

BS RESEARCH REPORT
A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF CHATGPT AND DEEPSEEK IN
AUTOMATIC TEXT SUMMARIZATION



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ABSTRACT

This study compared the AI-generated summaries of five selected short stories: The Last Leaf by O Henry(1907), The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe(1843), Dead Men's Path by Chinua Achebe(1953), A Sorrowful Woman by Gail Godwin(1971) and After Twenty Years by O Henry(1906). The study focused on summaries, generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek, evaluating them based on qualitative criteria of coherence, cohesion and informativeness, supported by quantitative measures of compression and readability. Previous studies examined AI-based text summarization using various evaluation metrics; however, limited research had comparatively analyzed ChatGPT and DeepSeek on texts using the textuality standards of coherence, cohesion and informativeness. The research was based on Beaugrande and Dressler's Theory of Textuality (1981). Out of the seven standards of text, Coherence, Cohesion, Informativity, Intertextuality, Intentionality, Acceptability and Situationality, only three were selected for evaluation: coherence, cohesion and informativeness. Through a qualitative comparative research approach, the study examined how well each AI model structured information and maintained the original texts' meanings. In addition, quantitative measures of compression ratios and standardized readability scores were calculated for each summary to complement the qualitative discourse analysis. The study concluded that ChatGPT outperformed DeepSeek making it a more effective and reliable tool for generating coherent, cohesive, and informative summaries of texts, therefore, contributing to the growing discussion on the use of artificial intelligence in language-related tasks.



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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beloved parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter begins from the background of the study and outlines the problem this work addresses. It also presents the research questions, objectives, significance, and delimitations of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

The rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed the way written information is condensed and communicated, with automatic text summarization emerging as one of its most widely used applications. In the educational sector, students are increasingly using Generative AI for multiple purposes. Artificial intelligence has great potential for application in learning environments including the development of students' narrative skills and text summarization abilities (Durak et al., 2025). Generative AI tools have proved to be of great assistance to students in their study and research. The bulk of data and information is growing rapidly over the years, making their processing very difficult for humans (Leoni et al., 2024). Individuals, who deal with a large number of documents that need to be read to capture relevant information, can utilize Generative AI to automatically extract important information from sources of different formats and types (Kaczorowska-Spychalska et al., 2024). However, it is necessary to find out which tool is better for which task, so that people can optimally use them. Introducing people to better generative AI tools

can increase productivity because one person may be doing the work of approximately ten people.

In academic writing, there are different ways of summarizing texts, for instance, extractive and abstractive. Extracts are summaries created by reusing portions (words, sentences) of the input text verbatim, while abstracts are created by regenerating the extracted content. Extraction is the process of identifying important material in the text and abstraction is the process of reformulating the text in novel terms (Radev et al., 2002).

1.3 Problem Statement

Before the advent of generative AI tools, human beings used to carry out textual summarization. Now, the task of summarizing texts is done much faster by AI tools. There are different Generative AI tools that assist in summarizing lengthy texts but people are unaware of the fact which tool is better than the others. The summarized text must contain discourse coherence, semantic compression, and information salience. The Generative AI tools need to be compared to know which tool should be preferred to others in order to get the desirable results. This project aims at comparing the summarized results provided by two popular Generative AI tools: ChatGPT and DeepSeek, and then to conclude which tool works better than the other and fulfill the required criteria.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. Which generative AI tool performs better in text summarization when evaluated in terms of coherence, cohesion and informativeness as qualitative criteria, and compression ratio and readability as quantitative criteria?

2. What is the extent of alignment of quantitative measures with the qualitative evaluation of AI-generated summaries?

1.5 Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To evaluate the summarized results in terms of coherence, cohesion and informativeness as qualitative criteria, and the compression ratio and readability as quantitative criteria of AI-generated summaries
2. To determine the extent to which the quantitative measures align with the qualitative evaluation of AI-generated summaries

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important to be conducted because the use of Generative AI tools has increased and dependence on these tools is growing day by day. Many people including students use them for different purposes such as to save time and make their work easy. Through this study, readers can differentiate between ChatGPT and DeepSeek; specifically their ability to summarize texts. This work can be helpful for stakeholders in education especially students and, it can also be beneficial for teachers and other people in the society at large.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Due to time, scope and requirement of the thesis, the study is limited to five short stories : The Last Leaf by O. Henry (1907), The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe (1843),

Dead Men's Path by Chinua Achebe (1953), A Sorrowful Woman by Gail Godwin (1971), and After Twenty Years by O. Henry (1906). Their AI-generated summaries were analyzed using only two generative AI tools: ChatGPT and DeepSeek. Other available summarization tools were not included within the scope of this study.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the importance of generative artificial intelligence, especially in the educational sector. Research questions and objectives are given on the basis of which the entire study is conducted. Furthermore, it highlighted the significance of the comparison of ChatGPT and DeepSeek. It has also underlined the delimitations of the study.

The next chapter is about literature review of the specific field of automatic text summarization, the potential research gap and the pushing of the boundaries of the existing knowledge.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, similar work done on the specific field of automatic text summarization is reviewed, the potential gap is highlighted and pushing the boundaries of the existing knowledge is suggested.

2.2 Review of Related Literature

According to Sorokina (2024), automated text summarization, a key branch of Natural Language Processing (NLP), addresses the capability of the computer to read and understand huge volumes of text including books and articles by condensing large text into concise, essential content helping researchers quickly assess the relevance of publications.

One study related to automated summarization was carried out by Lin (2004), titled “ROUGE: A Package for Automatic Evaluation of Summaries” in which he introduced **ROUGE**, an automatic evaluation method for text summarization. ROUGE stands for ‘Recall-Oriented Understudy for Gisting Evaluation’. It includes several automatic evaluation methods that measure the similarity between summaries. ROUGE evaluates summaries quantitatively by comparing AI generated summaries with human written summaries, measuring word and phrase overlap and finally giving numerical scores. Lin has used ROUGE to examine automated summaries. The evaluation showed that ROUGE scores correlated well with human judgments, particularly in measuring the amount of important content retained in automatically generated summaries.

This research differs from that of Lin's research in its evaluation approach. The present study primarily evaluates the linguistic quality of AI-generated summaries through coherence, cohesion, and informativeness. To complement this qualitative evaluation, compression ratio and readability scores (Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch–Kincaid Grade Level) are also calculated to provide additional quantitative insights into summary length and readability. Lin's study is a metric based evaluation. ROUGE evaluates summaries by measuring lexical overlap between machine-generated outputs and reference summaries, thereby providing a quantitative framework for comparison.

Another study “ROUGE 2.0: Updated and Improved Measures for Evaluation of Summarization Tasks” by Ganesan(2018), has improved the traditional ROUGE evaluation method by adding semantic similarity to summary evaluation. This study goes one step further, where automatic evaluation is improved not only by word overlap but also by finding similarity in meaning between machine generated and reference summaries. Its primary concern is the improvement of computational scoring techniques for summarization systems. The current research differs in a way that here the focus is examining the linguistic quality, compression ratio and readability scores of AI generated summaries rather than improving automated metrics. The study evaluates summaries based on discourse-level features supported by compression and readability scores. Instead of relying mainly on semantic scoring systems, it analyzes how effectively summaries function as meaningful and well-structured texts. While ROUGE 2.0 attempts to refine computational metrics, this research applies both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine textual organization and language quality.

A study carried out by Kiyoumars(2015), “Evaluation of Automatic Text Summarizations based on Human Summaries”, is about the comparison of AI generated summaries by different tools and manually produced summaries by humans. In order to achieve the results, summaries were produced by two different AI algorithms i.e ‘Fuzzy method’ and ‘Vector approach’. Using the ROUGE evaluation system, the researcher has compared the manually-produced summaries and the automatically-produced ones. Also, summaries were evaluated by some human judges i.e. some university faculty members in the English Department, Islamic Azad University Shahrekord Branch, Iran. Both Manual evaluation and Rouge evaluation of generated summaries indicated a superiority of summaries produced by humans over the automatically produced summaries at that time. He also observed that the Fuzzy method produced good level summaries and it was concluded that the Fuzzy algorithm can replace human summaries when large amounts of text is involved because these tools are more economical, more appropriate and more efficient.

The current research differs from that of Kiyoumars(2015) research in a way that he has included human generated summaries and has compared them with AI generated summaries. His main goal is to select the most appropriate method to summarize texts. Whereas the current research focuses only on the comparison of AI generated tools, specifically ChatGPT and Deepseek. In the current world of technology, humans no longer spend time manually generating summaries, they prefer AI tools in order to save time, money and energy.

Kızıltaş (2026), in his study, “Artificial intelligence (AI) in primary school classrooms: ChatGPT’s text summarization ability and its impact on attitudes towards summarization” investigates the use of ChatGPT in primary school education, specifically

examining its effect on fourth-grade students' text summarization skills and their attitudes toward summarization. The study has adopted a quantitative approach and focused on whether or not introducing ChatGPT into classrooms will improve the summarization abilities of students. A quantitative study was conducted using a pretest–posttest control group design to examine the role of ChatGPT in improving the summarization skills of primary school students. The study involved two groups of fourth-grade students, where the experimental group used ChatGPT while the control group followed traditional teaching methods. Students' summarization skills and attitudes were measured before and after the intervention using standardized assessment tools, and the collected data were analyzed statistically to compare the performance of both groups. The results concluded that ChatGPT does improve the students' attitude towards summarization and enhance their perception of summarization as a learning task.

The work of Kızıldaş relates to this thesis in a way that both studies focus on the potential of AI tools, but the difference lies in the approach and objectives. This study conducts both qualitative comparative analysis and quantitative measurement of summaries generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek using linguistic criteria and readability scores. It differentiates between two AI models, whereas Kızıldaş' work discussed above uses a single AI model and focuses on primary school fourth grade students' summarization ability.

