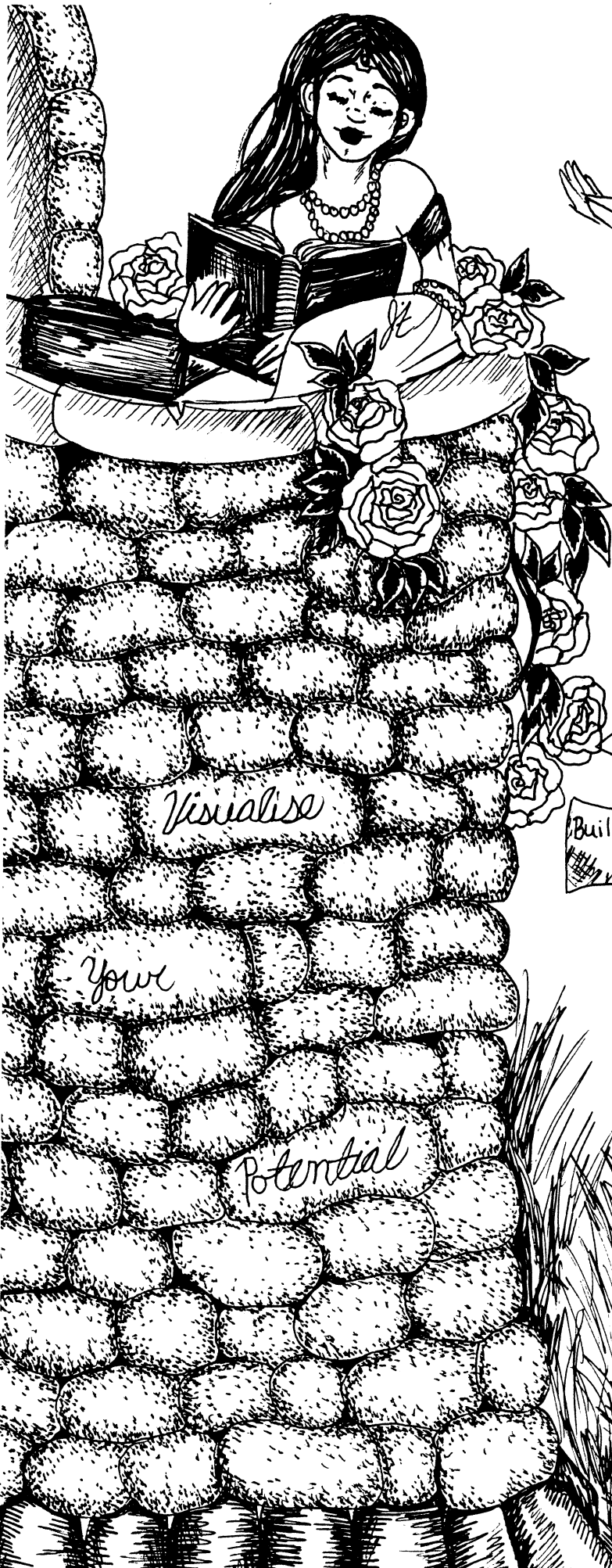


2014

ENGLISH



*Visualise*

*Your*

*Potential*



Build

Your

Future

**Style Guide**

# Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship can be defined as the norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour with regard to technology use.

## ① Digital Access: full electronic participation in society.

Technology users need to be aware of and support electronic access for all to create a foundation for Digital Citizenship. Digital exclusion of any kind does not enhance the growth of users in an electronic society. All people should have fair access to technology no matter who they are. Places or organizations with limited connectivity need to be addressed as well. To become productive citizens, we need to be committed to equal digital access.

## ② Digital Commerce: electronic buying and selling of goods.

Technology users need to understand that a large share of market economy is being done electronically. Legitimate and legal exchanges are occurring, but the buyer or seller need to be aware of the issues associated with it. The mainstream availability of Internet purchases of toys, clothing, cars, food, etc. has become commonplace to many users. At the same time, an equal amount of goods and services which are in conflict with the laws or morals of some countries are surfacing (which might include activities such as illegal downloading, pornography, and gambling). Users need to learn about how to be effective consumers in a new digital economy.

## ③ Digital Communication: electronic exchange of information.

One of the significant changes within the digital revolution is a person's ability to communicate with other people. In the 19th century, forms of communication were limited. In the 21st century, communication options have exploded to offer a wide variety of choices (e.g., e-mail, cellular phones, instant messaging). The expanding digital communication options have changed everything because people are able to keep in constant communication with anyone else. Now everyone has the opportunity to communicate and collaborate with anyone from anywhere and anytime. Unfortunately, many users have not been taught how to make appropriate decisions when faced with so many different digital communication options

## ④ Digital Literacy: process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology.

While schools have made great progress in the area of technology infusion, much remains to be done. A renewed focus must be made on what technologies must be taught as well as how it should be used. New technologies are finding their way into the work place that are not being used in schools (e.g., videoconferencing, online sharing spaces such as wikis). In addition, workers in many different occupations need immediate information (just-in-time information). This process requires sophisticated searching and processing skills (i.e., information literacy). Learners must be taught how to learn in a digital society. In other words, learners must be taught to learn anything, anytime, anywhere. Business, military, and medicine are excellent examples of how technology is being used differently in the 21st century. As new technologies emerge, learners need to learn how to use that technology quickly and appropriately. Digital Citizenship involves educating people in a new way— these individuals need a high degree of information literacy skills.

**⑥ Digital Etiquette: electronic standards of conduct or procedure.**

Technology users often see this area as one of the most pressing problems when dealing with Digital Citizenship. We recognize inappropriate behavior when we see it, but before people use technology they do not learn digital etiquette (i.e., appropriate conduct). Many people feel uncomfortable talking to others about their digital etiquette. Often rules and regulations are created or the technology is simply banned to stop inappropriate use. It is not enough to create rules and policy, we must teach everyone to become responsible digital citizens in this new society.

**⑦ Digital Law: electronic responsibility for actions and deeds**

Digital law deals with the ethics of technology within a society. Unethical use manifests itself in form of theft and/or crime. Ethical use manifests itself in the form of abiding by the laws of society. Users need to understand that stealing or causing damage to other people's work, identity, or property online is a crime. There are certain rules of society that users need to be aware in a ethical society. These laws apply to anyone who works or plays online. Hacking into others information, downloading illegal music, plagiarizing, creating destructive worms, viruses or creating Trojan Horses, sending spam, or stealing anyone's identify or property is unethical.

**⑧ Digital Rights & Responsibilities: those freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world.**

There is a basic set of rights extended to every digital citizen. Digital citizens have the right to privacy, free speech, etc. Basic digital rights must be addressed, discussed, and understood in the digital world. With these rights also come responsibilities. Users must help define how the technology is to be used in an appropriate manner. In a digital society these two areas must work together for everyone to be productive.

**⑨ Digital Health & Wellness: physical and psychological well-being in a digital technology world.**

Eye safety, repetitive stress syndrome, and sound ergonomic practices are issues that need to be addressed in a new technological world. Beyond the physical issues are those of the psychological issues that are becoming more prevalent such as Internet addiction. Users need to be taught that there inherent dangers of technology. Digital Citizenship includes a culture where technology users are taught how to protect themselves through education and training.

**⑩ Digital Security (self-protection): electronic precautions to guarantee safety.**

In any society, there are individuals who steal, deface, or disrupt other people. The same is true for the digital community. It is not enough to trust other members in the community for our own safety. In our own homes, we put locks on our doors and fire alarms in our houses to provide some level of protection. The same must be true for the digital security. We need to have virus protection, backups of data, and surge control of our equipment. As responsible citizens, we must protect our information from outside forces that might cause disruption or harm.

Respect, Educate and Protect (REPs)

The concept of REPs is a way to explain, as well as teach the themes of digital citizenship. Each area encompasses three of the digital elements.

RESPECT	EDUCATE	PROTECT
Etiquette	Communication	Rights & Responsibility
Access	Literacy	Safety (Security)
Law	Commerce	Health & Welfare

Source: [http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/Nine\\_Elements.html](http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/Nine_Elements.html)

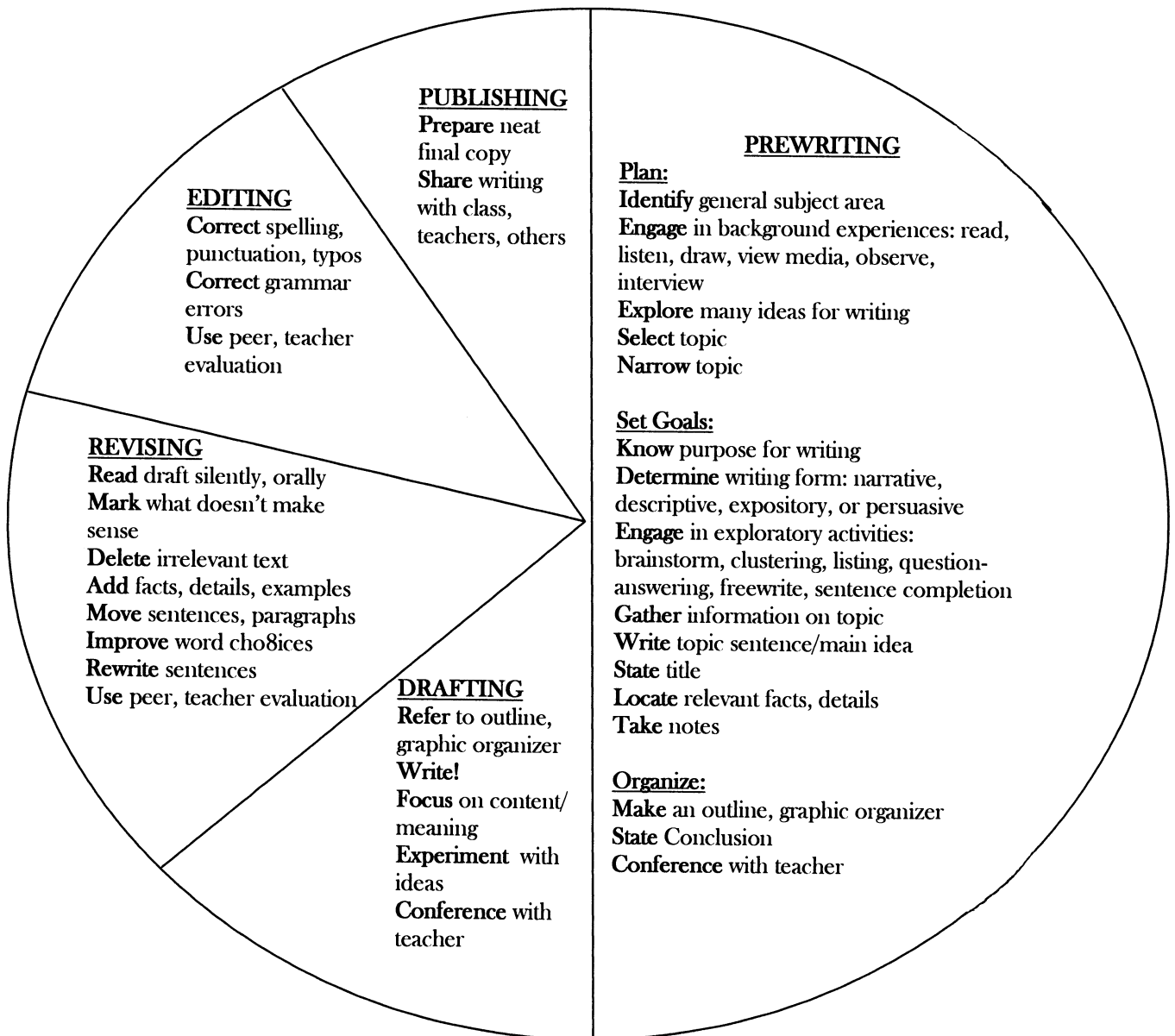
# Steps in the Writing Process

In English class, you are often assessed on whether or not you have applied all the steps in the writing process. But what does that really mean?

Good writers know that good writing does not start at typing out an essay; it starts with thinking, reading, and planning. It means taking your time to fully develop your ideas. It means having a solid understanding of who you are writing for and why you are writing. It means taking your time with edits and revisions. It means not rushing.

This pie graph represents all the steps of the writing process. Notice that it not only details what you should be doing at each step, it also quantifies how much of your time you should spend on these activities. Prewriting is fully HALF the process!

Review the steps and the activities suggested within each step. Think about your own writing process. What steps do you always hit? Which ones do you need to spend more time on? Use this along with your writing reflection chart to improve your writing process.



# Writing Reflection

Writing Task	My best 'step' in my writing process was...because...	My feedback from my teacher was...	Next time, I'm going to fix/change...

# Writing Reflection

Writing Task	My best 'step' in my writing process was...because...	My feedback from my teacher was...	Next time, I'm going to fix/change...

# NOTE MAKING

Learning to make notes effectively will help you to improve your study and work habits and to remember important information. Often, students are deceived into thinking that because they **understand** everything that is said in class they will therefore remember it. This is dead wrong! Write it down.

