Precis Writing

Precis (pronounced “preh-zee”) is a fancy word for “essential” -- could also be called an “Explication”, depending on who does the asking. Precis Writing will prepare you for the Analytical Response section of the AP Test.

Precis (Introductory Paragraph):
1. Read and Summarize the Work (3-4 Sentences):
   - What is the overall tone in the piece?
   - What is the author’s purpose?
   - What is the author’s main idea?
   - Who is the audience, and is it important to the argument?

2. Précis Review: (All one paragraph - Method Portion of ELPS Journal)
   - **Author’s Name**, a phrase describing the **author**, the **form** (Essay, Article, Story)
     - **Title** of the work, the date (in parenthesis),
     - A rhetorically accurate verb (such as “assert,” “argue,” “suggest,” “imply,” “claim,” “question,” etc.) that describes what the author is doing in the text
     - A **THAT** clause in which you state the author’s Major Premise (“Complex Claim”) -- underline.
   - **Minor Premises** - explanation (in order of appearance) of details that develop and/or supports the argument (Rhetorical Modes: comparison-contrast, cause and effect, narration, anecdote, argument, classification, description, metaphor/analogy). This does mean every last details -- just the ones that best achieve his purposes.
   - A statement of the author’s **Enthymeme** (“Call to Action”) phrased with accurate tone word (“urges”, “discourages”, “warns”, “pleads”, “calls for”, “begs”) followed by an IN ORDER TO phrase in which you explain what the author wants the audience to do or feel as a result of reading the work.
   - A description of the intended audience (**tone** - what he shows in the text) and/or the relationship the author establishes with the reader (**mood** - what you, as the reader, take away -- without using the word “I”).
   - Comparison-Contrast, Cause and Effect Statement that discusses the implications of the argument (“If ___________, so ______________”, “Since ______________, then ________________, Because ______________, (subject) ________________”) answering the questions “Does the author convince you?”