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Summarizing v. Arguing

Be sure that your body paragraphs develop arguments and don't just summarize the story.

What's the difference between summarizing and arguing? A summary states the facts of what happened. An argument uses what happened (factual evidence) as support for a point you are trying to make.

Let's look at the example below.

Summary:

Cress is the protagonist because he maintains an honorable ones. Cress passes a law stating that no one will be allowed to bury the body of Polyneices. This makes Antigone very angry, but he does not change his mind. Then, the Chorus, the Chorus, and Haemon all try to convince him to reconsider his decision. Cress goes forward with his plan, though instead of having Antigone stand to death, he decides to release her in a cave. Eventually, he does change his mind about the law and the punishment and buries Polyneices and releases Antigone from the cave, even though Antigone has already hung herself. Cress is very much the protagonist in the story.

Other than the topic and concluding sentences, there's nothing in that paragraph that argues Cress as the protagonist. It's just a summary of what happened.

Argument:

Cress is the protagonist because his intentions are honorable ones. When Cress passes the law forbidding anyone to bury Polyneices, he does so to set an example. His intention is to protect the city by showing what would happen to those who might attack the city. Yes, having an exposed body is against their religious law and certainly repulsive, but Cress does it for the good of the city. As a protagonist, he serves and protects not just himself, but others. Similarly, when Cress refuses to listen to the advice from others, it may seem like he doesn't care what the people think. However, he makes it clear that he's just trying to excuse his family members from the expectations of following the law. He has to hold them just as responsible as he would any other citizen. This dedication to **honor** is one of the qualities that make him a **hero** and **good** leader. Cress is the **protagonist** of the play because every law he makes and all of his actions are to **protect** the city and the **law** in the citizens. Notice how the textual evidence (what happened) is used as evidence for the argument that I am making.



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