As you make notes, you will develop skill in selecting important material and in discarding unimportant material. The secret to developing this skill is practice. Check your results constantly. Strive to improve. Notes enable you to retain important facts and data and to develop an accurate means of arranging necessary information.

Here are some hints on note making.

1. Don't write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points. Concentrate on the "meat" of the subject and forget the trimmings.
2. Notes should consist of key words or very short sentences. If a speaker gets sidetracked it is often possible to go back and add further information.
3. Take accurate notes. You should usually use your own words, but try not to change the meaning. If you quote **directly** from an author, quote **correctly**.
4. Think a minute about your material before you start making notes. Don't take notes just to be taking notes! Take notes that will be of real value to you when you look over them at a later date.
5. Have a uniform system of punctuation and abbreviation that will make sense to you. Use a skeleton outline and show importance by indenting. Leave lots of white space for later additions.
6. Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
7. Don't worry about missing a point.
8. Don't keep notes on oddly shaped pieces of paper. Keep notes in order and in one place.
9. Shortly after making your notes, go back and rework (not redo) your notes by adding extra points and spelling out unclear items. Remember, we forget rapidly. Budget time for this vital step just as you do for the class itself.
10. Review your notes regularly. This is the only way to achieve lasting memory.

# TAKING LECTURE NOTES

I. There are many reasons for taking lecture notes.

- A. Making yourself take notes forces you to listen carefully and test your understanding of the material.
- B. When you are reviewing, notes provide a gauge to what is important in the text.
- C. Personal notes are usually easier to remember than the text.
- D. The writing down of important points helps you to remember them even before you have studied the material formally.

II. Instructors usually give clues to what is important to take down. Some of the more common clues are:

- A. Material written on the blackboard.
- B. Repetition
- C. Emphasis
  - 1. Emphasis can be judged by tone of voice and gesture.
  - 2. Emphasis can be judged by the amount of time the instructor spends on points and the number of examples he or she uses.
- D. Word signals (e.g. "There are **two points of view** on . . ." "The **third** reason is . . ." "In **conclusion** . . .")
- E. Summaries given at the end of class.
- F. Reviews given at the beginning of class.

III. Each student should develop his or her own method of taking notes, but most students find the following suggestions helpful:

- A. Make your notes brief.
  - 1. Never use a sentence where you can use a phrase. Never use a phrase where you can use a word.
  - 2. Use abbreviations and symbols, but be consistent.
- B. Put most notes in your own words. However, the following should be noted exactly:
  - 1. Formulas
  - 2. Definitions
  - 3. Specific facts
- C. Use outline form and/or a numbering system. Indentation helps you distinguish major from minor points.
- D. If you miss a statement, write key words, skip a few spaces, and get the information later.
- E. Don't try to use every space on the page. Leave room for coordinating your notes with the text after the lecture. (You may want to list key terms in the margin or make a summary of the contents of the page.)
- F. Date your notes. Perhaps number the pages.



# World Literature: Literature Without Walls

*"National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world literature."*

~Karl Marx, "Communist Manifesto"

## What is World Literature?

World Literature is a term coined by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1827 to describe literature that was emerging beyond Western Europe. World Literature represents cultural awareness. The term describes any work that:

- a) can be read as literature and,
- b) which has succeeded in circulating beyond its culture of origin

## World Literature and Translation:

At times, elements of a literary work can be lost in translation, especially works that are translated into English. As a result, the original meaning can be lost. Moreover, new meaning can be added because readers who are unfamiliar with a work's culture of origin are likely to impose on it the literary values prevalent in their own culture.

## The Canon and Ethnocentrism:

The **canon** is the accepted body of works that are considered the most important of a particular time period or place.

**Ethnocentrism** is the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own ethnic group or culture; a tendency to view alien groups or cultures from the perspective of one's own.

## Characteristics of World Literature:

1. World Literature is literature that has a readership and an impact beyond its original language and cultural era. For example the Bible and works by William Shakespeare have been translated into more than 100 languages and are read or performed on every continent. World literature directly relates to **globalization** where the general circulation of ideas increases connectivity and interdependence of cultures - they increase the interactions between groups of people that previously may have had little or no contact with each other.
2. World Literature is a category whereby literature has "legs": It is a work of literature that is a touchstone of local culture - it becomes a standard for local culture. It then becomes an influence on a regional culture, and later part of the fabric of global community. It moves from local to regional to global.
3. World Literature gains in translation: This means that it may inspire new genres, enrich a local tongue's vocabulary through the adaptation of new words, blend with regional concepts, or take on new meanings at different times and places. These are works that are able to adapt themselves to acquire meaning in different cultures.

# What Makes Literature Canadian?

Some common responses to this question reflect the typical Canadian perspective.

What stereotypically makes a Canadian novel Canadian are elements that concern:

- a) Nature
- b) Frontier Life
- c) Canada's position in the world
- d) The New Canadian Experience

Some other prominent themes typically found in Canadian literature are as follows:

<p><b>Man versus Nature</b> Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>The search for self-identity</b> Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Multiculturalism</b> Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b> Canada is said to be a mosaic (stained glass window) while America is said to be a melting pot. Do we as Canadians truly value, respect and appreciate those who are "different"? Or, do we pretend to - all the while holding prejudices and stereotypes in our hearts. Perhaps we stake a claim to something that truly does not exist. Is this stained glass more of a cultural blemish than a sign of multicultural beauty?</p>
<p><b>Failure</b> Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Self-deprecation</b> Define: belittling or undervaluing oneself; excessively modest.</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b> Canadians tend to have a reputation for being very modest. Self-deprecation can manifest itself in being constantly apologetic to the point where one devalues themselves and makes it a habit. This can perhaps lead to failure, being overlooked and then having to search for an identity that has been lost or relinquished for the sake of modesty.</p>

<p><b>Humour</b>  Define: the quality of being funny, the ability to appreciate or express that which is humourous.</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Anti-Americanism</b>  Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Self-evaluation</b>  Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b> Are Canadians more introspective? Do we contemplate our place in the world more than other cultures? If so, are we haunted by it? Is this healthy or is it narcissistic? Do we ever come to a static conclusion? How do Canadians claim to actualize themselves as human beings?</p>
<p><b>The underdog</b>  Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Urban versus Rural</b>  Define:</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>
<p><b>Satire</b>  Define: The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices</p>	<p><b>Analyze:</b></p>

University of Toronto professor of English, Nick Mount, was posed the same question on the topic of Canadian Literature by one of his students:

**What is Canadian literature? ... [do] works in a national literature actually have some kind of bond in terms of themes particular to a country?**

Over the years there have been a lot of attempts to answer the question you're asking. What makes Canadian literature Canadian? Probably the most well-known one is Margaret Atwood's argument in *Survival* – that ours is a literature of victims, that America's is a literature of heroes and ours is a literature of victims. Other people have proposed the influence of the north, that you can feel the influence of the geography working on the literature. More recently, people have wondered about why Canada appears to have so many famous female novelists, which is different from many countries. Others say our literature is more multicultural, as a reflection of our society. We like our literature to reflect who we want to be.

One of the most recent arguments is in a very good book by Noah Richler called *This is My Country*. He does a slightly different take on Margaret Atwood's victim argument. He says our literature is populated by what he calls 'myths of disappointment.' He starts with Sir John Franklin and the failed expedition to the north and includes others like Louis Riel, the deportation of the Acadians, and a lot of examples from our literature. We appear to be fascinated with people who have lost something.

All those arguments are true, to some degree. There are a lot of books that fit all those arguments. But the problem is that there are a lot of other Canadian books that *don't* fit those arguments. Unfortunately, people turn what was really just meant as descriptions into prescriptions. So someone might say, "Well that book doesn't have a loser in it, so it's not Canadian" and that's when the argument gets ridiculous.

The only real test is citizenship. And even that doesn't always work. Because you could have a writer visiting here from another country who writes a book that becomes embraced by Canadian culture. But that person wouldn't officially be a Canadian citizen. Or there are a lot more cases the other way – for example, Mordecai Richler wrote many of his books when he was living outside the country. So, even that doesn't work.

Ultimately, to me it's like asking the question "What is a poem?" And the answer is, "Well, if it says it's a poem, then it's a poem." And Can Lit is basically whatever its books say it is.



## Death by Landscape: a short story by Canadian novelist, Margaret Atwood

Make note of areas that you feel are important to Canadian literature based on the criteria listed on the first page of this handout.

Answer the following questions:

1. What about the story is Canadian? List the themes that you feel are relevant. Explain.
2. What is death by landscape? Why would Atwood use this particular setting to tell the story?
3. Identify and explain the main conflict in the story.
4. Is there a lesson to take from this story? If so, what is it and how do you know?
5. As a Canadian, how do you identify with this story?
6. Margaret Atwood on Death by Landscape: "... there is this collective consciousness here in Canada of living at the edge of the world; after all, Canada is one of the only countries in the world where you can drive down some lonely highway until it ends, and there is nothing beyond it. Even in the United States, there are cities on either side of the desert. In Russia you can drive from Europe to the Pacific. But Canada is unique in that there is this massive, unending wilderness north of every inhabited place... whether it be Northern Ontario sitting atop Toronto or Nunavut sitting atop the prairies. And we all have this dark, lonely wilderness hanging over our heads waiting to swallow us up." Comment on Atwood's claim.

# Death by Landscape (1990)

- by Margaret Atwood (1939) -

Now that the boys are grown up and Rob is dead, Lois has moved to a condominium apartment in one of Toronto's newer waterfront developments. She is relieved not to have to worry about the lawn, or about the ivy pushing its muscular little suckers into the brickwork, or the squirrels gnawing their way into the attic and eating the insulation off the wiring, or about strange noises. This building has a security system, and the only plant life is in pots in the solarium.

Lois is glad she's been able to find an apartment big enough for her pictures. They are more crowded together than they were in the house, but this arrangement gives the walls a European look: blocks of pictures, above and beside one another, rather than one over the chesterfield, one over the fireplace, one in the front hall, in the old acceptable manner of sprinkling art around so it does not get too intrusive. This way has more of an impact. You know it's not supposed to be furniture.

None of the pictures is very large, which doesn't mean they aren't valuable. They are paintings, or sketches and drawings, by artists who were not nearly as well known when Lois began to buy them as they are now. Their work later turned up on stamps, or as silk-screen reproductions hung in the principals' offices of high schools, or as jigsaw puzzles, or on beautifully printed calendars sent out by corporations as Christmas gifts to their less important clients. These artists painted after the first war, and in the Thirties and Forties; they painted landscapes. Lois has two Tom Thompsons, three A. Y. Jacksons, a Lawren Harris. She has an Arthur Lismer, she has a J.E.H. MacDonald. She has a David Milne. They are pictures of convoluted tree trunks on an island of pink wave-smoothed stone, with more islands behind; of a lake with

rough, bright, sparsely wooded cliffs; of a vivid river shore with a tangle of bush and two beached canoes, one red, one gray; of a yellow autumn woods with the ice-blue gleam of a pond half-seen through the interlaced branches.

It was Lois who'd chosen them. Rob had no interest in art, although he could see the necessity of having something on the walls. He left all the decorating decisions to her, while providing the money, of course. Because of this collection of hers, Lois's friends - especially the men - have given her the reputation of having a good nose for art investments.

But this is not why she bought the pictures, way back then. She bought them because she wanted them. She wanted something that was in them although she could not have said at the time what it was. It was not peace: She does not find them peaceful in the least. Looking at them fills her with a wordless unease. Despite the fact that there are no people in them or even animals, it's as if there is something, or T someone, looking back out.

WHEN she was fourteen, Lois went on a canoe trip. She'd only been on overnights before.

This was to be a long one, into the trackless wilderness, as Cappie put it. It was Lois's first canoe trip, and her last.

Cappie was the head of the summer camp to which Lois had been sent ever since she was nine. Camp Manitou, it was called; it was one of the better ones, for girls, though not the best. Girls of her age whose parents could afford it were routinely packed off to such camps, which bore a generic resemblance to one another. They favored Indian names and had hearty,

energetic leaders, who were called Cappie or Skip or Scottie. At these camps you learned to swim well and sail, and paddle a canoe, and perhaps ride a horse or play tennis. When you weren't doing these things you could do Arts and Crafts, and turn out dingy, lumpish clay ashtrays for your mother - mothers smoked more then - or bracelets made of colored braided string.

Cheerfulness was required at all times, even at breakfast. Loud shouting and the banging of spoons on the tables were allowed, and even encouraged, at ritual intervals. Chocolate bars were rationed, to control tooth decay and pimples. At night, after supper, in the dining hall or outside around a mosquito-infested campfire ring for special treats, there were sing-songs.

Lois can still remember all the words to "My Darling Clementine," and to "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean," with acting-out gestures: a rippling of the hands for "ocean," two hands together under the cheeks for "lies." She will never be able to forget them, which is a sad thought.

