Essay I Final Draft Issues, Or, I Know What I’m Doing This Summer

Technical Matters
Ellipses at beginning of quote: unnecessary
The verb “to deal”: vague. “Sacks deals with his need for stability.”
Use a long “em” dash when setting off a phrase: -- or — (not a hyphen, or “en” dash: “-”)

Titles
1. Sacksian Science: Religion or Pastime
2. The Mutation and Evolution of the Idea
3. Women in Chains
4. Maternal love: Harmless or problematic?
5. Feminist Reform of the Devil Baby: Affirmative Action versus Literature
6. Crying Wolf
7. Sacks: The Unreasonable Logician

Analytical Problem
Was Sacks contradictory in expressing that science was like a religion to him, while he admits that he doesn't believe in God, who is the central aspect of religion?

As a result, several perspectives of how Sacks views science can be derived. On one hand, from reading “Brilliant Light,” the audience tends to believe that Sacks is contradictory—he rejects religion, but his description of science is almost religious. On the other hand, it seems that Sacks did not see science as religious at all.

Introduction
What happens when words fail us? Does the idea or emotion those words were trying to express just lose sustenance and meaning? Why the clown that Dillard describes in such depth in the third paragraph? I “Total Eclipse,” Annie Dillard attempts to answer all these questions while she expresses her ideas about language and experience. In that essay she brings up many good ideas. She says that language is inadequate. I agree. She says that everyone experiences life differently. I agree with that also. She says that words and the ability to use those words to communicate with others are the only things that give meaning to any occurrence. I disagree. I believe a better way to define the relationships between language and experience is that they complement each other, no define one another. We use language as a way to explain an experience and without experience we would have no reason for language. However to say that if we had no words to communicate an idea or emotion then that idea or emotion would have no meaning at all just isn’t right. Unlike Dillard I believe that we shouldn’t limit ourselves to an inadequate language in order to explain ourselves, but instead forget language altogether and the experience itself tell is how it wishes to be defined.
Thesis: SCAR? The three Ts?
1. This “problem” which prevents people from sharing exact information and encounters and experiences is truly a gift of freedom that allows the individual to create his or her own ideas, to possess original experiences, apart from anything anyone else has personally experienced.

2. The power of Memory immunizes elderly women from emotions and dehumanizes them to a point they cannot exhibit inherent human characteristics, and encourages self-deception of their past tragedies.

3. Personally, I do not believe women should accept their lives as they come to them. They should fight for what they believe in and not become conformists. Women should not conform with giving everything they have to their children, they should do the best the can to get a hold of the life they have before having children.

Sentence Style Revision: Action, Clarity, Grace
1. Science, as Sacks discovers, is a highly unpredictable art in which mistakes are often masterpieces waiting to be discovered.

2. “Memory,” a term Addams capitalizes, is disdained as a regretful emotion that yields sorrow in women.

3. The process of experimentation requires extensive amounts of logic and reasoning capabilities.

4. In her essay, “The Devil Baby at Hull House,” Jane Addams explains how the rumor of the devil baby attracts women from around the country to see a deformed baby who resembles the devil "with his cloven hooves, his pointed ears and diminutive tail" (Addams 75).

5. Twice it is noted that Sabbath and lighting of candles on Friday was a special event.

6. Within the text, Sacks is constantly telling of his need for science.

7. With his "Uncle Tungsten" he has this love to learn more about the metals, how to extract them, their density, and even their word roots.

8. His sudden change in behavior is not normal because it is uncommon for a desire in a person’s life which has been so powerful to vanish at once, and it is also uncommon for a person not to find substitute for that desire.

Paragraph Revision: look at logic of paragraph, use of evidence, close reading
Reading the essay, one can often notice how chemistry reveals and stokes the boyish nonchalance and fantasies inside young Sacks. Reading slightly humorous yet frightening descriptions of filling the house with noxious fumes, searing his older brother’s eyebrows off in an explosion, and generally creating all kinds of “frothings, the incandescences, the stinks and bangs” ((67) makes me wonder whether chemistry is merely a trifling toy to play with to Sacks. Surely he must realize the unpredictable dangers that unsupervised experiments could contain? For instance, I would not be so daring, if not a little foolish, to engage my own friends to
observe my “experiment” as Sacks did when he took his friends out to a lake to watch the reaction of solid sodium with water. But to young Sacks and his friends, it was obviously a fantastic idea, as Sacks wielded his tongs without hesitation:

I pulled the sodium out of it oil with tongs, and fling it into the water beneath. It took fire instantly, and sped around and around on the surface like a demented meteor, with a huge sheet of yet flame above it. My friends still have vivid memories if this. We all exulted—this was chemistry with a vengeance! (70)

However, a paradox seems to be at work when I take a closer look at the last sentence of he passage. What Sacks and his friends are doing at the moment seems hopelessly childish and thoughtless, yet the last phrase draws my attention because it is the least thing I expect Sacks to say to describe the moment. In fact, I was expecting him to gush on the incident such as, “it was bloody wonderful!” But describing chemistry as vengeful is different, more mysterious and thoughtful, urging readers such as me to ponder the meaning beneath the expression. My observation is that this vengeance represents the victorious emotion Sacks feels for his success for seeking comfort and security in science over religion. When he was taken to and left at Greystone, Sacks’s core beliefs were uprooted. Sacks narrates in his essay that his younger self could not understand why his parents and God would seemingly abandon him in that awful place to perish. I remember the disturbing finality with which he pronounced the nonexistence of God after his fateful radish test. Thus, I feel that this vengeance is retaliation for the resentment and disappointment he felt towards God for letting him not only physically, but also mentally suffer at Greystone, for he had lost his independence and peace while staying there. Looking at my examination of the significance behind the phrase “chemistry with a vengeance,” I am assured that there Sacks is indeed caught in a paradox, for his actions and his reflections seem to oppose each other in the sense of thought and maturity.

Conclusion: what should a good, thought-provoking conclusion do?

Only by looking at situation objectively can new change occur. If these women are held in their own illusory worlds where they are fated martyrs, they will never be able to overcome this reality where sons abandon them or abuse them in such ways. Addams implies that only those in the same circumstances can understand the emotions and hardships that come with the role of a mother without the support of a husband. In many ways, she has lost hope in the sons who may change through education and understanding. These women should not delude themselves from the rest of the world as tragic figures, but instead actively come to realize that sons can overcome poverty and abusive fathers to become competent, independent men.