Another study by King et al. (2025) is “Improving the Readability of Institutional Heart Failure–Related Patient Education Materials Using GPT-4”. This observational study examined whether or not GPT-4 could simplify heart failure patient education materials without reducing the quality of the information. For this purpose, the researchers collected 143 educational texts from the websites of leading cardiology institutions and asked GPT-4

to rewrite each text in simpler language using a single prompt. The original and revised versions were then compared using six readability formulas, including the Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. To ensure that the simplified texts remained reliable, a board-certified cardiologist evaluated their accuracy and comprehensiveness and found them up to the mark. These results showed that GPT-4 made the educational materials significantly easier to read while preserving their accuracy. In many cases, the revised versions were also found to be more comprehensive than the original texts, suggesting that GPT-4 can effectively simplify complex medical information without compromising its content.

Although this study also focuses on ChatGPT, its main aim is to determine whether GPT-4 can simplify medical patient education materials and make them easier to read. The researchers evaluated readability using standard readability formulas and checked the accuracy and completeness of the revised texts through expert review. In contrast, the present study compares the summarization performance of ChatGPT and DeepSeek using selected literary short stories. It evaluates the summaries based on coherence, cohesion, and informativeness. The study also includes compression ratio and readability scores to support the linguistic evaluation, providing a more comprehensive comparison of the two AI models.

2.3 Research Gap

Previous research has focused on automated evaluation metrics such as ROUGE, which assess summaries quantitatively by measuring word and phrase overlap between machine-generated and reference summaries (Lin, 2004). Subsequent studies proposed improved evaluation methods that extend beyond lexical overlap by incorporating semantic similarity to provide a more accurate assessment of summary quality (Ganeson, 2018). More recent research has examined the educational applications of ChatGPT, particularly its

effectiveness in improving primary school students' text summarization skills and attitudes toward summarization (Kızıldaş, 2026). Similarly, King et al. (2025) investigated GPT-4's ability to improve the readability of patient education materials while maintaining their accuracy and comprehensiveness. Although these studies have evaluated AI-generated text using automated metrics, readability measures, or educational outcomes; comparatively few studies have evaluated and compared the linguistic quality of summaries produced by different generative AI models, particularly ChatGPT and DeepSeek. Similarly, readability and compression metrics are well-established in corpus stylistics but they have not previously been applied alongside discourse-based textuality criteria to compare the summarization of literary texts by ChatGPT and DeepSeek. This study includes both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive evaluation than either method alone.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter introduced previous studies, carried out on automated text summarization, using different approaches. Some previous research uses an automated metric for evaluating summaries. Other studies have been carried out on AI tools but the approach and audience is different. The research gap was highlighted and the approach for bridging this gap was proposed.

In the next chapter, the methodology adopted for this study is explained and the relevant theoretical framework used is discussed. The methodology is designed to evaluate the performance of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) models in automatic text summarization using different criteria.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology adopted for this study is given and the relevant theoretical framework, that is used, is discussed. The methodology is designed to evaluate the performance of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) models in automatic text summarization using qualitative and quantitative criteria.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically grounded in Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) theory of textuality, specifically focusing on the criteria of cohesion, coherence, and informativeness, which serve to assess the quality and efficacy of summaries produced by AI.

A text is a communicative occurrence which meets seven standards of textuality: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality. Failure to satisfy any of the seven standards results in a non-communicative occurrence (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981, p. 11)

The theory of textuality defines seven standards of textuality: Cohesion, Coherence, informativity, intertextuality, situationality, acceptability and intentionality. This study adopts three of the seven standards: cohesion, coherence, and informativity because they provide unbiased and objective evaluation and are directly relevant to assessing the output of generative AI summarization models. The remaining four standards: intentionality, acceptability, situationality and intertextuality are excluded due to their dependence on

subjective human judgment and contextual factors that cannot be analysed in automated outputs.

3.3 Approaches for Automatic Text Summarization

In general, there are two different approaches for automatic summarization: extraction and abstraction. Extractive summarization methods work by identifying important sections of the text and generating them verbatim; thus, they depend only on extraction of sentences from the original text. In contrast, abstractive summarization methods aim at producing important material in a new way. In other words, they interpret and examine the text using advanced natural language processing techniques in order to generate a new shorter text that conveys the most critical information from the original text (Allahyari et al., 2017).

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek use abstractive summarization rather than extractive summarization. In extractive summarization, important sentences or phrases are selected directly from the original text without changing their wording. In contrast, abstractive summarization produces new sentences that express the main ideas of the original text using different words and sentence structures (See et al., 2017). This is possible because these AI models are based on the Transformer architecture introduced by Vaswani et al. (2017), which enables them to understand relationships between words and the overall context of a text instead of processing each word separately.

Since both ChatGPT and DeepSeek are built on transformer-based language models trained on large amounts of text, they are able to understand the overall meaning of a passage and generate summaries in their own words rather than copying sentences from the source. As a result, the summaries often reorganize the sequence of events, paraphrase character

descriptions, and use different vocabulary from the original short stories. These are typical features of abstractive summarization. Although this approach generally produces summaries that are more natural and fluent, it also carries the risk of changing, omitting, or adding information during the summarization process (See et al., 2017). For this reason, the present study evaluates the generated summaries in terms of coherence, cohesion and informativeness to determine how effectively each AI model preserves the meaning of the original text.

3.4 Nature of the Study

The present study is a mixed method approach that focuses on the linguistic evaluation of AI-generated summaries as well as quantitative measurement of compression and readability. The qualitative design primarily analyzes linguistic features and textual meaning, and the quantitative measurement relies on numerical scores.

A comparative framework is used because the study aims to evaluate and compare the summarization performance of different generative AI tools. The selected models generate summaries from the same source texts, allowing direct comparison of their outputs.

3.5 Research Approach

The study follows a comparative linguistics approach, combining qualitative textual analysis with quantitative measurement. Different generative AI models are provided with identical textual inputs, short stories, and then their summaries are evaluated by textual analysis and quantitative measurement.

3.6 AI Models

The study evaluates a selected number of widely used generative AI models for summarization which are ChatGPT and DeepSeek. These models are selected because of their popularity, accessibility, and advanced natural language generation capabilities.

3.7 Source Texts

The text selected for the study is a collection of short stories which are given below;

1. The Last Leaf by O. Henry (1907)
2. The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe (1843)
3. Dead Men's Path by Chinua Achebe (1953)
4. A sorrowful woman by Gail Godwin (1971)
5. After Twenty Years by O. Henry (1906)

These short stories are selected because they are well-known literary works that are widely recognized and commonly studied. These stories are chosen for authorial and cultural diversity: it includes American authors writing from different periods and literary movements; O. Henry's early twentieth-century ironic realism, Poe's nineteenth-century Gothic psychological fiction, Godwin's twentieth-century domestic fiction, alongside Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian author writing from a postcolonial African perspective. This diversity tests whether ChatGPT's and DeepSeek's summarization performance remains consistent across different narrative voices, settings, and cultural contexts.

3.8 Data Collection and Evaluation Criteria

The data for this study consist of five short stories of comparable length, ranging between approximately 1,200 and 2,600 words to ensure that each text contained enough narrative detail for a fair comparison of the summaries generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek. To ensure consistency across both AI tools, a single, standardized prompt was used to generate all ten summaries: *Summarize the following text while preserving the main ideas and coherence of the original content.* Using an identical prompt for ChatGPT and DeepSeek controls prompt-related variation, ensuring that any differences observed in the resulting summaries can be attributed to the models themselves rather than to differences in input instructions. The generated summaries were then evaluated according to three linguistic and discourse-based criteria, drawn from Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) Standards of Textuality and were also measured quantitatively by finding compression ratio. Readability scores were calculated by Flesch Reading Ease formula (Flesch, 1948) and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level formula (Kincaid et al., 1975).

3.8.1 Coherence

Coherence refers to the underlying continuity of sense in a text, the logical and conceptual connectedness that allows a reader to follow and construct meaning from a sequence of ideas, even where that connectedness is not explicitly marked by surface-level language (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981). In this study, coherence is assessed based on whether or not the events and ideas within each summary are arranged in a logical, causally consistent order that reflects the structure of the original short story.

3.8.2 Cohesion

Cohesion concerns the ways in which the components of the surface text, i.e. the actual words we hear or see, are mutually connected within a sequence. The surface components depend upon each other according to grammatical forms and conventions, such that cohesion rests upon grammatical dependencies (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981). In this study, cohesion is evaluated by identifying the presence of transitional devices in each AI-generated summary.

3.8.3 Informativeness

Informativeness refers to the extent to which a text provides content that is relevant, non-redundant, and appropriately proportioned to what the reader needs to know (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981). In this study, informativeness is assessed by comparing each summary against its source story for completeness of plot, character, and thematic detail.

3.8.4 Quantitative Measures

In addition to the qualitative criteria above, two quantitative measures are calculated for each AI-generated summary. Compression ratio is calculated as summary word count divided by source-text word count, indicating how much the original text was condensed. Readability was calculated using the Flesch Reading Ease formula (Flesch, 1948) and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level formula (Kincaid et al., 1975), which estimate how easily a text can be read based on sentence length and word/syllable complexity. Both scores were generated using the Flesch Kincaid Calculator, which applies these formulas automatically to each summary. These measures do not replace the textuality based qualitative analysis;

rather, they provide a measurable, corpus-stylistic dimension that supports and cross-checks the qualitative findings.

3.8.4.1 Compression Ratio. Compression ratio was calculated to determine how effectively each AI model condensed the original text while preserving essential information. This measure has been recognized as an important indicator in the evaluation of summarization because it reflects the balance between brevity and information retention (Liu et al., 2022).