Lois thinks she can recognize women who went to these camps and were good at it. They have a hardness to their handshakes, even now; a way of standing, legs planted firmly and farther apart than usual; a way of sizing you up, to see if you'd be any good in a canoe - the front, not the back. They themselves would be in the back. They would call it the stem.

She knows that such camps still exist, although Camp Manitou does not. They are one of the few things that haven't changed much. They now offer copper enameling, and functionless pieces of stained glass baked in electric ovens, though judging from the productions of her friends' grand-

children the artistic standards have not improved.

To Lois, encountering it in the first year after the war, Camp Manitou seemed ancient. Its log-sided buildings with the white cement in between the half-logs, its flagpole ringed with whitewashed stones, its weathered gray dock jutting out into Lake Prospect, with its woven rope bumpers and its rusty rings for tying up, its prim round flowerbed of petunias near the office door, must surely have been there always. In truth, it dated only from the first decade of the century; it had been founded by Cappie's parents, who'd thought of camping as bracing to the character, like cold showers, and had been passed along to her as an inheritance and an obligation.

Lois realized later that it must have been a struggle for Cappie to keep Camp Manitou going during the Depression and then the war, when money did not flow freely. If it had been a camp for the very rich, instead of the merely well-off, there would have been fewer problems. But there must have been enough Old Girls, ones with daughters, to keep the thing in operation, though not entirely shipshape: Furniture was battered: painted trim was peeling, roofs leaked. There were dim photographs of these Old Girls dotted around the dining hall, wearing ample woolen bathing suits and showing their fat, dimpled legs, or standing, arms twined, in odd tennis outfits with baggy skirts.

In the dining hall, over the stone fireplace that was never used, there was a huge molting stuffed moose head, which looked somehow carnivorous. It was a sort of mascot; its name was Monty Manitou. The older campers spread the story that it was haunted and came to life in the dark, when the feeble and undependable lights had been turned off or, due to yet another generator failure, had gone out. Lois

was afraid of it at first, but not after she got used to it.

Cappie was the same: You had to get used to her. Possibly she was forty, or thirty-five, or fifty. She had fawn-colored hair that looked as if it was cut with a bowl. Her head jutted forward, jiggling like a chicken's as she strode around the camp, clutching notebooks and checking things off in them. She was like Lois's minister in church: Both of them smiled a lot and were anxious because they wanted things to go well; they both had the same overwashed skins and stringy necks. But all this disappeared when Cappie was leading a sing-song or otherwise leading. Then she was happy, sure of herself, her plain face almost luminous. She wanted to cause joy. At these times she was loved, at others merely trusted.

There were many things Lois didn't like about Camp Manitou, at first. She hated the noisy chaos and spoon banging of the dining hall, the rowdy sing-songs at which you were expected to yell in order to show that you were enjoying yourself. Hers was not a household that encouraged yelling. She hated the necessity of having to write dutiful letters to her parents claiming she was having fun. She could not complain, because camp cost so much money.

She didn't much like having to undress in a roomful of other girls, even in the dim light, although nobody paid any attention, or sleeping in a cabin with seven other girls, some of whom snored because they had adenoids or colds, some of whom had nightmares, or wet their beds and cried about it. Bottom bunks made her feel closed in, and she was afraid of falling out of top ones; she was afraid of heights. She got homesick, and suspected her parents of having a better time when she wasn't there than when she was, although her mother wrote to her every week saying how much they missed her. All this was when she was

nine. By the time she was thirteen she liked it. She was an old hand by then.

LUCY was her best friend at camp. Lois had other friends in the winter, when there was school and itchy woolen clothing and darkness in the afternoons, but Lucy was her summer friend.

She turned up the second year, when Lois was ten and a Bluejay. (Chickadees, Bluejays, Ravens, and Kingfishers – these were the names Camp Manitou assigned to the different age groups, a sort of totemic clan system. In those days, thinks Lois, it was birds for girls, animals for boys – wolves and so forth – though some animals and birds were suitable and some were not: never vultures, for instance; never skunks, or rats.)

Lois helped Lucy to unpack her tin trunk and place the folded clothes on the wooden shelves, and to make up her bed. She put her in the top bunk right above her, where she could keep an eye on her. Already she knew that Lucy was an exception to a good many rules; already she felt proprietorial.

Lucy was from the United States, where comic books came from, and the movies. She wasn't from New York or Hollywood or Buffalo, the only American cities Lois knew of, but from Chicago. Her house was on the lakeshore and had gates to it, and grounds. They had a maid, all of the time. Lois's family only had a cleaning lady twice a week.

The only reason Lucy was being sent to this camp (she cast a look of minor scorn around the cabin, diminishing it and also offending Lois, while at the same time daunting her) was that her mother had been a camper here. Her mother had been a Canadian once but had married her father, who had a patch over one eye, like a pirate. She showed Lois the picture of him in her

## Death by Landscape (Cont.)

3 of 8

wallet. He got the patch in the war. "Shrapnel," said Lucy, offhandedly. Lois, who was unsure about shrapnel, was so impressed she could only grunt. Her own two-eyed, unwounded father was tame by comparison.

"My father plays golf," she ventured at last.

"Everyone plays golf," said Lucy. "My mother plays golf."

Lois's mother did not. Lois took Lucy to see the outhouses and the swimming dock and the dining hall with Monty Manitou's baleful head, knowing in advance they would not measure up.

This was a bad beginning; but Lucy was good-natured, and accepted Camp Manitou with the same casual shrug with which she seemed to accept everything. She would make the best of it, without letting Lois forget that this was what she was doing.

However, there were things Lois knew that Lucy did not. Lucy scratched the tops off all her mosquito bites and had to be taken to the infirmary to be daubed with Ozonol. She took her T-shirt off while sailing, and although the counselor spotted her after a while and made her put it back on, she burned spectacularly, bright red, with the X of her bathing-suit straps standing out in alarming white; she let Lois peel the sheets of whispery-thin burned skin off her shoulders. When they sang "Alouette" around the campfire, she did not know any of the French words. The difference was that Lucy did not care about the things she didn't know, whereas Lois did.

During the next winter, and subsequent winters, Lucy and Lois wrote to each other. They were both only children, at a time when this was thought to be a disadvantage, so in their letters they pretended to be sisters or even twins. Lois had to strain a little over this, because Lucy was so blond, with translucent skin and large

blue eyes like a doll's, and Lois was nothing out of the ordinary, just a tallish, thinnish, brownish person with freckles. They signed their letters LL, with the L's entwined together like the monograms on a towel. (Lois and Lucy, thinks Lois. How our names date us. Lois Lane, Superman's girlfriend, enterprising female reporter; I Love Lucy. Now we are obsolete, and it's little Jennifers, little Emilys, little Alexandras and Carolines and Tiffanys.)

They were more effusive in their letters than they ever were in person. They bordered their pages with X's and O's, but when they met again in the summers it was always a shock. They had changed so much, or Lucy had. It was like watching someone grow up in jolts. At first it would be hard to think up things to say.

But Lucy always had a surprise or two, something to show, some marvel to reveal. The first year she had a picture of herself in a tutu, her hair in a ballerina's knot on the top of her head; she pirouetted around the swimming dock, to show Lois how it was done, and almost fell off. The next year she had given that up and was taking horseback riding. (Camp Manitou did not have horses.) The next year her mother and father had been divorced, and she had a new stepfather, one with both eyes, and a new house, although the maid was the same.

The next year, when they had graduated from Bluejays and entered Ravens, she got her period, right in the first week of camp. The two of them snatched some matches from their counselor, who smoked illegally, and made a small fire out behind the furthest outhouse, at dusk, using their flashlights. They could set all kinds of fires by now; they had learned how in Campcraft.

On this fire they burned one of Lucy's used sanitary napkins. Lois is not sure why they did this or whose idea it was. But she can remember the feel-

ing of deep satisfaction it gave her as the white fluff singed and the blood sizzled, as if some wordless ritual had been fulfilled.

They did not get caught, but then they rarely got caught at any of their camp transgressions. Lucy had such large eyes, and was such an accomplished liar.

THIS year Lucy is different again: slower, more languorous. She is no longer interested in sneaking around after dark, purloining cigarettes from the counselor, dealing in black market candy bars. She is pensive, and hard to wake in the mornings. She doesn't like her stepfather, but she doesn't want to live with her real father either, who has a new wife. She thinks her mother may be having an affair with a doctor; she doesn't know for sure, but she's seen them smooching in his car, out in the driveway, when her stepfather wasn't there. It serves him right. She hates her private school. She has a boyfriend, who is sixteen and works as a gardener's assistant. This is how she met him: in the garden. She describes to Lois what it is like when he kisses her: rubbery at first, but then your knees go limp. She has been forbidden to see him and threatened with boarding school. She wants to run away from home.

Lois has little to offer in return. Her own life is placid and satisfactory, but there is nothing much that can be said about happiness. "You're so lucky," Lucy tells her, a little smugly. She might as well say boring, because this is how it makes Lois feel.

Lucy is apathetic about the canoe trip, so Lois has to disguise her own excitement. The evening before they are to leave, she slouches into the campfire ring as if coerced and sits down with a sigh of endurance, just as Lucy does.



Every canoe trip that went out of camp was given a special send-off by Cappie and the section leader and counselors, with the whole section in attendance. Cappie painted three streaks of red across each of her cheeks with a lipstick. They looked like three-fingered claw marks. She put a blue circle on her forehead with fountain-pen ink, tied a twisted bandanna around her head and stuck a row of frazzle-ended feathers around it, and wrapped herself in a red and black Hudson's Bay blanket. The counselors, also in blankets but with only two streaks of red, beat on tom-toms made of round wooden cheeseboxes with leather stretched over the top and nailed in place. Cappie was Chief Cappeosora. They all had to say "How!" when she walked into the circle and stood there with one hand raised.

Looking back on this, Lois finds it disquieting. She knows too much about Indians. She knows, for instance, that they should not even be called Indians, and that they have enough worries without other people taking their names and dressing up as them. It has all been a form of stealing.

But she remembers too that she was once ignorant of this. Once she loved the campfire, the flickering of light on the ring of faces, the sound of the fake tom-toms, heavy and fast like a scared heartbeat; she loved Cappie in a red blanket and feathers, solemn, as a Chief should be, raising her hand and saying, "Greetings, my Ravens." It was not funny, it was not making fun. She wanted to be an Indian. She wanted to be adventurous and pure, and aboriginal.

"YOU go on big water," says Cappie. This is her idea – all their ideas – of how Indians talk. "You go where no man has ever trod. You go many moons." This is not true. They are only going for a week, not many moons. The canoe route is clearly

marked, they have gone over it on a map, and there are prepared campsites with names that are used year after year. But when Cappie says this – and despite the way Lucy rolls up her eyes – Lois can feel the water stretching out, with the shores twisting away on either side, immense and a little frightening.

"You bring back much wampum," says Cappie: "Do good in war, my braves, and capture many scalps." This is another of her pretenses: that they are boys, and bloodthirsty. But such a game cannot be played by substituting the word squaw. It would not work at all.

Each of them has to stand up and step forward and have a red line drawn across her cheeks by Cappie. She tells them they must follow in the paths of their ancestors (who most certainly, thinks Lois, looking out the window of her apartment and remembering the family stash of daguerreotypes and sepia-colored portraits on her mother's dressing table – the stiff-shirted, black-coated, grim-faced men and the beflooned women with their severe hair and their corsetted respectability – would never have considered heading off onto an open lake in a canoe, just for fun).

At the end of the ceremony they all stood and held hands around the circle and sang taps. This did not sound very Indian, thinks Lois. It sounded like a bugle call at a military post, in a movie. But Cappie was never one to be much concerned with consistency, or with archaeology.

AFTER breakfast the next morning they set out from the main dock, in four canoes, three in each. The lipstick stripes have not come off completely and still show faintly pink, like healing burns. They wear their white denim sailing hats, because of the sun, and thin-striped T-shirts, and

pale baggy shorts with the cuffs rolled up. The middle one kneels, propping her rear end against the rolled sleeping bags. The counselors going with them are Pat and Kip. Kip is no-nonsense; Pat is easier to wheedle or fool.

There are white puffy clouds and a small breeze. Glints come from the little waves. Lois is in the bow of Kip's canoe. She still can't do a j-stroke very well, and she will have to be in the bow or the middle for the whole trip. Lucy is behind her; her own j-stroke is even worse. She splashes Lois with her paddle, quite a big splash.

"I'll get you back," says Lois.

"There was a stable fly on your shoulder," Lucy says.

Lois turns to look at her, to see if she's grinning. They're in the habit of splashing each other. Back there, the camp has vanished behind the first long point of rock and rough trees. Lois feels as if an invisible rope has broken. They're floating free, on their own, cut loose. Beneath the canoe the lake goes down, deeper and colder than it was a minute before.

"No horsing around in the canoe," says Kip. She's rolled her T-shirt sleeves up to the shoulder; her arms are brown and sinewy, her jaw determined, her stroke perfect. She looks as if she knows exactly what she is doing.

The four canoes keep close together. They sing, raucously and with defiance; they sing "The Quarter Master's Store" and "Clementine" and "Alouette." It is more like bellowing than singing.

