUND OF ASSIGNMENT:

How can a soccer coach encourage players to improve performance and achieve greatness? What might a music teacher say to help a student hit the winning notes? What would a dance teacher say? A writing professor? A director of a film?

THE SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENT:

You are the coach, the teacher, the director, etc. You see the potential in one of your players, students, actors, etc. Based on Colvin’s research, you will offer 3 to 5 tips to this aspiring performer. For each tip, provide 1 or 2 specific examples that best illustrate and explain this tip.

SPEECH COMPONENTS:

Your speech will include:

- A **VISUAL**
- An **INTRODUCTION** that states the purpose of your speech and draws the audience in
- A **BODY** with specific tasks or examples of your tips to improve performance
- A **CONCLUSION** restating the main points or purpose of the speech; Conclusions should end on a strong point

ACTIVITY 23: Getting Ready to Write Your Speech

Make a list of fields in which someone can achieve greatness.

Be as specific as possible. For example: acting, dancing, directing films, doing hair, playing soccer, sewing, skateboarding, writing books, etc.

PLANNING THE SPEECH WITH YOUR PARTNER

With your partner, decide who you will help to improve his or her performance with your advice.

What field is he or she involved? _____

(Be sure you know about the field you selected and are interested in thinking more about what it takes to be great in this field.)

Review the evaluation form so that you know how your speech will be graded!

ACTIVITY 24: Organizing and Composing a Draft

Your speech will have the parts of an essay (INTRODUCTION, BODY, CONCLUSION) and a **VISUAL**.

Complete the following:

Parts of a Successful Speech	Your Draft
<p>TITLE</p> <p>In your title, fill in the blank to note the field you have selected and your audience.</p>	
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>Consider the following tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grab your audience’s attention• Introduce your audience to Colvin’s article “What it Takes to be Great”• Explain the idea of “DELIBERATE PRACTICE”• Clearly state your purpose	
<p>BODY</p> <p>In developing the body of your speech, consider the following tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearly state each of the major tips for improving performance• As needed, go back to the article and your notes to make a list of as many tips as you can find regarding DELIBERATE PRACTICE• For each tip, make sure to relate it to your specific activity by providing an example.	

<p>tips for DELIBERATE PRACTICE to improve performance (from Colvin's article)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1)2)3)4)5)6)
<p>SPECIFIC EXAMPLES or IDEAS related to your activity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1)2)3)4)5)6)

CONCLUSION

Consider the following tips:

- Restate the purpose
- Restate your main points
- End on a strong note using an idea, short video clip, funny thought, quotation, etc.
- Motivate your audience to talk about your ideas

VISUAL

Since a visual is essential to your speech, list some visuals that you may use in your presentation.

Consider:

- How can you best show the activity you are giving advice?
- What visual best illustrates what can result from following your tips?

ACTIVITY 25: Rewriting and Editing the Speech

Once you have drafted your speech, look at the additional questions and tips below to help you prepare to present it to the class.

- How will you divide the speech so that you both have equal talking time?
- What terminology would be usefully for your audience?
- Speak clearly and in a loud voice.
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Know your speech. Use notecards.
- At what point in your speech will you refer to your visual?
- How will you explain your visual?
- Is the font and/or the picture large enough for those in the back of the room to see?
- Are you within the 2-4 minute limit?

PARTNER WORK

Practice your speech with your partner. Look at the evaluation sheet to make sure that you meet the requirements. Identify how you can improve your speech.

WORK WITH ANOTHER PAIR

Take turns giving your timed speech. Each pair will use the evaluation form to provide feedback to the other pair. Use the feedback to make changes before you give your presentation in front of the class.

ACTIVITY 26: Reflecting on the Article, “What it Takes to be Great”

To complete this unit, revisit the statements about greatness you rated before you read the article. Now that you have read Colvin’s argument, complete the following:

STATEMENT

What do you think on a SCALE of 1 to 5?

People are born great—you either got it or you don’t.

1 2 3 4 5 **BEFORE** reading the article

1 2 3 4 5 **AFTER** reading the article

You can make yourself great if you put in many hours of practice.

1 2 3 4 5 **BEFORE** reading the article

1 2 3 4 5 **AFTER** reading the article

If you find your natural talent, you will be great from the first day and achieve fame and fortune.

1 2 3 4 5 **BEFORE** reading the article

1 2 3 4 5 **AFTER** reading the article

People usually do get better when beginning a particular activity, but stop making improvements fairly soon after.

1 2 3 4 5 **BEFORE** reading the article

1 2 3 4 5 **AFTER** reading the article

Reflect on your new ratings and compare with your original ones. How did they change?

REFLECTIONS

Of your special interests (hobbies, sports, activities), which would you like to improve using Geoff Colvin's concept of deliberate practice? _____

How would you improve your performance? _____

With regard to should and your own learning, are there any areas in which you would like to improve your performance? _____

How might you improve your performance in school, using Geoff Colvin's concept of deliberate practice?