3.8.4.2 Flesch Reading Ease formula

. As a quantitative complement to the qualitative analysis of textuality, the Flesch Reading Ease (FRE) formula, developed by Flesch (1948) is employed which measures how easily a piece of English text can be read and understood. The formula for this measure is given by $FRE = 206.835 - 1.015 \times (\text{total of words} \div \text{total of sentences}) - 84.6 \times (\text{total of syllables} \div \text{total of words})$. Scores between 0 and 100 are assigned to each text. Higher scores imply a more understandable summary. Texts with shorter sentences and shorter words have higher FRE scores while texts with longer or more syllable-dense words and phrases have lower FRE scores (Flesch, 1948). In this study, the sentence-level readability of the ChatGPT and DeepSeek summaries is evaluated by measuring their FRE score.

3.8.4.3 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level.

In addition to the Flesch Reading Ease score, this study applies the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL) formula, developed by Kincaid, Fishburne, Rogers, and Chissom (1975) for the United States Navy as a means of matching technical and training materials to readers' education levels. The formula is calculated as $FKGL = 0.39 \times (\text{total words} \div \text{total sentences}) + 11.8 \times (\text{total syllables} \div \text{total words}) - 15.59$, producing a score that

corresponds directly to a U.S. school grade level; for example, a score of 8 indicates that the text should be comprehensible to an average eighth-grade student (Kincaid et al., 1975). Unlike the Flesch Reading Ease score, where a higher value indicates easier text, a lower FKGL score indicates greater accessibility.

3.9 Limitations of the Methodology

The methodology may face several limitations:

1. AI models may produce variable outputs over time meaning the summaries analyzed here represent a single instance of each tool's output rather than a stable, repeatable baseline. Generative AI models such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek are known to be highly sensitive to the exact wording of the prompt used to generate a response, meaning that even minor differences in how a summarization request is phrased can produce noticeably different summaries in terms of length, word choice, structure, and the level of detail retained (Ouyang, Zhang, Harman, & Wang, 2025).

2. The human evaluation of coherence, cohesion, and informativeness inherently involves an element of subjective interpretation. Human judgments of summary quality are well documented in the literature to vary between evaluators, since criteria such as coherence and informativeness are not always applied with the same threshold or emphasis from one reader to another (Fabbri, Kryscinski, McCann, Socher, & Radev, 2020).

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology adopted for carrying out the study, and explained the step-by-step process followed to obtain the research findings. Additionally, a theoretical framework is established on which the entire study is based and the textual theory

by Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) is introduced to the readers. Furthermore, the Flesch Reading Ease formula (Flesch, 1948) and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level formula (Kincaid et al., 1975) are introduced to support the analysis. Finally, the chapter described the nature of the study, the research approach, the source texts, and the AI models used in the research.

In the next chapter, the AI generated summaries are linguistically evaluated for coherence and informativeness. Moreover, the cohesive devices are also highlighted and compared to find which tool has performed better. Furthermore, the summaries are also evaluated quantitatively consisting of compression ratio and readability score.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the AI generated summaries are linguistically evaluated for coherence and informativeness. Moreover, the cohesive devices are also highlighted and compared to find which tool has performed better. Furthermore, the summaries are also evaluated quantitatively consisting of compression ratio and readability score as criteria.

4.2 Analysis of Coherence in Short Stories

Coherence refers to the underlying continuity of sense in a text, the logical and conceptual connectedness that allows a reader to follow and construct meaning from a sequence of ideas, even where that connectedness is not explicitly marked by surface-level language (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981).

4.2. Coherence Scoring Description Table

The following table shows the coherence scores and their corresponding descriptions.

Score	Description
5	Ideas are logically connected and flow naturally.
4	Mostly coherent with only minor breaks.
3	Generally understandable but some abrupt transitions.
2	Weak logical flow; difficult to follow in places.
1	Incoherent; ideas appear disconnected.

The examination of the AI-generated summaries of "The Last Leaf" shows significant variances in coherence between ChatGPT and DeepSeek. Coherence signifies the logical structuring, interrelatedness, and smooth progression of ideas in a summary. In this respect, ChatGPT generates a more coherent summary as it preserves a distinct chronological order of events and delivers the narrative in a logically coherent way. The summary smoothly connects Johnsy's illness, her increasing despair, Behrman's sacrifice, and the symbolic meaning of the last leaf without any abrupt shifts in narration. The transitions between events are seamless. They are improving readability and enabling the reader to track the plot effortlessly.

Additionally, ChatGPT maintains the cause-and-effect connections that are vital to the narrative. For example, Johnsy's conviction that the falling leaves signify her imminent death is directly linked to Behrman's final act of painting the last leaf, which ultimately renews her hope. The summary ensures referential clarity by consistently utilizing pronouns and character references, thus preventing confusion in the narrative.

The DeepSeek summary seems notably less coherent because of poor transitions and a disjointed display of occurrences. While the summary contains significant plot elements, the arrangement of ideas lacks fluidity, resulting in a less impactful narrative flow. For example, the painter Behrman is not mentioned in the right place and his character is introduced abruptly which disrupts the overall flow of the summary. Moreover, the emotional and symbolic link between the last leaf and Johnsy's healing is not articulated with the same clarity and consistency as in ChatGPT's summary.

After analysing AI-generated summaries of "The Tell-Tale Heart" I have concluded that both ChatGPT and DeepSeek yield nearly identical outcomes regarding narrative

structure and logical progression. Both summaries preserve the order of events by depicting the narrator's fixation on the old man's eye, the killing, and the subsequent confession in a coherent way. The flow of concepts stays coherent and clear, enabling the reader to track the narrative without any confusion. Moreover, both AI tools successfully maintain the connection between the narrator's mental instability and his eventual collapse. The summaries show clear references and steady narration, enhancing overall readability. Despite slight variations in phrasing and specifics, both ChatGPT and DeepSeek demonstrate a similar degree of consistency in summarizing the narrative.

A similar observation is made while observing the summaries of "Dead Men's Path". The summaries generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek are almost both up to the mark. Both models maintain a logical sequence of events by clearly presenting Michael Obi's modernization plans, the conflict regarding the village pathway, and the resulting consequences. The ideas are connected smoothly, which helps preserve the narrative flow of the original story.

"A sorrowful Woman" is summarized in a more logical and chronological sequence by ChatGPT, allowing the narrative to progress smoothly from the woman's emotional withdrawal to the tragic conclusion of the story. In contrast, DeepSeek's summary appears comparatively less coherent because some events are presented more abruptly, affecting the smooth progression of ideas. For example, here in the sentence "Over time, the mother becomes more active, even baking bread, but then fires the girl, feeling upset by her presence", generated by DeepSeek, there is a lack of connectivity between the events and it creates ambiguity in the text.

“After twenty years”, the version of ChatGPT is relatively more coherent as it clearly presents the reunion of the two friends, the revelation of Bob’s identity, and the final arrest scene in a well-connected manner. In comparison, DeepSeek’s summary seems comparatively less coherent due to the abrupt presentation of certain events, with some key story details being omitted. This weakens the continuity of the narrative and reduces the clarity of the cause-and-effect relationship between events.

4.2.2 Scoring Table for Coherence

Based on the discussion in 4.2.1, the coherence score given to ChatGPT and DeepSeek, for generating summaries of all the five stories, is in the table below.

Short Stories	Score for ChatGPT Output	Score for DeepSeek Output
The Last Leaf	5	4
The Tell-Tale Heart	4	4
Dead Men’s Path	4	4
A sorrowful Woman	4	3
After Twenty Years	4	2

Upon examining the summaries, it can be concluded that those summaries produced by ChatGPT are noticeably better, in terms of coherence criterion, than DeepSeek.

4.3 Analysis of Informativeness in short story

Informativeness refers to the extent to which a text provides content that is relevant, non-redundant, and appropriately proportioned to what the reader needs to know (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981).

4.3.1 Compression Quality Score (1 for low informativeness, 5 for highly informative)

The scores for informativeness, for the stories discussed above, given to ChatGPT and DeepSeek, for the generated summaries are given in the tables below.

4.3.1.1 Short Story: The Last Leaf

Criterion	ChatGPT score	DeepSeek score
Key Events	5	5
Themes	5	5
Character Roles	5	5
Omission of extra details	5	5

In terms of informativeness, both ChatGPT and DeepSeek have produced similar summaries of “The Last Leaf”, which includes all the major characters i.e Sue, Johnsy and Behrman. The plot is developed thoroughly throughout the summary without omitting important information. Moreover, the symbolic meaning of the last leaf is highlighted and the main themes are preserved.

4.3.1.2 Short Story: The Tell-Tale Heart

Criterion	ChatGPT score	DeepSeek score
Key Events	5	4
Themes	5	5
Character Roles	5	3
Omission of extra details	5	5

Summary of “The Tell-Tale Heart”, is much better with ChatGPT than DeepSeek. ChatGPT focused on the major key points in the story and included them in the summary. The generative AI tool DeepSeek omitted some important aspects. For example, the identity and role of the old man is not mentioned and the reader wonders about the relation of the narrator with the old man. ChatGPT also includes more relevant events and psychological aspects of the story, which helps the reader understand the plot and theme more effectively.

4.3.1.3 Short Story: Dead Men’s Path

Criterion	ChatGPT score	DeepSeek score
Key Events	5	4
Themes	5	4
Character Roles	5	5
Omission of extra details	5	2

After analysing “Dead Men’s Path”, it is evident that the summary by ChatGPT has concise information which is required to understand the plot and theme of the story.

DeepSeek provided extra information that can be seen in the following sentence from the summary: *The priest urges coexistence (“let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch”), but Obi refuses to reopen the path.* The summary includes a proverb which is not required because a summary is meant to give a brief recap of a larger text while omitting the unnecessary details. It is worth noting that a proverb is considered an extra detail in the summary.

4.3.1.4 Short Story: A Sorrowful Woman

Criterion	ChatGPT score	DeepSeek score
Key Events	5	4
Themes	5	4
Character Roles	5	5
Omission of extra details	5	2

In the DeepSeek summary of “A Sorrowful Woman”, there is some information which is not necessary to be included. For example, this event is unnecessary in a summary: *When the girl brings the child in with a grasshopper, the mother reacts with horror, and the visits become limited to notes slipped under the door.* This can simply be stated that the mother avoided visits with her child and was annoyed by the sight of her family members. The summary by ChatGPT has all the necessary details that are required for understanding the plot of the story and no absurd information.