After that the wind grows stronger, blowing slantwise against the bows, and they have to put all their energy into shoving themselves through the water.

Was there anything important, anything that would provide some sort of reason or clue to what happened next? Lois can remember everything, every detail; but it does her no good.

They stopped at noon for a swim and lunch, and went on in the afternoon. At last they reached Little Birch, which was the first campsite for overnight. Lois and Lucy made the fire while the others pitched the heavy canvas tents. The fireplace was already there, flat stones piled into a U shape. A burned tin can and a beer bottle had been left in it. Their fire went out, and they had to restart it. "Hustle your bustle," said Kip. "We're starving."

The sun went down, and in the pink sunset light they brushed their teeth and spat the toothpaste froth into the lake. Kip and Pat put all the food that wasn't in cans into a packsack and slung it into a tree, in case of bears.

Lois and Lucy weren't sleeping in a tent. They'd begged to be allowed to sleep out; that way they could talk without the others hearing. If it rained, they told Kip, they promised not to crawl dripping into the tent over everyone's legs: They would get under the canoes. So they were out on the point.

Lois tried to get comfortable inside her sleeping bag, which smelled of musty storage and of earlier campers – a stale, salty sweetness. She curled herself up, with her sweater rolled up under her head for a pillow and her flashlight inside her sleeping bag so it wouldn't roll away. The muscles of her sore arms were making small pings, like rubber bands breaking.

Beside her Lucy was rustling around. Lois could see the glimmering oval of her white face.

"I've got a rock poking into my back," said Lucy.

"So do I," said Lois. "You want to go into the tent?" She herself didn't, but it was right to ask.

"No," said Lucy. She subsided into her sleeping bag. After a moment she said, "It would be nice not to go back."

"To camp?" said Lois.

"To Chicago," said Lucy. "I hate it there."

"What about your boyfriend?" said Lois. Lucy didn't answer. She was either asleep or pretending to be.

There was a moon, and a movement of the trees. In the sky there were stars, layers of stars that went down and down. Kip said that when the stars were bright like that instead of hazy, it meant bad weather later on. Out on the lake there were two loons, calling to each other in their insane, mournful voices. At the time it did not sound like grief. It was just background.

The lake in the morning was flat calm. They skimmed along over the glassy surface, leaving V-shaped trails behind them; it felt like flying. As the sun rose higher it got hot, almost too hot. There were stable flies in the canoes, landing on a bare arm or leg for a quick sting. Lois hoped for wind.

They stopped for lunch at the next of the named campsites, Lookout Point. It was called this because, although the site itself was down near the water on a flat shelf of rock, there was a sheer cliff nearby and a trail that led up to the top. The top was the lookout, although what you were supposed to see from there was not clear. Kip said it was just a view.

Lois and Lucy decided to make the climb anyway. They didn't want to hang around waiting for lunch. It wasn't their turn to cook, though they hadn't avoided much by not doing it, because cooking lunch was no big deal. It was just unwrapping the cheese and getting out the bread and peanut butter, though Pat and Kip always had to do their woodsy act and boil up a billy tin for their own tea.

They told Kip where they were going. You had to tell Kip where you were going, even if it was only a little way into the woods to get dry twigs for kindling. You could never go anywhere without a buddy.

"Sure," said Kip, who was crouching over the fire, feeding driftwood into it. "Fifteen minutes to lunch."

"Where are they off to?" said Pat. She was bringing their billy tin of water from the lake.

"Lookout," said Kip.

"Be careful," said Pat. She said it as an afterthought, because it was what she always said.

"They're old hands," Kip said.

LOIS looks at her watch: It's ten to twelve. She is the watch-minder; Lucy is careless of time. They walk up the path, which is dry earth and rocks, big rounded pinky-gray boulders or split-open ones with jagged edges. Spindly balsam and spruce trees grow to either side; the lake is blue fragments to the left. The sun is right overhead; there are no shadows anywhere. The heat comes up at them as well as down. The forest is dry and crackly.

It isn't far, but it's a steep climb and they're sweating when they reach the top. They wipe their faces with their bare arms, sit gingerly down on a scorching-hot rock, five feet from the edge but too close for Lois. It's a lookout all right, a sheer drop to the lake and a long view over the water, back the way they've come. It's amazing to Lois that they've traveled so far, over all that water, with nothing to propel them but their own arms. It makes her feel strong. There are all kinds of things she is capable of doing.

"It would be quite a dive off here," says Lucy.

"You'd have to be nuts," says Lois.

"Why?" says Lucy. "It's really deep. It goes straight down." She stands up and takes a step nearer the edge. Lois gets a stab in her midriff, the kind she gets when a car goes too fast over a bump. "Don't," she says.

"Don't what?" says Lucy, glancing around at her mischievously. She knows how Lois feels about heights. But she turns back. "I really have to pee," she says.

"You have toilet paper?" says Lois, who is never without it. She digs in her shorts pocket.

"Thanks," says Lucy.

They are both adept at peeing in the woods: doing it fast so the mosquitoes don't get you, the underwear pulled up between the knees, the squat with the feet apart so you don't wet your legs, facing downhill; the exposed feeling of your bum, as if someone is looking at you from behind. The etiquette when you're with someone else is not to look. Lois stands up and starts to walk back down the path, to be out of sight.

"Wait for me?" says Lucy.

Lois climbed down, over and around the boulders, until she could not see Lucy; she waited. She could hear the voices of the others, talking and laughing, down near the shore. One voice was yelling, "Ants! Ants!" Someone must have sat on an anthill. Off to the side, in the woods, a raven was croaking, a hoarse single note.

She looked at her watch: It was noon. This is when she heard the shout.

She has gone over and over it in her mind since, so many times that the first, real shout has been obliterated, like a footprint trampled by other footprints. But she is sure (she is almost positive, she is nearly certain) that it was not a shout of fear. Not a scream. More like a cry of surprise, cut off too soon. Short, like a dog's bark.

"Lucy?" Lois said. Then she called. "Lucy!" By now she was clambering back up, over the stones of the path. Lucy was not up there. Or she was not in sight.

"Stop fooling around," Lois said. "It's lunchtime." But Lucy did not rise from behind a rock or step out, smiling, from behind a tree. The sunlight was all around; the rocks looked white. "This isn't funny!" Lois said, and it wasn't. Panic was rising in her, the panic of a small child who does not know where the bigger ones are hidden. She could hear her own heart. She looked quickly around; she lay down on the ground and looked over the edge of the cliff. It made her feel cold. There was nothing.

She went back down the path, stumbling; she was breathing too quickly; she was too frightened to cry. She felt terrible, guilty and dismayed, as if she had done something very bad by mistake, something that could never be repaired. "Lucy's gone," she told Kip.

Kip looked up from her fire, annoyed. The water in the billy tin was boiling. "What do you mean, 'Gone'?" she said. "Where did she go?"

"I don't know," said Lois. "She's just gone."

No one had heard the shout; but then, no one had heard Lois calling either. They had been talking among themselves, by the water.

Kip and Pat went up to the lookout and searched and called and blew their whistles.

Nothing answered.

Then they came back down, and Lois had to tell exactly what had happened. The other girls all sat in a circle and listened to her. Nobody said anything. They all looked frightened, especially Pat and Kip. They were the leaders. You did not just lose a camper like this, for no reason at all.

"Why did you leave her alone?" said Kip.

"I was just down the path," said Lois. "I told you. She had to go to the bathroom." She did not say pee in front of people older than herself.

Kip looked disgusted.

"Maybe she just walked off into the woods and got turned around," said one of the girls.

"Maybe she's doing it on purpose," said another.

Nobody believed either of these theories. They took the canoes and searched around the base of the cliff and peered down into the water. But there had been no sound of falling rock; there had been no splash. There was no clue, nothing at all. Lucy had simply vanished.

That was the end of the canoe trip. It took them the same two days to go back that it had taken coming in, even though they were short a paddler. They did not sing. After that the police went, in a motorboat, with dogs; they were the Mounties and the dogs were German shepherds, trained to follow trails in the woods. But it had rained since, and they could find nothing.

LOIS is sitting in Cappie's office. Her face is bloated with crying, she's seen that in the mirror. By now she feels numbed; she feels as if she has drowned. She can't stay here. It has been too much of a shock. Tomorrow her parents are coming to take her away. Several of the other girls who were on the canoe trip are being collected in the same way. The others will have to stay, because their parents are in Europe or cannot be reached.

Cappie is grim. They've tried to hush it up, but of course everyone in camp knows. Soon the papers will know too. You can't keep it quiet, but what can

## Death by Landscape (Cont.)

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be said? What can be said that makes any sense? "Girl vanishes in broad daylight, without a trace." It can't be believed; other things, worse things, will be suspected. Negligence, at the very least. But they have always taken such care. Bad luck will gather around Camp Manitou like a fog; parents will avoid it in favor of other, luckier places. Lois can see Cappie thinking all this, even through her numbness. It's what anyone would think.

Lois sits on the hard wooden chair in Cappie's office, beside the old wooden desk over which hangs the thumb-tacked bulletin board of normal camp routine, and gazes at Cappie through her puffy eyelids. Cappie is now smiling what is supposed to be a reassuring smile. Her manner is too casual: She's after something. Lois has seen this look on Cappie's face when she's been sniffing out contraband chocolate bars, hunting down those rumored to have snuck out of their cabins at night.

"Tell me again," says Cappie, "from the beginning."

Lois has told her story so many times by now, to Pat and Kip, to Cappie, to the police, that she knows it word for word. She knows it, but she no longer believes it. It has become a story. "I told you," she says. "She wanted to go to the bathroom. I gave her my toilet paper. I went down the path, I waited for her. I heard this kind of shout ... "

"Yes," says Cappie, smiling confidently, "but before that. What did you say to each other?"

Lois thinks. Nobody has asked her this before. "She said you could dive off there. She said it went straight down."

"And what did you say?"

"I said you'd have to be nuts."

"Were you mad at Lucy?" says Cappie, in an encouraging voice.

"No," says Lois. "Why would I be mad at Lucy? I wasn't ever mad at Lucy." She feels like crying again. The times when she has, in fact, been mad at Lucy have been erased already. Lucy was always perfect.

"Sometimes we're angry when we don't know we're angry," says Cappie, as if to herself. "Sometimes we get really mad and we don't even know it. Sometimes we might do a thing without meaning to, or without knowing what will happen. We lose our tempers."

Lois is only thirteen, but it doesn't take her long to figure out that Cappie is not including herself in any of this. By we she means Lois. She is accusing Lois of pushing Lucy off the cliff. The unfairness of this hits her like a slap. "I didn't!" she says.

"Didn't what?" says Cappie softly. "Didn't what, Lois?"

Lois does the worst thing. She begins to cry. Cappie gives her a look like a pounce. She's got what she wanted.

Later, when she was grown up, Lois was able to understand what this interview had been about. She could see Cappie's desperation, her need for a story, a real story with a reason in it; anything but the senseless vacancy Lucy had left for her to deal with. She wanted Lois to supply the reason, to be the reason. It wasn't even for the newspapers or the parents, because she could never make such an accusation without proof. It was for herself: something to explain the loss of Camp Manitou and of all she had worked for, the years of entertaining spoiled children and buttering up parents and making a fool of herself with feathers stuck in her hair. Camp Manitou was, in fact, lost. It did not survive.

Lois worked all this out, twenty years later. But it was far too late. It was too late even ten minutes afterward, when she'd left Cappie's office and was walking slowly back to her cabin

to pack. Lucy's clothes were still there, folded on the shelves, as if waiting. She felt the other girls in the cabin watching her with speculation in their eyes. Could she have done it! She must have done it. For the rest of her life, she has caught people watching her in this way.

Maybe they weren't thinking this. Maybe they were merely sorry for her. But she felt she had been tried and sentenced; and this is what has stayed with her: the knowledge that she has been singled out, condemned for something that was not her fault.

LOIS sits in the living room of her apartment, drinking a cup of tea. Through the knee-to-ceiling window she has a wide view of Lake Ontario, with its skin of wrinkled blue-gray light, and of the willows of Toronto Island shaken by a wind that is silent at this distance and on this side of the glass. When there isn't too much pollution she can see the far shore, the foreign shore, though today it is obscured.

Possibly she should go out, go downstairs, do some shopping; there isn't much in the refrigerator. The boys say she doesn't get out enough. But she isn't hungry, and moving, stirring from this space, is increasingly an effort.

She can hardly remember, now, having her two boys in the hospital, nursing them as babies; she can hardly remember getting married, or what Rob looked like. Even at the time she never felt she was paying full attention. She was tired a lot, as if she was living not one life but two: her own, and another, shadowy life that hovered around her and would not let itself be realized, the life of what would have happened if Lucy had not stepped sideways and disappeared from time.

She would never go up north, to Rob's family cottage or to any place with

wild lakes and wild trees and the calls of loons. She would never go anywhere near. Still, it was as if she was always listening for another voice, the voice of a person who should have been there but was not. An echo.

While Rob was alive, while the boys were growing up, she could pretend she didn't hear it, this empty space in sound. But now there is nothing much left to distract her.

She turns away from the window and looks at her pictures. There is the pinkish island, in the lake, with the inter-twisted trees. It's the same landscape they paddled through, that distant summer. She's seen travelogues of this country, aerial photographs; it looks different from above, bigger, more hopeless: lake after lake, random blue puddles in dark green bush, the trees like bristles. How could you ever find anything there, once it was lost? Maybe if they cut it all down, drained it all away, they might find Lucy's bones, sometime, wherever they are hidden. A few bones, some buttons, the buckle from her shorts.

But a dead person is a body; a body occupies space, it exists somewhere. You can see it; you put it in a box and bury it in the ground, and then it's in a box in the ground. But Lucy is not in a box or in the ground. Because she is nowhere definite, she could be anywhere.

And these paintings are not landscape paintings. Because there aren't any landscapes up there, not in the old, tidy European sense, with a gentle hill, a curving river, a cottage, a mountain in the background, a golden evening sky. Instead there's a tangle, a receding maze, in which you can become lost almost as soon as you step off the path. There are no backgrounds in any of these paintings, no vistas; only a great deal of foreground that goes back and back, endlessly, involving you in its twists and turns of tree and branch and rock. No matter how far back in you go, there will be

more. And the trees themselves are hardly trees; they are currents of energy, charged with violent color.

Who knows how many trees there were on the cliff just before Lucy disappeared? Who counted? Maybe there was one more, afterward.

Lois sits in her chair and does not move. Her hand with the cup is raised halfway to her mouth. She hears something, almost hears it: a shout of recognition or of joy.

She looks at the paintings, she looks into them. Every one of them is a picture of Lucy. You can't see her exactly, but she's there, in behind the pink stone island or the one behind that. In the picture of the cliff she is hidden by the clutch of fallen rocks toward the bottom; in the one of the river shore she is crouching beneath the overturned canoe. In the yellow autumn woods she's behind the tree that cannot be seen because of the other trees, over beside the blue sliver of pond; but if you walked into the picture and found the tree, it would be the wrong one, because the right one would be farther on.

Everyone has to be somewhere, and this is where Lucy is. She is in Lois's apartment, in the holes that open inward on the wall, not like windows but like doors. She is here. She is entirely alive.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Margaret Atwood** (1939 - Canadian novelist, short story writer, critic, and essayist, is among the most honored authors of fiction in recent history. She has been shortlisted for the Booker Prize five times, winning once, and has been a finalist for the Governor General's Award seven times, winning twice. She is also an award-winning poet, having published 15 books of poetry. In 1987 her novel,

*The Handmaid's Tale*, received the very first Arthur C. Clarke Award for the best science-fiction novel first published in the United Kingdom during the previous year. She has written 12 novels, 9 collections of short stories, and 6 childrens' books.

# What Makes a Novel Classic?

By Esther Lombardi

The definition of a "classic" can be a hotly debated topic. Depending on what you read, or the experience of the person you question on the topic, you may receive a wide range of answers. So, what is a "classic"--in the context of books and literature?

- A classic usually expresses some artistic quality--an expression of life, truth, and beauty.
- A classic stands the test of time. The work is usually considered to be a representation of the period in which it was written; and the work merits lasting recognition. In other words, if the book was published in the recent past, the work is not a classic.
- A classic has a certain universal appeal. Great works of literature touch us to our very core beings--partly because they integrate themes that are understood by readers from a wide range of backgrounds and levels of experience. Themes of love, hate, death, life, and faith touch upon some of our most basic emotional responses.
- A classic makes connections. You can study a classic and discover influences from other writers and other great works of literature. Of course, this is partly related to the universal appeal of a classic. But, the classic also is informed by the history of ideas and literature--whether unconsciously or specifically worked into the plot of the text.

So, now we have some background as to how a classic is defined. But, what about the book you are reading? Is it a classic?

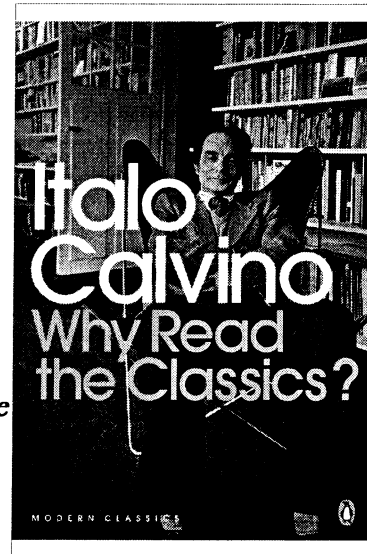


# Italo Calvino's 14 Definitions of What Makes a Classic

by Maria Popova

*“A classic is a work which constantly generates a pulviscular cloud of critical discourse around it, but which always shakes the particles off.”*

A reader recently wrote me to lightly criticize the fact that I called George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* “cult-classics,” suggesting that they instead merit the inferior term “required reading.” So what, exactly, is a classic, and why should we care? Richard J. Smith, in discussing the iconic ancient Chinese *Book of Changes*, offered a four-point checklist definition and Simon Critchley showed us how to read them. But perhaps the most essential question is *why* the classics should be read. That's exactly what beloved Italian writer Italo Calvino addresses in his 1991 book *Why Read the Classics?* (public library) — a sort of “classic” in its own right. In this collection of essays on classical literature, Calvino also produces these 14 definitions of a “classic”:



1. The classics are those books about which you usually hear people saying: 'I'm rereading...!', never 'I'm reading...!'
2. The Classics are those books which constitute a treasured experience for those who have read and loved them; but they remain just as rich an experience for those who reserve the chance to read them for when they are in the best condition to enjoy them.
3. The classics are books which exercise a particular influence, both when they imprint themselves on our imagination as unforgettable, and when they hide in the layers of memory disguised as the individual's or the collective unconscious.
4. A classic is a book which with each rereading offers as much of a sense of discovery as the first reading.
5. A classic is a book which even when we read it for the first time gives the sense of rereading something we have read before.
6. A classic is a book which has never exhausted all it has to say to its readers.
7. The classics are those books which come to us bearing the aura of previous interpretations, and trailing behind them the traces they have left in the culture or cultures (or just in the languages and customs) through which they have passed.

8. A classic is a work which constantly generates a pulverulent cloud of critical discourse around it, but which always shakes the particles off.
9. Classics are books which, the more we think we know them through hearsay, the more original, unexpected, and innovative we find them when we actually read them.
10. A classic is the term given to any book which comes to represent the whole universe, a book on a par with ancient talismans.
11. 'Your' classic is a book to which you cannot remain indifferent, and which helps you define yourself in relation or even in opposition to it.
12. A classic is a work that comes before other classics; but those who have read other classics first immediately recognize its place in the genealogy of classic works.
13. A classic is a work which relegates the noise of the present to a background hum, which at the same time the classics cannot exist without.
14. A classic is a work which persists as a background noise even when a present that is totally incompatible with it holds sway.

Perhaps most poetic is Calvino's 11th definition, bespeaking the idea that there is room for subjectivity even in a term as deterministically universal as a "classic," and offering a witty answer to the nitpicky reader: *"Your' classic is a book to which you cannot remain indifferent, and which helps you define yourself in relation or even in opposition to it."*



# Dramatic Purpose

In a play, each conversation, soliloquy, action, or scene serves a specific purpose; this purpose is called **Dramatic Purpose**.

- 1) **Theme Development:** to suggest, develop and expand a theme in the play
- 2) **Character Development:** to reveal character (traits, motives, opinions), show the development of a character, or establish the relationships between characters
- 3) **Comic Relief:** to provide humorous relief from a previously tense scene
- 4) **Plot Advancement:** to emphasize action and develop the story of the play
- 5) **Background:** to provide the reader/audience with background information about the events occurring before the play begins or events off stage
- 6) **Foreshadow:** to hint at events to come
- 7) **Irony:** i) to make the audience aware of something the characters don't know (**Dramatic Irony**)  
ii) to make the audience aware that something horrible is going to happen, while the characters are **unaware** (**Tragic Irony**—a subtype of **Dramatic Irony**)  
iii) to surprise the audience when the outcome of events is very different than what is expected to happen (**Situational Irony**)
- 8) **Pathos:** To develop the audience's pathos (meaning pity or sympathy) for certain characters
- 9) **Suspense:** To build suspense and excitement about what may happen next in the play
- 10) **Setting:** To develop the setting of the play and/or establish a mood

# Dystopian Literature: Definition and Characteristics

**Utopia:** A place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions.

**Dystopia:** A futuristic, imagined universe in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control. Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

## Characteristics of a Dystopian Society

- Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society.
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society.
- Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.
- Citizens have a fear of the outside world.
- Citizens live in a dehumanized state.
- The natural world is banished and distrusted.
- Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad.
- The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.

## Types of Dystopian Controls

Most dystopian works present a world in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through one or more of the following types of controls:

- Corporate control: One or more large corporations control society through products, advertising, and/or the media. Examples include *Minority Report* and *Running Man*.
- Bureaucratic control: Society is controlled by a mindless bureaucracy through a tangle of red tape, relentless regulations, and incompetent government officials. Examples in film include *Brazil*.
- Technological control: Society is controlled by technology—through computers, robots, and/or scientific means. Examples include *The Matrix*, *The Terminator*, and *I, Robot*.
- Philosophical/religious control: Society is controlled by philosophical or religious ideology often enforced through a dictatorship or theocratic government.

## The Dystopian Protagonist

- often feels trapped and is struggling to escape.
- questions the existing social and political systems.
- believes or feels that something is terribly wrong with the society in which he or she lives.
- helps the audience recognize the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective.

# Building Question Sequences based on Bloom's Taxonomy

## Creating - What else could happen instead

- How do we build relationships where change is possible?
- How can schools do a better job of encouraging students to explore and discover their true identities?
- 

So then... apply new understandings by proposing a new way forward, a new model

## Evaluating - Should it happen

- Is education the most effective way to combat racism?
- Is it acceptable to praise and reward people for making drastic life changes?
- 

Why? See all sides.

Question our own thoughts/ biases/ assumptions/ ideas

## Analysing - Why it happens

- Why does physical difference interfere with interpersonal understanding?
- How can we distinguish between true and superficial transformation?
- 

## Applying - How similar things happen

- How does Caliban's experiences relate to Bob Marley's *Redemption Song*?
- How do the contestants in Top Model show similar transformations?

Connect to the world  
Artifacts /  
real world examples

## Understanding - How it happens

- When does Prospero begin to change his opinions about Caliban?
- How do Eliza's physical changes change her relationship with Higgins?
- 

Questions about the text  
Based on examples and quotations

## Remembering - What happens

- What does Prospero threaten Caliban with in Act 1, scene 2?
- Describe Eliza's performance at the ball.

# Bloom's Taxonomy Question Stems

## Knowledge

- What happened after . . . ?
- How many . . . ?
- Who was it that . . . ?
- Can you name the . . . ?
- Described what happened at . . . ?
- Who spoke to . . . ?
- Can you tell why . . . ?
- Find the meaning of . . . ?
- What is . . . ?
- Which is true or false . . . ?

## Comprehension

- Can you write in your own words . . . ?
- Can you write a brief outline . . . ?
- What do you think might happen next . . . ?
- Who do you think . . . ?
- What was the main idea . . . ?
- Who was the key character . . . ?
- Can you distinguish between . . . ?
- What differences exist between . . . ?
- Can you provide an example of what you mean . . . ?
- Can you provide a definition for . . . ?

## Application

- Do you know another instance where . . . ?
- Could this have happened in . . . ?
- Can you group by characteristics such as . . . ?
- What factors would you change if . . . ?
- Can you apply the method used to some experience of your own . . . ?
- What questions would you ask of . . . ?
- From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about . . . ?
  - Would this information be useful if you had a . . . ?

## Analysis

- Which events could have happened . . . ?
- If . . . happened, what might the ending have been?
- How was this similar to . . . ?
- What was the underlying theme of . . . ?
- What do you see as other possible outcomes?
- Why did . . . changes occur?
- Can you compare your . . . with that presented in . . . ?
- Can you explain what must have happened when . . . ?
- How is . . . similar to . . . ?

- What are some of the problems of . . . ?
- Can you distinguish between . . . ?
- What were some of the motives behind . . . ?
- What was the turning point in the game . . . ?
- What was the problem with . . . ?

### **Synthesis**

- Can you design a . . . to . . . ?
- Why not compose a song about . . . ?
- Can you see a possible solution to . . . ?
- If you had access to all resources how would you deal with . . . ?
- Why don't you devise your own way to deal with . . . ?
- What would happen if . . . ?
- How many ways can you . . . ?
- Can you create new and unusual uses for . . . ?
- Can you write a new recipe for a tasty dish?
- Can you develop a proposal which would . . . ?

### **Evaluation**

- Is there a better solution to . . . ?
- Judge the value of . . . ?
- Can you defend your position about . . . ?
- Do you think . . . is a good or a bad thing?
- How would you have handled . . . ?
- What changes to . . . would you recommend?
- Are you a . . . person?
- How would you feel if . . . ?
- How effective are . . . ?
- What do you think about . . . ?