4.3.1.5 Short Story: After Twenty Years

Criterion	ChatGPT score	DeepSeek score
Key Events	5	2
Themes	5	4
Character Roles	5	5
Omission of extra details	5	5

While analysing “After twenty years”, it was observed that the summary by DeepSeek provided less information than required for understanding the plot. The summary by ChatGPT clearly explains the background of Bob and Jimmy’s friendship, including their promise to meet after twenty years and their different life choices. It also provides more detail about Bob’s confidence in Jimmy’s loyalty and explains the recognition scene more effectively when Bob notices that the man is not actually Jimmy. These details are missing from the summary by DeepSeek and they are required for a complete understanding of the plot.

As a result of the discussion of all five stories, it is evident that the ChatGPT summarized versions are noticeably better in informativeness as compared to DeepSeek.

4.4 Comparative Analysis of Cohesive Devices

In order to compare the cohesion in the summaries, the transitional devices are highlighted to find whether or not the summaries have retained them.

In the summary of “The Last Leaf” by both AI tools, several transitional words and phrases are used such as:

1. Despite
2. During winter
3. That night
4. However
5. The next morning
6. In the end

These connectors help maintain a logical progression of events and improve the overall flow of the narrative.

The summarized and easily understandable form, for all five stories, is given in the following table.

Name of short story	ChatGPT Summary Output	DeepSeek Summary Output
The Last Leaf	During winter Despite That night However The next morning Later In the end	One winter However Despite then but that night
The Tell-Tale Heart	although but For seven nights On the eighth night eventually then	despite especially not out of greed or hatred, but because For seven nights But each night

	after Later At first but soon again and finally	so On the eighth night as Finally and When At first but soon too
Dead Men's Path	Together with While however because Soon after and because insisting that A few days later In response On the same day both...and	initially but Despite and The village priest long before and but SOON after and The next morning That day
A Sorrowful Woman	Although and As even Meanwhile further Eventually then while There Over time Despite this One day after but while	and He They even When and Over time even but then Eventually only briefly each evening One day and if
After Twenty Years	When exactly twenty years after While and After some time and	while and shortly after until and when

	However because then Before arresting him In the note when Unable to himself and	but so instead
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From the results of the table above, similar observations are made with other short stories as well. The summaries consist of several transitional devices which help the reader in understanding the plot of the story. Both the AI tools have performed equally well with the criterion of cohesion except in the last story “After Twenty Years”. The summary produced by DeepSeek has very few connectors which disrupt the flow of the narrative and does not make it very easy for the reader to connect ideas and major events.

4.5 Compression Ratio and Readability Scores

To complement the qualitative discourse analysis, two quantitative measures were calculated for each of the ten AI-generated summaries. Compression ratio is the summary word count as a percentage of source-text word count. Standardized readability is measured using the Flesch Reading Ease (FRE) formula designed by Flesch (1948) and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL) formula designed by Kincaid et al. (1975). Higher FRE values and lower FKGL values indicate that the text is easily readable.

The following table presents the compression ratio and readability scores for the selected five short stories.

Name of the Short story	Tool used	Original Word Count	Summary Word Count	Compression Ratio (%)	Flesch Reading Ease	Flesch Kincaid Grade Level
The Last Leaf	ChatGPT	2021	215	10.6%	72.8	6.9
The Last Leaf	DeepSeek	2021	196	9.7%	71.7	7.3
The Tell-Tale Heart	ChatGPT	2222	286	12.9%	66.1	9.5
The Tell-Tale Heart	DeepSeek	2222	253	11.4%	69.9	8
Dead Men's Path	ChatGPT	1222	273	22.3%	39.9	13.4
Dead Men's Path	DeepSeek	1222	236	19.3%	49.7	11.7
A Sorrowful Woman	ChatGPT	2616	319	12.2%	51.3	11.1
A Sorrowful Woman	DeepSeek	2616	233	8.9%	71.4	7.4
After Twenty Years	ChatGPT	1251	239	19.1%	59.7	9.9
After Twenty Years	DeepSeek	1251	140	11.2%	56.1	11.3

Across all five stories, ChatGPT produced comparatively longer summaries (M = 266 words; average compression ratio of 15.4%) than DeepSeek (M = 212 words; average compression ratio of 12.1%). This is consistent with the qualitative findings that ChatGPT

tended to retain more plot detail and character information, which by definition increases summary length and reduces the degree of compression.

Readability scores, however, show a different pattern. Summaries, produced by DeepSeek scored higher on average, on the Flesch Reading Ease scale ($M = 63.7$) and lower on the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level ($M = 9.1$) than ChatGPT's summaries ($M = 57.9$ and $M = 10.1$, respectively), indicating that output of DeepSeek was, on average, marginally easier to read at the sentence level. This adds an important variation to the qualitative conclusion that ChatGPT was uniformly superior. While ChatGPT's summaries were judged more coherent and complete, DeepSeek's summaries were, on these quantitative measures, more concise and slightly more readable. The two tools therefore appear to make different trade-offs. ChatGPT is prioritizing completeness at the cost of length and moderate readability, and DeepSeek is prioritizing brevity and sentence-level simplicity at some cost to informational completeness.

4.6 Conclusion

In summary, the comparative evaluation of the AI-generated summaries reveals clear distinctions in coherence, cohesion, and informativeness. Generally, ChatGPT produced more coherent summaries by arranging events in a logical order, while some of the DeepSeek summaries exhibited sudden shifts and lacked details that disrupted the overall flow. In terms of cohesion, ChatGPT and DeepSeek utilized transitional words and phrases effectively, resulting in a smoother narrative and enhanced textual consistency. Concerning informativeness, ChatGPT offered more comprehensive summaries by incorporating key plot points, character information, and thematic aspects without significant omissions.

Quantitative measures reported in section 4.5 add a further nuance to this picture: ChatGPT produced longer summaries which indicated that it retained most of the important information whereas DeepSeek's summaries were, on average, more concise and scored marginally higher on standardized readability formulas.

The next and final chapter presents the conclusion of the research report and an indication of the future work.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings presented in chapter four and relates them to the research objectives and questions outlined in chapter one. It begins by presenting the overall conclusions drawn from the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the summarized outputs of ChatGPT and DeepSeek. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and practical applications of the study. Overall, the chapter argues that the evaluation of generative AI summarization tools requires attention to both the discourse-level qualities of a text and its measurable, quantitative properties, since neither dimension alone offers a complete picture of a tools' performance.

5.2 Key Findings

In this study, an attempt has been made to evaluate summaries produced by generative artificial intelligence tools. For this purpose, five short stories have been selected: *The Last Leaf* by O Henry (1907), *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe (1843), *Dead Men's Path* by Chinua Achebe (1953), *A Sorrowful Woman* by Gail Godwin (1971) and *After Twenty Years* by O Henry (1906). A single prompt is selected to ensure consistency throughout the summaries generated by AI tools: ChatGPT and DeepSeek.

This study set out to comparatively evaluate the summaries generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek for five short stories, using Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) Standards of Textuality, specifically coherence, cohesion, and informativeness, supported by quantitative measures of compression ratio and readability. Discourse analysis serves as the foundation

for this research, supported by quantitative corpus-stylistic measures. By analyzing how well each generative AI model produced meaningful, logically connected, and information-rich texts, this framework made it possible to evaluate AI-generated summaries in terms of cohesion, coherence, and informativeness. To complement this qualitative framework, compression ratio and standardized readability formulas (Flesch, 1948; Kincaid et al., 1975) were also calculated for each summary, adding a quantitative dimension to the analysis.

Regarding coherence, ChatGPT consistently produced summaries with a more logical and clearly ordered progression of events, while several DeepSeek summaries exhibited abrupt shifts or omitted transitional detail that disrupted the narrative flow. Regarding cohesion, both tools made effective use of transitional devices. Regarding informativeness, ChatGPT performed more strongly, retaining a fuller range of plot detail, character information, and thematic content, whereas DeepSeek's summaries more frequently omitted details necessary for a complete understanding of the story.

On the quantitative measures, however, the pattern was reversed. DeepSeek's summaries were, on average, more concise (12.1% average compression ratio versus ChatGPT's 15.4%) and scored marginally higher on standardized readability formulas ($M = 65.1$ Flesch Reading Ease and $M = 8.9$ Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, compared to ChatGPT's $M = 59.2$ and $M = 10.0$, respectively).

In this study, the qualitative and quantitative strands point toward a single and consistent result. While summaries produced by DeepSeek were shorter and scored marginally higher on standardized readability formulas, this study argues that brevity and readability are only meaningful when they do not come at the cost of clarity and completeness. A summary that

is easier to read but omits key plot events, character motivations, or thematic detail has not truly succeeded at the task of summarization; it has simply produced a shorter text. Viewed this way, ChatGPT's longer summaries are a reflection of a fuller range of narrative and thematic detail. ChatGPT preserved the clarity and completeness of the source text more faithfully, even at a marginal cost to compression and sentence-level ease of reading.

5.3 Recommendations and Future Work

Summaries are always needed by bosses to know what details are there in a report. It means that they are competent to read and understand the whole document but they want to save time. Therefore, generated summaries that are complete in content which are also cohesive and coherent will help the executives to completely understand what is in the document. They do not need easy English of the summaries at the cost of relatively less information and clarity. Therefore, ChatGPT is recommended for summarization purposes.

Future research should extend the work on the efficiency of generative artificial intelligence tools, adding tools other than ChatGPT and DeepSeek such as Gemini and Claude. Furthermore, a wider range of texts can be examined utilizing both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. Apart from summarization, other areas such as paraphrasing, vocabulary quality and simplification can be examined and evaluated using AI tools. Such investigations would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and limitations of generative AI.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. It begins by summarizing the key findings of the research in relation to the coherence, cohesion, and

informativeness of the summaries generated by ChatGPT and DeepSeek, followed by a discussion of the quantitative findings on compression ratio and readability. It then draws these qualitative and quantitative strands together into an overall conclusion regarding which tool performed better and why. The chapter closes with a set of recommendations for future research and for the practical use of generative AI summarization tools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Selected Short Stories

A.1 The Last Leaf By O. Henry

In a small part of the city west of Washington Square, the streets have gone wild. They turn in different directions. They are broken into small pieces called “places.” One street goes across itself one or two times. A painter once discovered something possible and valuable about this street. Suppose a painter had some painting materials for which he had not paid. Suppose he had no money. Suppose a man came to get the money. The man might walk down that street and suddenly meet himself coming back, without having received a cent! This part of the city is called Greenwich Village. And to old Greenwich Village the painters soon came. Here they found rooms they like, with good light and at a low cost.

Sue and Johnsy lived at the top of a building with three floors. One of these young women came from Maine, the other from California. They had met at a restaurant on Eighth Street. There they discovered that they liked the same kind of art, the same kind of food, and the same kind of clothes. So they decided to live and work together. That was in the spring. Toward winter a cold stranger entered Greenwich Village. No one could see him. He walked around touching one person here and another there with his icy fingers. He was a bad sickness. Doctors called him Pneumonia. On the east side of the city he hurried, touching many people; but in the narrow streets of Greenwich Village he did not move so quickly. Mr. Pneumonia was not a nice old gentleman. A nice old gentleman would not hurt a weak little woman from California. But Mr. Pneumonia touched Johnsy with his cold fingers. She lay on

her bed almost without moving, and she looked through the window at the wall of the house next to hers. One morning the busy doctor spoke to Sue alone in the hall, where Johnsy could not hear. "She has a very small chance," he said. "She has a chance, if she wants to live. If people don't want to live, I can't do much for them. Your little lady has decided that she is not going to get well. Is there something that is troubling her?" "She always wanted to go to Italy and paint a picture of the Bay of Naples," said Sue. "Paint! Not paint. Is there anything worth being troubled about? A man?" "A man?" said Sue. "Is a man worth—No, doctor. There is not a man." "It is weakness," said the doctor. "I will do all I know how to do. But when a sick person begins to feel that he's going to die, half my work is useless. Talk to her about new winter clothes. If she were interested in the future, her chances would be better." After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom to cry. Then she walked into Johnsy's room. She carried some of her painting materials, and she was singing. Johnsy lay there, very thin and very quiet. Her face was turned toward the window. Sue stopped singing, thinking that Johnsy was asleep. Sue began to work. As she worked she heard a low sound, again and again. She went quickly to the bedside. Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting—counting back. "Twelve," she said; and a little later, "Eleven"; and then, "Ten," and, "Nine"; and then, "Eight," and, "Seven," almost together. Sue looked out the window. What was there to count? There was only the side wall of the next house, a short distance away. The wall had no window. An old, old tree grew against the wall. The cold breath of winter had already touched it. Almost all its leaves had fallen from its dark branches. "What is it, dear?" asked Sue. "Six," said Johnsy, in a voice still lower. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It hurt my head to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five now." "Five

what, dear? Tell your Sue.” “Leaves. On the tree. When the last one falls, I must go, too. I’ve known that for three days. Didn’t the doctor tell you?” “Oh, I never heard of such a thing,” said Sue. “It doesn’t have any sense in it. What does an old tree have to do with you? Or with your getting well? And you used to love that tree so much. Don’t be a little fool. The doctor told me your chances for getting well. He told me this morning. He said you had very good chances! Try to eat a little now. And then I’ll go back to work. And then I can sell my picture, and then I can buy something more for you to eat to make you strong.” “You don’t have to buy anything for me,” said Johnsy. She still looked out the window. “There goes another. No, I don’t want anything to eat. Now there are four. I want to see the last one fall before night. Then I’ll go, too.” “Johnsy, dear,” said Sue, “will you promise me to close your eyes and keep them closed? Will you promise not to look out the window until I finish working? I must have this picture ready tomorrow. I need the light; I can’t cover the window.” “Couldn’t you work in the other room?” asked Johnsy coldly. “I’d rather be here by you,” said Sue. “And I don’t want you to look at those leaves.” “Tell me as soon as you have finished,” said Johnsy. She closed her eyes and lay white and still. “Because I want to see the last leaf fall. I have done enough waiting. I have done enough thinking. I want to go sailing down, down, like one of those leaves.” “Try to sleep,” said Sue. “I must call Behrman to come up here. I want to paint a man in this picture, and I’ll make him look like Behrman. I won’t be gone a minute. Don’t try to move till I come back.” Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the first floor of their house. He was past sixty. He had had no success as a painter. For forty years he had painted, without ever painting a good picture. He had always talked of painting a great picture, a masterpiece, but he had never yet started it. He got a little money by letting others paint pictures of him. He drank too much. He still talked of his great

masterpiece. And he believed that it was his special duty to do everything possible to help Sue and Johnsy. Sue found him in his dark room, and she knew that he had been drinking. She could smell it. She told him about Johnsy and the leaves on the vine. She said that she was afraid that Johnsy would indeed sail down, down like the leaf. Her hold on the world was growing weaker. Old Behrman shouted his anger over such an idea. "What!" he cried. "Are there such fools? Do people die because leaves drop off a tree? I have not heard of such a thing. No, I will not come up and sit while you make a picture of me. Why do you allow her to think such a thing? That poor little Johnsy!" "She is very sick and weak," said Sue. "The sickness has put these strange ideas into her mind. Mr. Behrman, if you won't come, you won't. But I don't think you're very nice." "This is like a woman!" shouted Behrman. "Who said I will not come? Go. I come with you. For half an hour I have been trying to say that I will come. God! This is not any place for someone so good as Johnsy to lie sick. Some day I shall paint my masterpiece, and we shall all go away from here. God! Yes." Johnsy was sleeping when they went up. Sue covered the window, and took Behrman into the other room. There they looked out the window fearfully at the tree. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A cold rain was falling, with a little snow in it too. Behrman sat down, and Sue began to paint. She worked through most of the night. In the morning, after an hour's sleep, she went to Johnsy's bedside. Johnsy with wide-open eyes was looking toward the window. "I want to see," she told Sue. Sue took the cover from the window. But after the beating rain and the wild wind that had not stopped through the whole night, there still was one leaf to be seen against the wall. It was the last on the tree. It was still dark green near the branch. But at the edges it was turning yellow with age. There it was hanging from a branch nearly twenty feet above the ground. "It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it

would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall today, and I shall die at the same time.” “Dear, dear Johnsy!” said Sue. “Think of me, if you won’t think of yourself. What would I do?” But Johnsy did not answer. The most lonely thing in the world is a soul when it is preparing to go on its far journey. The ties that held her to friendship and to earth were breaking, one by one. The day slowly passed. As it grew dark, they could still see the leaf hanging from its branch against the wall. And then, as the night came, the north wind began again to blow. The rain still beat against the windows. When it was light enough the next morning, Johnsy again commanded that she be allowed to see. The leaf was still there. Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was cooking something for her to eat. “I’ve been a bad girl, Sue,” said Johnsy. “Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how bad I was. It is wrong to want to die. I’ll try to eat now. But first bring me a looking-glass, so that I can see myself. And then I’ll sit up and watch you cook.” An hour later she said, “Sue, some day I hope to paint the Bay of Naples.” The doctor came in the afternoon. Sue followed him into the hall outside Johnsy’s room to talk to him. “The chances are good,” said the doctor. He took Sue’s thin, shaking hand in his. “Give her good care, and she’ll get well. And now I must see another sick person in this house. His name is Behrman. A painter, I believe. Pneumonia, too. Mike is an old, weak man, and he is very ill. There is no hope for him. But we take him to the hospital today. We’ll make it as easy for him as we can.” The next day the doctor said to Sue: “She’s safe. You have done it. Food and care now—that’s all.” And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay. She put one arm around her. “I have something to tell you,” she said. “Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. He was ill only two days. Someone found him on the morning of the first day, in his room. He was helpless with pain.” “His shoes and his clothes

were wet and as cold as ice. Everyone wondered where he had been. The night had been so cold and wild. “And then they found some things. There was a light that he had taken outside. And there were his materials for painting. There was paint, green paint and yellow paint. And— “Look out the window, dear, at the last leaf on the wall. Didn’t you wonder why it never moved when the wind was blowing? Oh, my dear, it is Behrman’s great masterpiece—he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell.”

A.2 The Tell-Tale Heart By Edgar Allan Poe

True! — nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses — not destroyed — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily — how calmly I can tell you the whole story. It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture — a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees — very gradually — I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded — with what caution — with what foresight — with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it — oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening

sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, so that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly — very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! — would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously — oh, so cautiously — cautiously (for the hinges creaked) — I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights — every night just at midnight — but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he had passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept. Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers — of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back — but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in the bed, crying out — “Who’s there?”

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening; — just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief — oh, no! — it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself — “It is nothing but the wind in the chimney — it is only a mouse crossing the floor,” or “it is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp.” Yes, he has been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel — although he neither saw nor heard — to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little — a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it — you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily — until, at length a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye.

It was open — wide, wide open — and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness — all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And now have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over acuteness of the senses? — now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! — do you mark me well? I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me — the sound would be heard by a neighbor! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once — once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I

placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye — not even his — could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out — no stain of any kind — no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all — ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock — still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart, — for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbor during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises. I smiled, — for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search — search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: — it continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definitiveness — until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale; — but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased — and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound — much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath — and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly — more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men — but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed — I raved — I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder — louder — louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! — no, no! They heard! — they suspected! — they knew! — they were making a mockery of my horror! — this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! — and now — again! — hark! louder! louder! louder! louder! —

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed! — tear up the planks! — here, here! — it is the beating of his hideous heart!”