# Critical Thinking: Elements

The elements of critical thinking are the following:

- ❖ Statement
- ❖ Premise
- ❖ Conclusion
- ❖ Argument

- ✓ **Statement** (claim): An assertion that something is or is not the case (**Thesis**)
- ✓ **Premise**: A statement given in support of another statement (**Controlling Idea**)
- ✓ **Conclusion**: A statement that premises are used to support (**Conclusion** 😊)
  
- ✓ **Argument**: A group of statements in which some of them (the premises) are intended to support another of them (the conclusion) (**Body paragraphs**)

Note:

- The conclusion is what the speaker wants the audience to accept.
- The premises state reasons for the audience to accept that conclusion.
  - Premises provide reason (evidence, grounds) for believing that the conclusion is true.

**Examples of Premises and Conclusions in Action:**

- *Premise*: 'I got sick when I ate there.'
- *Conclusion*: 'You should avoid that restaurant.'
- *Premise*: 'The prime minister is brave.'
- *Conclusion*: 'So, I think he's a good leader.'

So, how do we recognize arguments?

- Look for a conclusion, and look for supporting premises.
- Look for 'indicator words'.
  - Indicator words are words that tend to indicate the presence of an argument.
  - They show the direction of the argument, the flow of logic.

Premise indicator words are followed by a premise.

- Examples of premise indicator words:
  - because, since, in view of the fact, given that, for the reason that, or due to the fact that.
    - 'We should go back to Joe's Diner, **because** we had fun there last week.'
    - 'We can expect Dad to be late, **since** he's always late when he stops at Canadian Tire.'

Conclusion indicator words are followed by a conclusion.

- Examples of conclusion indicator words:
  - therefore, thus, so, consequently, it follows that, we can conclude that, ergo, or hence.
    - 'The quiz is tomorrow, **so** we should study.'
    - 'I got sick last time; **therefore** we shouldn't go back there.'

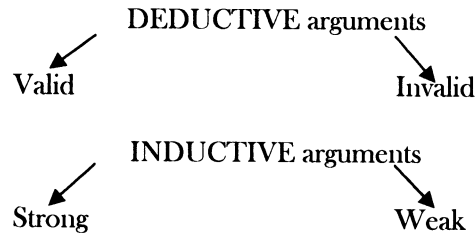
# Aristotle's Principle

*To appropriately evaluate an argument, strive for the most justifiable interpretations of the aims of the argument, and use that to select the most appropriate standards of evaluation.*

There are two kinds of arguments: Deductive and Inductive

**Deductive:** Intended to provide logically conclusive support for its conclusion

**Inductive:** Intended to provide probable support of conclusion



- **Deductive Arguments** try to prove their conclusions with rigorous, inescapable logic. Example:
  - P All humans are mortal.
  - P Socrates is a human.
  - C Therefore, Socrates is mortal.
- **Inductive Arguments** try to show that their conclusions are plausible (likely or probable), given their premises. Example:
  - P So far, every class, the professor has worn a tie.
  - C Therefore, next class, the professor will wear a tie.

An argument can only be evaluated AFTER you have figured out if the argument presented is deductive or inductive.

## DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS

- A *deductive* argument that succeeds is one whose conclusion necessarily follows its premises and is therefore **valid**. “Truth preserving”
- If a *deductive* argument fails at providing conclusive support for its conclusion, then it’s called **invalid**.

### Deductive Validity:

- A valid deductive argument is an argument in which it is impossible for all the premises to be true and the conclusion false. In other words:
  - If the premises are true, the conclusion must be true.
  - The conclusion follows necessarily from the premises.
  - The premises provide logically conclusive grounds for the truth of the premises.
  -

### Deductive Invalidity:

- An invalid deductive argument is an argument whose premises do not guarantee their conclusion. (*i.e.*, they have bad deductive **structure/form**.)
- Notice, in the following argument, even though the premises and conclusion are true, it is invalid:
  - P All lions are animals.
  - P Simba is an animal.
  - C Therefore, Simba is a lion.

- What if “Simba” here referred to your pet parakeet? The premises would still be true, and yet the conclusion would be false.
- If you get rid of your assumption (which is not in the argument) that we are talking about the fictional film character (Simba), the invalidity becomes clear. Let’s use a different name.
  - P All lions are animals.
  - P Athena is an animal.
  - C Therefore, Athena is a lion.

### Deductive Validity ≠ Truth (Deductive validity does not equal truth)

- Valid arguments: the validity of an argument **has nothing to do with the truth of its premises**.
  - Valid argument:
    - P All squares are circles.
    - P All circles are triangles.
    - C Therefore, all squares are triangles.
- Valid’ doesn’t mean ‘true’.
- ‘Valid’ means the argument has good logical structure/form.
- A valid argument is such that if its premises are true, its conclusion **must** be true.

### Deductive Arguments: validity

ASK YOURSELF: **IF** the premises were true, would the conclusion follow with strict logical necessity?

- If “yes”: valid deductive argument (only one possible, logical answer)
- If “no”: invalid deductive argument

All dogs are pets  
 All pets are living things  
 -----  
 All dogs are living things

All philosophers are nerds.  
 MacDonald is a philosopher.  
 So, MacDonald must be a nerd.

All human beings are mortal  
 Jay-Z is a human being  
 -----  
 Jay-Z is mortal

I’m taller than Aimee.  
 Aimee is taller than Melissa.  
 So, I’m taller than Melissa.

All Catholics support abortion  
 Optimus Prime is Catholic  
 Optimus Prime supports abortion

If you drove through town, you drove right past my house.  
 And you did drive right through town.  
 So, you must have driven right past me house!

- Joe’s birthday is exactly one week after Mark’s, and Mark’s is on May 10. Hence Joe’s is on May 17.
- Since Christmas Day is always on Thursday, it follows that the day after Christmas is always a Friday.
- Since John loves Nancy, and Nancy loves Peter, it follows necessarily that John loves Peter.

### Telling the difference between Deductive and Inductive Arguments

- Indicator Words:
  - Deductive: *certainly, definitely, this entails that, conclusively*
  - Inductive: *probably, likely, one would expect, odds are, reasonable to assume*



# INDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS

Mother: "I left Katy in the backyard playing. He has never wandered away on her own; and the gate is always locked. But she's gone, and the gate has been forced open. I think she has been abducted! So please call the police!"

- P** She has never wandered away on her own  
**P** The gate is always locked  
**P** She is gone and the gate has been forced open  
**C** **I THINK** she has been abducted. Call the police.

## Inductive Strength

- Strong inductive argument: an inductive argument the premises of which, if true, make the conclusion likely or probable. *i.e.*:
  - If the premises are true, the conclusion is *probably* true.
  - The premises provide *probable*, but not logically conclusive grounds for the truth of the conclusion.
- Common form:
  - Most b's are p.
  - X is a b.
  - Therefore, (probably) X is p.
- Example:
  - All recent presidents have been college grads.
  - Therefore the next president will be a college grad.

## Inductive Weakness

- Weak inductive argument: inductive argument, the premises of which, do not provide good evidence for its conclusion.
- Example:

**P** All previous popes have been men.  
**C** Therefore, probably the next pope will be female.

## Induction and Premise Truth

- The inductive strength or weakness of an argument *has nothing to do with the truth or falsity of its premises*.
- Example: Inductive strength with false premises:

**P** All previous presidents have been female.  
**C** Therefore, the next president will be female.
- Example: Inductive weakness with true premises:

**P** Most presidents have been married.  
**C** Therefore the next president will probably be male.

## Inductive Strength Comes in Degrees

- This argument...

**P** The last 5 presidents were male  
**C** Therefore the next president will be male.
- ...is weaker than this one:

**P** All the presidents have been male  
**C** Therefore the next president will be male.

  - ✓ Recall, validity doesn't come in degrees. A deductive argument is either valid or invalid. No two valid arguments differ in "how valid" they are.
  - ✓ But some inductively strong arguments are inductively stronger than others.

# The Essay

Adapted from *The Oxford's Guide to Understanding Language, Literature, and Media*

## Understanding Form

The form of a piece of writing refers to how the text is structured. The essay follows a standard structure: The **introduction** establishes the topic and the positions to be taken in relation to it (the thesis). The **body** develops the thesis through supporting arguments. The **conclusion** sums up the key ideas of the essay and leaves the reader with a sense of importance of the topic.

## Formal and Informal Essays

Essays fall into two broad categories: **formal** and **informal**. The informal essay is often called the familiar or personal essay.

Characteristic	Informal Essay	Formal Essay
<b>Author's Viewpoint</b>	Usually uses first person; directly addresses reader	Usually uses third-person pronoun
<b>Subject/Content: Sources of Evidence</b>	Frequently drawn from life of the writer and everyday events	More commonly drawn from shared historical events in literature or other forms of knowledge
<b>Tone</b>	Frequently more personal and subjective; may be ironic, amusing, thoughtful, angry or serious	Tends to be removed from the subject and appears to be objective; may be ironic, amusing, thoughtful, angry, serious, but tend to hold emotions in check and express concerns through strong arguments and powerful rhetorical devices
<b>Structure</b>	Appears to be more loosely structured	Follows fairly rigid structure that focuses on the development of one clear argument at a time to support a clearly stated thesis
<b>Location of Thesis</b>	May appear anywhere in the essay; may not be explicitly stated	Usually stated explicitly, generally located in the first or second paragraph of the essay
<b>Style</b>	A number of stylistic devices used to engage the reader; vocabulary tends to be drawn from everyday usage	A number of stylistic devices used to engage the reader; vocabulary tends to be more academic and may contain some unfamiliar words
<b>Purpose</b>	Entertainment; gentle reflection	Provokes thought and sometimes action

# The Four Types of Essays

Be it formal or informal, essays can be divided into four basic types depending on the authors purpose. These purposes are, to explain, to recount a story, to argue for a position, or to persuade.

The **expository essay (explanation)** describes or explains a topic. For example, an essay entitled “The care and Maintenance of a Bicycle” would be an expository essay.

The **narrative essay (recounting)** uses a single well-told story as the basis for drawing a conclusion or making a statement of opinion. For example, “My Most Exciting Bicycling Adventure” would be a narrative essay.

The **argumentative essay** presents a reasoned series of arguments in support of a position. For example, an essay entitled “Cars or Scooters: Which Is the More Efficient and Safe Method of Urban Transport?” would be an argumentative essay.

The **persuasive essay** combines reasoned arguments with the emotion required to persuade the reader to take action. For example, an essay entitled “Save the Ozone and Stimulate Your Heart: Leave Your Cars at Home and Bicycle” would be a persuasive essay.

N.B. The purpose of an essay will often determine its form, or structure. In argumentative writing for example, the author may present both sides of an issue in a measured way before making a judgment, or may be concerned only with building up the evidence on one side.

## Structural Components of the Essay

Beginning and ending are the most important parts of the essay because: the reader remembers these the best; they contain the ideas you want to emphasize; the beginning is what draws the reader in; the ending leaves the reader with a strong final image, thought, or insight.

Beginning/Ending	Strategy Example
<b>Illustrative anecdote:</b> a brief recounting of an incident that illustrates or introduces the point you made or are about to make	In his essay “How to Live to Be 200” Stephen Leacock uses the anecdote of Jiggins, the health nut, to introduce his criticism of the overly health conscious.
<b>Shocking statistic:</b>	“... powerful industries – the \$33-billion-dollar-a-year diet industry, the \$20-billion cosmetics industry, the \$300-million cosmetic surgery industry, and the \$7-billion pornography industry – have arisen from the capital made out of unconscious anxieties, and are in turn able, though their influence on mass culture, to use, stimulate, and reinforce the hallucination in a rising, economic spiral.” (Naomi Wolf, <i>The Beauty Myth</i> )
<b>Bold, direct statement:</b> a simple statement of belief or opinion that frequently challenges a commonly held assumption	“A student often leaves high school today without any sense of language as a structure.” (Northrop Frye, “Don’t You Think It’s Time to Start Thinking?”)

# Developing an Argument

The development of arguments is the main structural component of the essay. Employing different methods can indicate a sophisticated and lively thinking process.