A.3 Dead Men's Path By Chinua Achebe

Michael Obi's hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949. It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice. He had had sound secondary school education which designated him a "pivotal teacher" in the official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less-educated ones. "We shall make a good job of it, shan't we?" he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his promotion. "We shall do our best," she replied. "We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful . . ." In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for "modern methods" and his denigration of "these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market." She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school. The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything . . . Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him. "All our colleagues are young and unmarried," he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. "Which is a good thing," he continued. "Why?" "Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school." Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became skeptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband's happy prospects. She

looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair. He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhand- some. "A penny for your thoughts, Mike," said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman's magazine she read. "I was thinking what a grand opportunity we've got at last to show these people how a school should be run." Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty. Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighborhood bushes. One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flower-bed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side. "It amazes me," said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, "that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this foot- path. It is simply incredible." He shook his head. "The path," said the teacher apologetically, "appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial." "And what has that got to do with the school?" asked the headmaster. "Well, I don't know," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it." "That was some time ago. But it will not be used now," said

Obi as he walked away. "What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection." Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire. Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking-stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument. "I have heard," he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, "that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed . . ." "Yes," replied Mr. Obi. "We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound." "Look here, my son," said the priest bringing down his walking-stick, "this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born . . ." Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face. "The whole purpose of our school," he said finally, "is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas." "What you say may be true," replied the priest, "but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you reopen the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch." He rose to go. "I am sorry," said the young headmaster. "But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don't suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome." "I have no more words to say," said the old priest, already

outside. Two days later a young woman in the village died in childbed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence. Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down . . . That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the "tribal-war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster."

A.4 A sorrowful woman By Gail Godwin

One winter evening she looked at them: the husband durable, receptive, gentle; the child a tender golden three. The sight of them made her so sad and sick she did not want to see them ever again. She told the husband these thoughts. He was attuned to her; he understood such things. He said he understood. What would she like him to do? "If you could put the boy to bed and read him the story about the monkey who ate too many bananas, I would be grateful." "Of course," he said. "Why, that's a pleasure." And he sent her off to bed. The next night it happened again. Putting the warm dishes away in the cupboard, she turned and saw the child's grey eyes approving her movements. In the next room was the man, his chin sunk in the open collar of his favorite wool shirt. He was dozing after her good supper. The shirt was the grey of the child's trusting gaze. She began yelping without tears, retching in between. The man woke in alarm and carried her in his arms to bed. The boy followed them up the stairs, saying, "It's all right, Mommy," but this made her scream. "Mommy is sick," the father said, "go and wait for me in your room." The husband undressed her, abandoning

her only long enough to root beneath the eiderdown for her flannel gown. She stood naked except for her bra, which hung by one strap down the side of her body; she had not the impetus to shrug it off. She looked down at the right nipple, shriveled with chill, and thought, How absurd, a vertical bra. "If only there were instant sleep," she said, hiccuping, and the husband bundled her into the gown and went out and came back with a sleeping draught guaranteed swift. She was to drink a little 1/6 glass of cognac followed by a big glass of dark liquid and afterwards there was just time to say Thank you and could you get him a clean pair of pajamas out of the laundry, it came back today. The next day was Sunday and the husband brought her breakfast in bed and let her sleep until it grew dark again. He took the child for a walk, and when they returned, red-cheeked and boisterous, the father made supper. She heard them laughing in the kitchen. He brought her up a tray of buttered toast, celery sticks and black bean soup. "I am the luckiest woman," she said, crying real tears. "Nonsense," he said. "You need a rest from us," and went to prepare the sleeping draught, and the child's pajamas, select the story for the night.

She got up on Monday and moved about the house till noon. The boy, delighted to have her back, pretended he was a vicious tiger and followed her from room to room, growling and scratching. Whenever she came close, he would growl and scratch at her. One of his sharp little claws ripped her flesh, just above the wrist, and together they paused to watch a thin red line materialize on the inside of her pale arm and spill over in little beads. "Go away," she said. She got herself upstairs and locked the door. She called the husband's office and said. "I've locked myself away from him. I'm afraid." The husband told her in his richest voice to lie down, take it easy and he was already on the phone to call one of the babysitters they often employed. Shortly after, she heard the girl let herself in, heard the girl coaxing the

frightened child to come and play. After supper several nights later, she hit the child. She had known she was going to do it when the father would see. "I'm sorry" she said, collapsing on the floor. The weeping child had run to hide. "What has happened to me. I'm not myself anymore." The man picked her tenderly from the floor and looked at her with much concern. "Would it help if we got, you know, a girl in? We could fix the room downstairs. I want you to feel freer," he said, understanding these things. "We have the money for a girl. I want you to think about it." And now the sleeping draught was a nightly thing, she did not have to ask. He went down to the kitchen to mix it, he set it nightly beside her bed. The little glass and the big one, amber and deep rich brown, the flannel gown and the eiderdown.

The man put out the word and found the perfect girl. She was young, dynamic and not pretty. "Don't bother with the room. I'll fix it up myself." Laughing, she employed her thousand energies. She painted the room white, fed the child lunch, read edifying books, raced the boy to the mailbox, hung her own watercolors on the fresh-painted walls, made spinach souffle, cleaned a spot from the mother's coat, made them all laugh, danced in stocking feet to music in the white room after reading the child to sleep. She knitted dresses for herself and played chess with the husband. She washed and set the mother's soft ashblonde hair and gave her neck rubs, offered to. 2/6 The woman now spent her winter afternoons in the big bedroom. She made a fire in the hearth and put on slacks and an old sweater she had loved at school, and sat in the big chair and stared out the window at snow-ridden branches, or went away into long novels about other people moving through other winters.

The girl brought the child in twice a day, once in the later afternoon when he would tell of his day, all of it tumbling out quickly because there was not much time, and before he went to bed. Often now, the man took his wife to dinner. He made a courtship ceremony of it,

inviting her beforehand so she could get used to the idea. They dressed and were beautiful together again and went out into the frosty night. Over candlelight he would say, "I think you are better, you know." "Perhaps I am," she would murmur. "You look. . . like a cloistered queen," he said once, his voice breaking curiously. One afternoon the girl brought the child into the bedroom. "We've been out playing in the park. He found something he wants to give you, a surprise." The little boy approached her, smiling mysteriously. He placed his cupped hands in hers and left a live dry thing that spat brown juice in her palm and leapt away. She screamed and wrung her hands to be rid of the brown juice. "Oh, it was only a grasshopper." said the girl. Nimble she crept to the edge of a curtain, did a quick knee bend and reclaimed the creature, led the boy competently from the room. So the husband came alone. "I have explained to the boy," he said. "And we are doing fine. We are managing." He squeezed his wife's pale arm and put the two glasses on her table. After he had gone, she sat looking at the arm. "I'm afraid it's come to that," she said. "Just push the notes under the door; I'll read them. And don't forget to leave the draught outside."

The man sat for a long time with his head in his hands. Then he rose and went away from her. She heard him in the kitchen where he mixed the draught in batches now to last a week at a time, storing it in a corner of the cupboard. She heard him come back, leave the big glass and the little one outside on the door. Outside her window the snow was melting from the branches, there were more people on the streets. She brushed her hair a lot and seldom read anymore. She sat in her window and brushed her hair for hours, and saw a boy fall off his new bicycle again and again, a dog chasing a squirrel, an old woman peek slyly over her shoulder and then extract a parcel from a garbage can. In the evening she read the notes they slipped under her door. The child could not write, so he drew and sometimes painted his. The

notes were painstaking at first; the man and boy offering the final strength of their day to her. But sometimes, when they seemed to have had a bad day there were only hurried scrawls. One night, when the husband's note had been extremely short, loving but short, and there had been nothing from the boy, she stole out of her room as she often did to get more supplies, but crept upstairs instead and stood outside their doors, listening to the regular breathing of the man and boy asleep. She hurried back to her room and drank the draught. She woke earlier now. It was spring, there were birds. She listened for sounds of the man and the boy eating breakfast; she listened for the roar of the motor when they drove away. One beautiful noon, she went out to look at her kitchen in the daylight. Things were changed. He had bought some new dish towels. Had the old ones worn out? The canisters seemed closer to the sink. She inspected the cupboard and saw new things among the old. She got out flour, baking powder, salt, milk (he bought a different brand of butter), and baked a loaf of bread and left it cooling on the table. The force of the two joyful notes slipped under her door that evening pressed her into the corner of the little room; she had hardly space to breathe. As soon as possible, she drank the draught. Now the days were too short. She was always busy. She woke with the first bird. Worked till the sun set. No time for hair brushing. Her fingers raced the hours. Finally, in the nick of time, it was finished one late afternoon. Her veins pumped and her forehead sparkled. She went to the cupboard, took what was hers, closed herself into the little white room and brushed her hair for awhile.

"The girl upsets me," said the woman to her husband. He sat frowning on the side of the bed he had not entered for so long. "I'm sorry, but there it is." The husband stroked his creased brow and said he was sorry too. He really did not know what they would do without that treasure of a girl. "Why don't you stay here with me in bed," the woman said. Next morning

she fired the girl who cried and said, "I loved the little boy, what will become of him now? But the mother turned away her face and the girl took down the watercolors from the walls, sheathed the records she had danced to and went away. "I don't know what we'll do. It's all my fault. I know I'm such a burden, I know that." "Let me think. I'll think of something." (Still understanding these things.) "I know you will. You always do," she said. With great care he rearranged his life. He got up hours early, did the shopping, cooked the breakfast, took the boy to nursery school. "We will manage," he said, "until you're better, however long that is." He did his work, collected the boy from the school, came home and made the supper, washed the dishes, got the child to bed. He managed everything. One evening, just as she was on the verge of swallowing her draught, there was a timid knock on her door. The little boy came in wearing his pajamas. "Daddy has fallen asleep on my bed and I can't get in. There's not room."

Very sedately she left her bed and went to the child's room. Things were much changed. Books were rearranged, toys. He'd done some new drawings. She came as a visitor to her son's room, wakened the father and helped him to bed. "Ah, he shouldn't have bothered you," said the man, leaning on his wife. "I've told him not to." He dropped into his own bed and fell asleep with a moan. Meticulously she undressed him. She folded and hung his clothes. She covered his body with the bedclothes. She clicked off the light that shone in his face. The next day she moved her things into the girl's white room. She put her hairbrush on the dresser; she put a note pad and pen beside the bed. She stocked the little room with cigarettes, books, bread and cheese. She didn't need much. At first the husband was dismayed. But he was receptive to her needs. He understood these things. "Perhaps the best thing is for you to follow it through," he said. "I want to be big enough to contain whatever

you must do." All day long she stayed in the white room. She was a young queen, a virgin in a tower; she was the previous inhabitant, the girl with all the energies. She tried these personalities on like costumes, then discarded them. The room had a new view of streets she'd never seen that way before. The sun hit the room in late afternoon and she took to brushing her hair in the sun. One day she decided to write a poem. "Perhaps a sonnet." She took up her pen and pad and began working from words that had lately lain in her mind. She had choices for the sonnet, ABAB or ABBA for a start. She pondered these possibilities until she tottered into a larger choice: she did not have to write a sonnet. Her poem could be six, eight, ten, thirteen lines, it could be any number of lines, and it did not even have to rhyme. She put down the pen on top of the pad. In the evenings, very briefly she saw the two of them. They knocked on her door, a big knock and a little, and she would call Come in, and the husband would smile though he looked a bit tired, yet somehow this tiredness suited him. He would put her sleeping draught on the bedside table and say, "The boy and I have done all right today," and the child would kiss her. One night she tasted for the first time the power of his baby spit. "I don't think I can see him anymore," she whispered sadly to the man. And the husband turned away but recovered admirably and said, "Of course, I see." The man and boy came home and found five loaves of warm bread, a roast stuffed turkey, a glazed ham, three pies of different fillings, eight molds of the boy's favorite custard, two weeks supply of fresh-laundered sheets and shirts and towels, two hand-knitted sweaters (both of the same grey color), a sheath of marvelous watercolor beasts accompanied by 5/6 mad and fanciful stories nobody could ever make up again, and a tablet full of love sonnets addressed to the man. The house smelled redolently of renewal and spring. The man ran to the little room, could not contain himself to knock, flung back the door. "Look, Mommy is sleeping," said the boy.

"She's tired from doing all our things again." He dawdled in a stream of the last sun for that day and watched his father roll tenderly back her eyelids, lay his ear softly to her breast, test the delicate bones of her wrist. The father put down his face into her fresh-washed hair. "Can we eat the turkey for supper?" the boy asked.

A.5 After Twenty Years by O. Henry

The policeman on the beat moved up the avenue impressively. The impressiveness was habitual and not for show, for spectators were few. The time was barely 10 o'clock at night, but chilly gusts of wind with a taste of rain in them had well nigh depeopled the streets. Trying doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements, turning now and then to cast his watchful eye adown the pacific thoroughfare, the officer, with his stalwart form and slight swagger, made a fine picture of a guardian of the peace. The vicinity was one that kept early hours. Now and then you might see the lights of a cigar store or of an all-night lunch counter; but the majority of the doors belonged to business places that had long since been closed.

When about midway of a certain block the policeman suddenly slowed his walk. In the doorway of a darkened hardware store a man leaned, with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. As the policeman walked up to him the man spoke up quickly.

"It's all right, officer," he said, reassuringly. "I'm just waiting for a friend. It's an appointment made twenty years ago. Sounds a little funny to you, doesn't it? Well, I'll explain if you'd like to make certain it's all straight. About that long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands--'Big Joe' Brady's restaurant.'"Until five years ago," said the policeman. "It was torn down then."

The man in the doorway struck a match and lit his cigar. The light showed a pale, square-jawed face with keen eyes, and a little white scar near his right eyebrow. His scarfpin was a large diamond, oddly set.

"Twenty years ago to-night," said the man, "I dined here at 'Big Joe' Brady's with Jimmy Wells, my best chum, and the finest chap in the world. He and I were raised here in New York, just like two brothers, together. I was eighteen and Jimmy was twenty. The next morning I was to start for the West to make my fortune. You couldn't have dragged Jimmy out of New York; he thought it was the only place on earth. Well, we agreed that night that we would meet here again exactly twenty years from that date and time, no matter what our conditions might be or from what distance we might have to come. We figured that in twenty years each of us ought to have our destiny worked out and our fortunes made, whatever they were going to be."

"It sounds pretty interesting," said the policeman. "Rather a long time between meets, though, it seems to me. Haven't you heard from your friend since you left?"

"Well, yes, for a time we corresponded," said the other. "But after a year or two we lost track of each other. You see, the West is a pretty big proposition, and I kept hustling around over it pretty lively. But I know Jimmy will meet me here if he's alive, for he always was the truest, stanchest old chap in the world. He'll never forget. I came a thousand miles to stand in this door to-night, and it's worth it if my old partner turns up."

The waiting man pulled out a handsome watch, the lids of it set with small diamonds.

"Three minutes to ten," he announced. "It was exactly ten o'clock when we parted here at the restaurant door." "Did pretty well out West, didn't you?" asked the policeman. "You bet! I hope Jimmy has done half as well. He was a kind of plodder, though, good fellow as he was."

I've had to compete with some of the sharpest wits going to get my pile. A man gets in a groove in New York. It takes the West to put a razor-edge on him."The policeman twirled his club and took a step or two."I'll be on my way. Hope your friend comes around all right. Going to call time on him sharp?"

"I should say not!" said the other. "I'll give him half an hour at least. If Jimmy is alive on earth he'll be here by that time. So long, officer."

"Good-night, sir," said the policeman, passing on along his beat, trying doors as he went. There was now a fine, cold drizzle falling, and the wind had risen from its uncertain puffs into a steady blow. The few foot passengers astir in that quarter hurried dismally and silently along with coat collars turned high and pocketed hands. And in the door of the hardware store the man who had come a thousand miles to fill an appointment, uncertain almost to absurdity, with the friend of his youth, smoked his cigar and waited.

About twenty minutes he waited, and then a tall man in a long overcoat, with collar turned up to his ears, hurried across from the opposite side of the street. He went directly to the waiting man.

"Is that you, Bob?" he asked, doubtfully.

"Is that you, Jimmy Wells?" cried the man in the door.

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed the new arrival, grasping both the other's hands with his own.

"It's Bob, sure as fate. I was certain I'd find you here if you were still in existence. Well, well, well! --twenty years is a long time. The old gone, Bob; I wish it had lasted, so we could have had another dinner there. How has the West treated you, old man?" "Bully; it has given me everything I asked it for. You've changed lots, Jimmy. I never thought you were so tall by two or three inches."

"Oh, I grew a bit after I was twenty."

"Doing well in New York, Jimmy?"

"Moderately. I have a position in one of the city departments. Come on, Bob; we'll go around to a place I know of, and have a good long talk about old times."

The two men started up the street, arm in arm. The man from the West, his egotism enlarged by success, was beginning to outline the history of his career. The other, submerged in his overcoat, listened with interest. At the corner stood a drug store, brilliant with electric lights. When they came into this glare each of them turned simultaneously to gaze upon the other's face. The man from the West stopped suddenly and released his arm. "You're not Jimmy Wells," he snapped. "Twenty years is a long time, but not long enough to change a man's nose from a Roman to a pug."

"It sometimes changes a good man into a bad one, said the tall man. "You've been under arrest for ten minutes, 'Silky' Bob. Chicago thinks you may have dropped over our way and wires us she wants to have a chat with you. Going quietly, are you? That's sensible. Now, before we go on to the station here's a note I was asked to hand you. You may read it here at the window. It's from Patrolman Wells." The man from the West unfolded the little piece of paper handed him. His hand was steady when he began to read, but it trembled a little by the time he had finished. The note was rather short.

"Bob: I was at the appointed place on time. When you struck the match to light your cigar I saw it was the face of the man wanted in Chicago. Somehow I couldn't do it myself, so I went around and got a plain clothes man to do the job. JIMMY."

Appendix B

ChatGPT Generated Summaries

B.1 The Last Leaf by O Henry

The Last Leaf tells the story of two young artists, Sue and Johnsy, who live together in Greenwich Village. During winter, Johnsy becomes seriously ill with pneumonia. She loses hope and believes that she will die when the last leaf falls from an old vine outside her window. Despite Sue's efforts to encourage her, Johnsy continues to watch the leaves fall one by one. Sue asks their elderly neighbor, Behrman, a struggling painter who dreams of creating a masterpiece, to help her. Behrman is upset by Johnsy's hopeless belief but agrees to come upstairs. That night, during a cold storm, the final real leaf falls from the vine. However, the next morning Johnsy sees what appears to be the last leaf still hanging on the wall. The leaf remains there through wind and rain, inspiring Johnsy to regain her will to live. She realizes that wanting to die was wrong and begins to recover. Later, Sue learns that Behrman has died of pneumonia after being exposed to the storm. It is then revealed that the "last leaf" was actually painted by Behrman on the wall during the stormy night. His painting looked so real that it gave Johnsy hope and saved her life. In the end, Behrman's sacrifice and painted leaf became his long-awaited masterpiece.

B.2 The Tell Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe

The Tell-Tale Heart is narrated by a man who insists that he is not mad, although he admits to being extremely nervous and having unusually sharp senses. He explains that he loved an old man he lived with and had no desire for his wealth, but he became obsessed with the old man's pale blue "vulture eye," which filled him with terror. Determined to rid

himself of the eye, he carefully planned the old man's murder. For seven nights, the narrator secretly entered the old man's room at midnight, shining a thin ray of light onto the eye while the old man slept. On the eighth night, the old man awoke and sat in fear in the darkness. The narrator eventually opened the lantern enough to see the eye wide open, which enraged him. He then heard what he believed was the beating of the old man's heart growing louder and louder. Afraid that neighbors would hear the sound, he attacked the old man, killed him, and hid the body beneath the floorboards after dismembering it. Later, three police officers arrived to investigate a scream heard during the night. Confident in his cleverness, the narrator welcomed them, showed them around the house, and even placed his chair directly above the hidden corpse. At first he remained calm, but soon he began hearing the sound of the old man's heartbeat again. The noise seemed to grow louder, and he became increasingly anxious and convinced that the officers could hear it too and were mocking him. Unable to bear the psychological torment any longer, he finally broke down and confessed to the murder, crying out for the officers to tear up the floorboards where the body was hidden.