Development Method	Definition	Example
<b>Analogy</b>	Compares something less familiar with something more familiar in order to help the reader understand the former.	Comparing a computer circuit board to a superhighway helps those less familiar with computers to understand that the circuit board is a busy communication highway, containing set routes with junctions for going in different directions.
<b>Cause-effect</b>	Explains why something happened by showing the direct causal relationship between two or more things.	Edward Roussel in "Letter from Prison" argues that "to think that punishment causes redemption is a trap."
<b>Definition</b>	Explored in greater depth the significance associated with the term or concept under consideration in order to give as a full picture as possible of its characteristics.	Susan Sontag defines "beauty" (in her essay of the same name) by examining the ancient Greek and Christian views of beauty, the language used to describe men's versus women's beauty, internal and external beauty, and the significance of the absence of beauty in the world.
<b>Example</b>	Illustrates a point with reference to a personal or shared experience, an allusion, statistics, analogy, or quote from an authority.	In his essay "Were Dinosaurs Dumb?" Stephen Jay Gould cites Jack chopping down the beanstalk and David smiting Goliath with a slingshot as examples of metaphors and fairy tales that show how "slow wit is the tragic flaw of a giant."
<b>Comparison</b>	Points out similarities and differences between two or more ideas, things, people, etc.; point-by-point comparison in a more effective organization in that similarities and differences are clearly pointed out.	Comparing King Lear and Hamlet as tragic heroes reinforces the characteristics of the Shakespearean tragic hero while pointing out specific differences in their tragic flaws.
<b>Contrast</b>	Points out differences between two characters or ideas; because this method can sharpen and clarify an argument it is frequently more powerful than comparison.	By contrasting the openly discriminatory laws and practices against women with what couldn't be (and isn't) said to any minority, Doris Anderson in "The 51% Solution" argues that women are routinely discriminated against.
<b>Categorize/Classify</b>	Places together under a single heading concepts or things that share sufficient key characteristics as to be considered similar.	Kildare Dobbs in his essay "Canada's Regions" classifies the people each region of Canada by their character.

# Rhetorical Devices

To craft a work of prose or poetry, the author applies particular language techniques and structures, known as rhetorical devices. Knowledge of the nature and effect of these devices is critical to effective writing and reading - a careful reader will recognize how the author is using language and consider why they have used the devices they have. Learn to recognize them and try using them in your own writing.

Rhetorical Device	Examples
<b>Abnormal Word Order</b> gives variety and emphasis to your writing by changing the usual subject-verb sentence patter.	normal word order (subject-verb): "The actor's worst nightmares stood laughing at him from the shadows." abnormal word order (verb-subject): "Laughing at him from the shadows stood the actor's worst nightmare."
<b>Allegory</b> is a narrative in which the characters and sometimes the setting represent general concepts and ideas.	fables in which personified animals are used allegorically to teach lessons of human conduct (e.g., "The Hare and the Tortoise")
<b>Alliteration</b> draws attention to a string of words through repetition of their initial sounds.	"As Frankenstein, Boris Karloff rambled, raged, and roared."
<b>Allusion</b> is an indirect reference to a well-known event, person, thing, place, or quality. By suggestion, it may enhance the significance of a poetic image or prose passage.	T.S. Eliot's <i>The Wasteland</i> alludes to the Garden of Eden after the fall (and includes many other allusions to mythology, the Bible).
<b>Analogy</b> helps the reader understand something unfamiliar by comparing it to something well-known.	Comparing an anthill to an urban centre helps to convey the fact that anthills are heavily populated, busy, and have regular patterns of movement.
A <b>balanced sentence</b> expresses two or more equal and parallel ideas.	"Many TV actors work hard all through the season; they play in films all through the hiatus."
<b>Climactic Word Order</b> presents several facts in order from least to most important.	"The young politician's career rise was meteoric; after beginning as a municipal councillor, she became mayor, and three short years later a Member of Parliament."
<b>Denotation</b> is the thing or situation to which the word specifically refers; <b>Connotation</b> is the associated meanings it implies or suggests.	Home <b>denotes</b> the place where a person lives, but <b>connotes</b> intimacy, privacy, coziness.
<b>Description</b> is based on observation, imagination or experience. It presents the characteristics, features, qualities, and sensations necessary for recognition, understanding or reconstruction.	"Hemingway had on a red plaid wool shirt, a figured wool necktie, a tan wool sweater-vest, a brown tweed jacket tight across the back and with sleeves too short for his arms, gray flannel slacks, Argyle socks, and loafers, and he looked bearish, cordial, and constricted. His hair, which was very long in back, was gray, except at the temples, where it was white; his mustache was white, and he had a ragged half-inch, full white beard. There was a bump about the size of a walnut over his left eye. He had on steel-rimmed spectacles, with a piece of paper under the nose-piece. He was in no hurry to get to Manhattan." (Lillian Ross, "How Do You Like It Now, Gentlemen?" <i>The New Yorker</i> , May 13, 1950)
<b>Exaggeration (Hyperbole)</b> emphasizes a fact.	"He was going to live the life of a tree or vegetable." (University of Toronto Convocation Address by George Faludy, 1978)

<p><b>Examples</b> backup or clarify a statement by providing proof, precedent, a model or a parallel case.</p>	<p>An extract from “<i>The Bluest Eye</i>” by Tony Morrison :“I talk about how I did not plant the seeds too deeply, how it was the fault of the earth, our land, our town. I even think now that the land of the entire country was hostile to marigolds that year. This soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers. Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live.” (206)</p>
<p><b>Eyewitness Account</b> is a personal description or response, volunteered or requested, from individuals physically present at an event, past or present.</p>	<p>It's day 15 [January 10, 2005] since the disaster, and still there are vast areas where exposed bodies can be seen lying around, decaying. Just cleaning up, picking up the bodies, remains the biggest challenge.</p>
<p><b>Foreshadowing</b> suggests or hints at events or developments "before" they happen; it can be used to emphasize a mood or tone as well.</p>	<p>When Winston dreams he will meet O'Brien in the place with no darkness, Orwell is foreshadowing his trip to the Ministry of Love.</p>
<p><b>Image / Imagery</b> appeals to one or more of the senses by creating a vivid impression through the use of concrete details, adjectives, and figures of speech (e.g., metaphor, simile, personification).</p>	<p>The beauty of the daisy is conveyed using imagery such as “a nun demure” and “a silver shield with boss of gold.” (William Wordsworth, “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”)</p>
<p><b>Verbal Irony</b> says the opposite of what is meant. Sarcasm and equivocation are types.</p>	<p>Walking through the rainstorm, Sam exclaimed, “What a lovely day.”</p>
<p><b>Dramatic Irony</b> reveals to the reader or audience information about a character's situation of which the character is not aware.</p>	<p>The audience knows that Romeo is a Capulet before Juliet does.</p>
<p><b>Situational Irony</b> occurs when unexpected events or consequences occur.</p>	<p>By trying to stop the duel between Mercutio and Tybalt, Romeo unexpectedly makes the feud grow worse.</p>
<p><b>Metaphor</b> compares two things without the use of <i>like</i> or <i>as</i>; it is more subtle than a simile and thus requires more interpretation.</p>	<p>“Tyger! Tyger! burning bright!” (from William Blake’s poem “Tyger! Tyger!”)</p>
<p><b>Mood</b> creates in the reader the desired state of mind and emotions. It is often developed through our visual and physical response to the environment and to past experiences.</p>	<p>Charles Dickens creates a calm and peaceful mood in his novel “<i>Pickwick Papers</i>”: “The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly on.” The depiction of idyllic scenery imparts a serene and non-violent mood to the readers.</p>
<p><b>Opposites</b> contrast two opposing ideas.</p>	<p>“Clint Eastwood, a star in front of the camera, has also had a successful career behind the camera as a director.”</p>
<p><b>Onomatopoeia</b> draws attention to the sound of the word by imitating or suggesting sounds that correspond to its meaning.</p>	<p>“buzz,” “splash,” “slurp”</p>
<p><b>Oxymoron</b> places words that mean the opposite of one another side by side so that they create a new meaning.</p>	<p>“jumbo shrimp,” “wise fool”</p>
<p><b>Parallel Structure (Parallelism)</b> repeats specific words, phrases, or clauses in a series, giving emphasis to key words and making them memorable.</p>	<p>Abraham Lincoln’s “government of the people, by the people, for the people” (preposition, definite article, and noun are repeated in a series)</p>
<p>A <b>periodic sentence</b> withholds an important part of the sentence until the end so that it doesn’t make complete sense until the last word is read.</p>	<p>“Whether playing a young wild adventurer, a fugitive from the law, or a U.S. president, there is one actor whose films always make money— Harrison Ford.”</p>
<p><b>Personification</b> gives human traits to an inanimate object or animal.</p>	<p>“The fingers of ice scraped the window.”</p>

A <b>pun</b> is a play on words with the same sound but different meanings.	“Sticks float. The would.”
<b>Repetition</b> is used for emphasis and rhythm.	“It was a strange night, a hushed night, a moonless night, and all you could do was go to a movie.”
<b>Reversals (Chiasmus)</b> make a balanced sentence even more memorable by repeating the words in reverse order.	“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.” (John F. Kennedy)
A <b>rhetorical question</b> is one whose answer is already known or implied.	“Can anyone deny that the microchip has revolutionized communication?”
<b>Rhyme</b> makes two or more words memorable by having endings that sound the same.	“With <b>might</b> and <b>right</b> on his side, he approached the challenge.”
<b>Rhythm</b> is the movement implicit in an arrangement of words, e.g., a regular beat deriving from the patterns of stress on the syllables, a rising or a falling inflection, a series of phrases that move quickly or slowly.	“the moment comes ... bringing back all I have recently experienced to be explored and slowly understood, when I can converse again with my hidden powers, and so grow, and so be renewed, till death do us part.” (Mary Sarton, “The Rewards of Solitary Life”)
A <b>sentence fragment</b> places emphasis on key words to create an overall effect, such as humour or suspense.	“A cold room. A lonely room. A bare room. No place to spend twenty years of a life.”
A <b>simile</b> points out a similarity between two unlike things using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> .	“The cold stabbed like a driven nail through the parka’s fold.”
A <b>symbol</b> is an object or action that represents something other than what it is.	The green light at the end of the dock in <i>The Great Gatsby</i> represents the verdant hope of the new world and is therefore associated with the American Dream.
<b>Personal Symbolism</b> is a system for investing things or objects with meaning so that they come to represent a specific thought or idea	In <i>Slaughterhouse Five</i> , Billy sees the colours blue and ivory as representing sacrifice and loss.
General or <b>Universal Symbolism</b> uses traditional signs with an accepted meaning	My love is a red, red rose.
<b>Understatement (Litotes)</b> creates the reverse effect (and adds a touch of irony) by making the fact seem less significant.	“Bruce Willis’s onscreen characters frequently find themselves in a bit of a jam.”

Excerpt from *Canadian Students’ Guide to Language, Literature, and Media*, Oxford University Press, 2001.

## tone – speaker’s attitude

POSITIVE TONE WORDS	NEUTRAL (+, -, or neutral)	NEGATIVE TONE WORDS
admiring	commanding	abhorring
adoring	direct	acerbic
affectionate	impartial	ambiguous
appreciative	indirect	ambivalent
approving	meditative	angry
bemused	objective	annoyed
benevolent	questioning	antagonistic
blithe	speculative	anxious
calm	unambiguous	apathetic
casual	unconcerned	apprehensive
celebratory	understated	belligerent
cheerful		bewildered
comforting		biting
comic		bitter
compassionate		blunt
complimentary		bossy
conciliatory		cold
confident		conceited
contented		condescending
delightful		confused
earnest		contemptuous
ebullient		curt
ecstatic		cynical
effusive		demanding
elated		depressed
empathetic		derisive
encouraging		derogatory
euphoric		desolate
excited		despairing
exhilarated		desperate
expectant		detached
facetious		diabolic
fervent		disappointed
flippant		disliking
forthright		disrespectful
friendly		doubtful
funny		embarrassed
gleeful		enraged
gushy		evasive
happy		fatalistic
		fearful
		forceful
		foreboding
		frantic
		frightened
		frustrated
		furious
		gloomy
		grave
		greedy
		grim
		harsh
		haughty
		holier-than-thou
		hopeless
		hostile
		impatient
		incredulous
		indifferent
		indignant
		inflammatory
		insecure
		insolent
		irreverent
		lethargic
		melancholy
		mischievous
		miserable
		mocking
		mournful
		nervous
		ominous
		outraged
		paranoid
		pathetic
		patronizing
		pedantic
		pensive
		pessimistic
		pretentious
		psychotic
		resigned
		reticent
		sarcastic
		sardonic
		scornful
		self-deprecating
		selfish
		serious
		severe
		sinister
		skeptical
		sly
		solemn
		somber
		stern
		stolid
		stressful
		strident
		suspicious
		tense
		threatening
		tragic
		uncertain
		uneasy
		unfriendly
		unsympathetic
		upset
		violent
		wry



## mood – emotional effect that the text creates for the audience

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### POSITIVE MOOD WORDS

amused	jubilant
awed	liberating
bouncy	light-hearted
calm	loving
cheerful	mellow
chipper	nostalgic
confident	optimistic
contemplative	passionate
content	peaceful
determined	playful
dignified	pleased
dreamy	refreshed
ecstatic	rejuvenated
empowered	relaxed
energetic	relieved
enlightened	satiated
enthralled	satisfied
excited	sentimental
exhilarated	silly
flirty	surprised
giddy	sympathetic
grateful	thankful
harmonious	thoughtful
hopeful	touched
hyper	trustful
idyllic	vivacious
joyous	warm
	welcoming

### NEGATIVE MOOD WORDS

aggravated	insidious
annoyed	intimidated
anxious	irate
apathetic	irritated
apprehensive	jealous
barren	lethargic
brooding	lonely
cold	melancholic
confining	merciless
confused	moody
cranky	morose
crushed	nauseated
cynical	nervous
depressed	nightmarish
desolate	numb
disappointed	overwhelmed
discontented	painful
distressed	pensive
drained	pessimistic
dreary	predatory
embarrassed	rejected
enraged	restless
envious	scared
exhausted	serious
fatalistic	sick
foreboding	somber
frustrated	stressed
futile	suspenseful
gloomy	tense
grumpy	terrifying
haunting	threatening
heartbroken	uncomfortable
hopeless	vengeful
hostile	violent
indifferent	worried
infuriated	

# Argumentation and Logical Fallacies

Most academic writing tasks require you to make an argument—that is, to present reasons for a particular claim or interpretation you are putting forward. You may have been told that you need to make your arguments more logical or stronger. And you may have worried that you simply aren't a logical person or wondered what it means for an argument to be strong. Learning to make the best arguments you can is an ongoing process, but it isn't impossible: "Being logical" is something *anyone* can do, with practice.