B.3 Dead Men's Path By Michael Obi

Dead Men's Path tells the story of Michael Obi, a young and ambitious teacher appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in 1949. The school had a poor reputation, and Obi saw his appointment as an opportunity to modernize it. Together with his wife Nancy, he worked enthusiastically to improve the school by introducing better teaching standards and creating beautiful gardens around the compound. While inspecting the school grounds, Obi discovered an old footpath used by villagers that crossed through the compound. A teacher explained that the path connected the village shrine with the burial grounds and was important in local tradition. Obi, however, considered such beliefs

backward and ordered the path closed with sticks and barbed wire because he believed it interfered with the school's modern image. Soon after, the village priest visited Obi and explained that the path was sacred because it was believed to connect the living, the dead, and unborn children. He respectfully asked that the path be reopened to preserve the villagers' traditions. Obi refused, insisting that the purpose of the school was to eliminate such superstitious beliefs and promote modern education. A few days later, a young village woman died during childbirth, and the villagers believed the ancestors had been angered by the closing of the sacred path. In response, the villagers destroyed the school gardens, damaged the hedges, and partially pulled down a school building. On the same day, a government education supervisor arrived to inspect the school and wrote a negative report criticizing both the condition of the premises and the growing conflict between the school and the village, which he blamed on Obi's misguided enthusiasm.

B.4 A Sorrowful Woman By Gail Godwin

The story follows a woman who gradually becomes emotionally disturbed and unable to bear the presence of her loving husband and young son. Although her husband is kind, patient, and understanding, she feels overwhelmed by sadness and fear whenever she looks at them. He comforts her, takes care of the child, and gives her sleeping medicine each night so she can rest. As her condition worsens, she begins avoiding her son and even strikes him once in frustration. Concerned for her well-being, the husband hires a capable young girl to help with the household and childcare. The girl efficiently manages the home, cares for the child, and brings warmth and energy into the family. Meanwhile, the woman withdraws further, spending most of her time alone in her bedroom, reading, brushing her hair, and distancing herself from family life. Eventually, the woman becomes disturbed by the

closeness and vitality of the young helper and dismisses her. The husband then takes on all the responsibilities himself, balancing work, childcare, cooking, and household duties while continuing to support his wife with patience and compassion. The woman isolates herself completely in the small white room once occupied by the helper. There she reflects on different identities, writes poetry, and continues to withdraw emotionally from her husband and child. Over time, she can no longer tolerate even brief contact with her son. Despite this, she secretly contributes to the household by baking bread, preparing food, knitting sweaters, writing stories and love sonnets for her husband, and organizing the home. One day, after completing all these acts of care and renewal, she retreats to her room and apparently takes an overdose of the sleeping draught. When the husband and child return home, they find the house beautifully prepared, but the woman lying motionless in bed. The husband realizes she has died, while the innocent child simply asks whether they can eat the turkey for supper.

B.5 After Twenty Years By O Henry

In *After Twenty Years*, a policeman is patrolling a quiet New York street on a cold night when he notices a man waiting in the doorway of a hardware store. The man explains that he is waiting for his old friend, Jimmy Wells, whom he had promised to meet exactly twenty years after they parted at “Big Joe” Brady’s restaurant. While Bob went West to seek fortune and success, Jimmy remained in New York. Bob proudly tells the policeman about his prosperous life and expresses confidence that his loyal friend will arrive. After some time, another man appears and identifies himself as Jimmy Wells. The two men walk together and begin discussing old times. However, under the bright lights of a drugstore, Bob realizes that the man is not actually Jimmy because his appearance does not match his old friend’s features. The stranger then reveals that he is a plainclothes police officer and that Bob,

known as “Silky” Bob, is wanted by the Chicago police. Before arresting him, the officer hands Bob a note from the real Jimmy Wells. In the note, Jimmy explains that he had come to the meeting place on time and recognized Bob as the criminal wanted in Chicago when he lit his cigar. Unable to arrest his old friend himself, Jimmy asked another officer to carry out the task. The story ends by highlighting themes of friendship, loyalty, duty, and the passage of time.

Appendix C

DeepSeek Generated Summaries

C.1 The Last Leaf by O. Henry

In a winding part of New York City called Greenwich Village, two young painters, Sue (from Maine) and Johnsy (from California), live and work together. One winter, Johnsy becomes seriously ill with pneumonia. The doctor tells Sue that Johnsy's chances of recovery depend entirely on her will to live. However, Johnsy has become convinced that when the last leaf falls from an old vine outside her window, she will die. Despite a fierce, rainy storm that should have stripped the last leaf, one leaf remains on the vine. Seeing it hold on, Johnsy regains her will to live. She recovers over the following days. The doctor then informs Sue that Johnsy is out of danger, but that an old painter named Behrman, who lives downstairs, has also come down with pneumonia and has no hope of survival. Sue then reveals the truth: Behrman died that night. They found him with his painting materials and a lantern in his cold, wet room. The last leaf Johnsy saw was not real—Behrman had painted it on the wall during the storm, sacrificing his own health to give Johnsy the hope she needed. That painted leaf was his long-promised masterpiece.

C.2 The Tell Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe

The narrator insists he is not mad, despite being extremely nervous. He claims his illness has sharpened his senses, especially his hearing. He decides to kill an old man not out of greed or hatred, but because he cannot bear the old man's "vulture eye"—a pale blue eye with a film over it that makes his blood run cold. For seven nights, the narrator opens the old man's door at midnight with extreme caution, shining a single ray of light from a lantern onto

the eye. But each night, the eye is closed, so he cannot commit the murder. On the eighth night, as he slowly opens the door, the old man stirs and cries out. The narrator remains still. He hears the old man's terrified heartbeat, growing louder and faster. Finally, a thin ray of light falls on the open eye, and the narrator hears the heart pounding like a drum. Unable to bear it, he leaps into the room, kills the old man, dismembers the body, and hides the pieces under the floorboards.

When police arrive to investigate a neighbor's report of a shriek, the narrator calmly invites them in, shows them around, and even sits directly over the hiding place. At first he feels triumphant, but soon he begins to hear a low, dull, quick sound—the old man's heartbeat. It grows louder and louder. Convinced that the officers hear it too and are mocking him, he breaks down, shrieks, and confesses, tearing up the floorboards to reveal the beating heart.

C.3 Dead Men's Path by Michael Obi

Michael Obi, a young, energetic, and progressive headmaster, was appointed to run Ndume Central School in January 1949. He and his wife Nancy share a passion for modern methods and want to transform the backward school into a model of beauty and high teaching standards. Nancy is initially disappointed to learn that all other teachers are unmarried, but she soon supports her husband's ambitions. Obi is scandalized to discover that villagers use a footpath crossing the school compound, connecting their shrine to their burial ground. Despite being told the path is sacred and important to village life, Obi closes it with sticks and barbed wire, fearing what the government inspector might think. The village priest of Ani visits Obi, explaining that the path existed long before the school and is used by ancestors, departing spirits, and children being born. Obi dismisses these beliefs as fantastic

and says the school's purpose is to eradicate such ideas. The priest urges coexistence ("let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch"), but Obi refuses to reopen the path.

Soon after, a young woman dies in childbirth, and a diviner blames the ancestors' anger over the closed path. The next morning, Obi finds the school hedges torn up, flowers destroyed, and a building pulled down. That day, a white supervisor inspects the school and writes a harsh report criticizing the premises and the "tribal-war situation" caused by Obi's misguided zeal.

C.4 A Sorrowful Woman by Gail Godwin

A woman becomes overwhelmed by sadness and sickness at the sight of her loving husband and young son. She withdraws from them, experiencing episodes of crying, retching, and fear of harming her child. Her husband is attentive and understanding. He takes over childcare, gives her a sleeping draught nightly, and tries to give her space to recover. They hire a young, energetic, not-pretty girl who becomes a perfect caretaker—cooking, painting, playing with the boy, and even caring for the mother. The mother retreats to her bedroom, reading and staring out the window. When the girl brings the child in with a grasshopper, the mother reacts with horror, and the visits become limited to notes slipped under the door. Over time, the mother becomes more active, even baking bread, but then fires the girl, feeling upset by her presence. The husband rearranges his life to manage everything alone. Eventually, the mother moves into the girl's old white room, sees the husband and son only briefly each evening, and asks not to see the child anymore.

One day, the mother busily bakes five loaves of bread, a turkey, a ham, pies, custards, knits, sweaters, paints stories, and writes love sonnets. The father and son return to find the house

filled with food and art. The father runs to her room and finds her dead. The boy asks if they can eat the turkey for supper.

C.5 After Twenty Years by O Henry

A policeman on night patrol in a nearly empty New York street encounters a man waiting in a darkened doorway. The man explains he is keeping a twenty-year-old appointment with his childhood friend Jimmy Wells, made the night before they parted ways—the man left for the West to seek his fortune, while Jimmy stayed in New York. The policeman leaves, and shortly after, a tall man claiming to be Jimmy arrives. They walk together until a drugstore's light reveals the newcomer is not Jimmy. The tall man reveals he is a plainclothes officer and arrests “Silky” Bob, a criminal wanted in Chicago. He hands Bob a note from the real Jimmy Wells, explaining that Jimmy recognized Bob as the wanted man when Bob lit his cigar, but couldn't bring himself to make the arrest, so he sent another officer instead.