Each argument you make is composed of *premises* (this is a term for statements that express your reasons or evidence) that are arranged in the right way to support your *conclusion* (the main claim or interpretation you are offering). You can make your arguments stronger by **using good premises** (ones you have good reason to believe are both true and relevant to the issue at hand), making sure your premises **provide good support for your conclusion** (and not some other conclusion, or no conclusion at all), checking that you have **addressed the most important or relevant aspects** of the issue (that is, that your premises and conclusion focus on what is really important to the issue), and **not making claims that are so strong or sweeping that you can't really support them**.

You also need to be sure that you present all of your ideas in an orderly fashion that readers can follow.

This handout describes some ways in which arguments often fail to do the things listed above; these failings are called fallacies. If you're having trouble developing your argument, check to see if a fallacy is part of the problem.

## What are fallacies?

Fallacies are defects that weaken arguments. By learning to look for them in your own and others' writing, you can strengthen your ability to evaluate the arguments you make, read, and hear. It is important to realize two things about fallacies: first, fallacious arguments are very, very common and can be quite persuasive, at least to the casual reader or listener. You can find dozens of examples of fallacious reasoning in newspapers, advertisements, and other sources. Second, it is sometimes hard to evaluate whether an argument is fallacious. An argument might be very weak, somewhat weak, somewhat strong, or very strong. An argument that has several stages or parts might have some strong sections and some weak ones. The goal of this handout, then, is not to teach you how to label arguments as fallacious or fallacy-free, but to help you look critically at your own arguments and move them away from the "weak" and toward the "strong" end of the continuum.

## So what do fallacies look like?

For each fallacy listed, there is a definition or explanation, an example, and a tip on how to avoid committing the fallacy in your own arguments.

## 1. Hasty Generalizations

**Definition:** Making assumptions about a whole group or range of cases based on a sample that is inadequate (usually because it is atypical or too small). Stereotypes about people ("librarians are shy and smart," "wealthy people are snobs," etc.) are a common example of the principle underlying hasty generalization.

**Example:** "My roommate said her philosophy class was hard, and the one I'm in is hard, too. All philosophy classes must be hard!" Two people's experiences are, in this case, not enough on which to base a conclusion.

**Tip:** Ask yourself what kind of "sample" you're using: Are you relying on the opinions or experiences of just a few people, or your own experience in just a few situations? If so, consider whether you need more evidence, or perhaps a less sweeping conclusion. (Notice that in the example, the more modest conclusion "*Some* philosophy classes are hard for *some* students" would not be a hasty generalization.)

## 2. Missing the Point

**Definition:** The premises of an argument do support a particular conclusion—but not the conclusion that the arguer actually draws.

**Example:** "The seriousness of a punishment should match the seriousness of the crime. Right now, the punishment for drunk driving may simply be a fine. But drunk driving is a very serious crime that can kill innocent people. So the death penalty should be the punishment for drunk driving." The argument actually supports several conclusions—"The punishment for drunk driving should be very serious," in particular—but it doesn't support the claim that the death penalty, specifically, is warranted.

**Tip:** Separate your premises from your conclusion. Looking at the premises, ask yourself what conclusion an objective person would reach after reading them. Looking at your conclusion, ask yourself what kind of evidence would be required to support such a conclusion, and then see if you've actually given that evidence. Missing the point often occurs when a sweeping or extreme conclusion is being drawn, so be especially careful if you know you're claiming something big.

**3. Post hoc (also called false cause)** "*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*," which translates as "after this, therefore because of this."

**Definition:** Assuming that because B comes after A, A caused B. Of course, sometimes one event really does cause another one that comes later—for example, if I register for a class, and my name later appears on the roll, it's true that the first event caused the one that came later. But sometimes two events that seem related in time aren't really related as cause and event. That is, correlation isn't the same thing as causation.

**Examples:** "President Jones raised taxes, and then the rate of violent crime went up. Jones is responsible for the rise in crime." The increase in taxes might or might not be one factor in the rising crime rates, but the argument hasn't shown us that one caused the other.

**Tip:** To avoid the *post hoc* fallacy, the arguer would need to give us some explanation of the process by which the tax increase is supposed to have produced higher crime rates. And that's what you should do to avoid committing this fallacy: If you say that A causes B, you should have something more to say about how A caused B than just that A came first and B came later.

#### 4. Slippery Slope

**Definition:** The arguer claims that a sort of chain reaction, usually ending in some dire consequence, will take place, but there's really not enough evidence for that assumption. The arguer asserts that if we take even one step onto the "slippery slope," we will end up sliding all the way to the bottom; he or she assumes we can't stop partway down the hill.

**Example:** "Animal experimentation reduces our respect for life. If we don't respect life, we are likely to be more and more tolerant of violent acts like war and murder. Soon our society will become a battlefield in which everyone constantly fears for their lives. It will be the end of civilization. To prevent this terrible consequence, we should make animal experimentation illegal right now." Since animal experimentation has been legal for some time and civilization has not yet ended, it seems particularly clear that this chain of events won't necessarily take place. Even if we believe that experimenting on animals reduces respect for life, and loss of respect for life makes us more tolerant of violence, that may be the spot on the hillside at which things stop—we may not slide all the way down to the end of civilization. And so we have not yet been given sufficient reason to accept the arguer's conclusion that we must make animal experimentation illegal right now.

Like *post hoc*, slippery slope can be a tricky fallacy to identify, since sometimes a chain of events really can be predicted to follow from a certain action. Here's an example that doesn't seem fallacious: "If I fail English 101, I won't be able to graduate. If I don't graduate, I probably won't be able to get a good job, and I may very well end up doing temp work or flipping burgers for the next year."

#### 5. Weak analogy

**Definition:** Many arguments rely on an analogy between two or more objects, ideas, or situations. If the two things that are being compared aren't really alike in the relevant respects, the analogy is a weak one, and the argument that relies on it commits the fallacy of weak analogy.

**Example:** "Guns are like hammers—they're both tools with metal parts that could be used to kill someone. And yet it would be ridiculous to restrict the purchase of hammers—so restrictions on purchasing guns are equally ridiculous." While guns and hammers do share certain features, these features (having metal parts, being tools, and being potentially useful for violence) are not the ones at stake in deciding whether to restrict guns. Rather, we

restrict guns because they can easily be used to kill large numbers of people at a distance. This is a feature hammers do not share—it would be hard to kill a crowd with a hammer. Thus, the analogy is weak, and so is the argument based on it.

If you think about it, you can make an analogy of some kind between almost any two things in the world: "My paper is like a mud puddle because they both get bigger when it rains (I work more when I'm stuck inside) and they're both kind of murky." So the mere fact that you can draw an analogy between two things doesn't prove much, by itself.

Arguments by analogy are often used in discussing abortion—arguers frequently compare fetuses with adult human beings, and then argue that treatment that would violate the rights of an adult human being also violates the rights of fetuses. Whether these arguments are good or not depends on the strength of the analogy: do adult humans and fetuses share the properties that give adult humans rights? If the property that matters is having a human genetic code or the potential for a life full of human experiences, adult humans and fetuses do share that property, so the argument and the analogy are strong; if the property is being self-aware, rational, or able to survive on one's own, adult humans and fetuses don't share it, and the analogy is weak.

**Tip:** Identify what properties are important to the claim you're making, and see whether the two things you're comparing both share those properties.

## 6. Appeal to Authority

**Definition:** Often we add strength to our arguments by referring to respected sources or authorities and explaining their positions on the issues we're discussing. If, however, we try to get readers to agree with us simply by impressing them with a famous name or by appealing to a supposed authority who really isn't much of an expert, we commit the fallacy of appeal to authority.

**Example:** "We should abolish the death penalty. Many respected people, such as actor Guy Handsome, have publicly stated their opposition to it." While Guy Handsome may be an authority on matters having to do with acting, there's no particular reason why anyone should be moved by his political opinions—he is probably no more of an authority on the death penalty than the person writing the paper.

**Tip:** There are two easy ways to avoid committing appeal to authority: First, make sure that the authorities you cite are experts on the subject you're discussing. Second, rather than just saying "Dr. Authority believes X, so we should believe it, too," try to explain the reasoning or evidence that the authority used to arrive at his or her opinion. That way, your readers have more to go on than a person's reputation. It also helps to choose authorities who are perceived as fairly neutral or reasonable, rather than people who will be perceived as biased.

## 7. Ad Populum

**Definition:** The Latin name of this fallacy means "to the people." There are several versions of the *ad populum* fallacy, but what they all have in common is that in them, the arguer takes advantage of the desire most people have to be liked and to fit in with others and uses that desire to try to get the audience to accept his or her argument. One of the most common versions is the bandwagon fallacy, in which the arguer tries to convince the audience to do or believe something because everyone else (supposedly) does.

**Example:** "Gay marriages are just immoral. 70% of Americans think so!" While the opinion of most Americans might be relevant in determining what laws we should have, it certainly doesn't determine what is moral or immoral: there was a time where a substantial number of Americans were in favor of segregation, but their opinion was not evidence that segregation was moral. The arguer is trying to get us to agree with the conclusion by appealing to our desire to fit in with other Americans.

**Tip:** Make sure that you aren't recommending that your readers believe your conclusion because everyone else believes it, all the cool people believe it, people will like you better if you believe it, and so forth. Keep in mind that the popular opinion is not always the right one.

## 9. Appeal to Pity

**Definition:** The appeal to pity takes place when an arguer tries to get people to accept a conclusion by making them feel sorry for someone.

**Examples:** "I know the exam is graded based on performance, but you should give me an A. My cat has been sick, my car broke down, and I've had a cold, so it was really hard for me to study!" The conclusion here is "You should give me an A." But the criteria for getting an A have to do with learning and applying the material from the course; the principle the arguer wants us to accept (people who have a hard week deserve A's) is clearly unacceptable. The information the arguer has given might *feel* relevant and might even get the audience to consider the conclusion—but the information isn't logically relevant, and so the argument is fallacious. Here's another example: "It's wrong to tax corporations—think of all the money they give to charity, and of the costs they already pay to run their businesses!"

**Tip:** Make sure that you aren't simply trying to get your audience to agree with you by making them feel sorry for someone.

## 10. Appeal to Ignorance

**Definition:** In the appeal to ignorance, the arguer basically says, "Look, there's no conclusive evidence on the issue at hand. Therefore, you should accept my conclusion on this issue."

**Example:** "People have been trying for centuries to prove that God exists. But no one has

yet been able to prove it. Therefore, God does not exist." Here's an opposing argument that commits the same fallacy: "People have been trying for years to prove that God does not exist. But no one has yet been able to prove it. Therefore, God exists." In each case, the arguer tries to use the lack of evidence as support for a positive claim about the truth of a conclusion. There is one situation in which doing this is not fallacious: if qualified researchers have used well-thought-out methods to search for something for a long time, they haven't found it, and it's the kind of thing people ought to be able to find, then the fact that they haven't found it constitutes some evidence that it doesn't exist.

**Tip:** Look closely at arguments where you point out a lack of evidence and then draw a conclusion from that lack of evidence.

## 11. Straw Man

**Definition:** One way of making our own arguments stronger is to anticipate and respond in advance to the arguments that an opponent might make. In the straw man fallacy, the arguer sets up a weak version of the opponent's position and tries to score points by knocking it down. But just as being able to knock down a straw man (like a scarecrow) isn't very impressive, defeating a watered-down version of your opponent's argument isn't very impressive either.

**Example:** "Feminists want to ban all pornography and punish everyone who looks at it! But such harsh measures are surely inappropriate, so the feminists are wrong: porn and its fans should be left in peace." The feminist argument is made weak by being overstated. In fact, most feminists do not propose an outright "ban" on porn or any punishment for those who merely view it or approve of it; often, they propose some restrictions on particular things like child porn, or propose to allow people who are hurt by porn to sue publishers and producers—not viewers—for damages. So the arguer hasn't really scored any points; he or she has just committed a fallacy.

**Tip:** Be charitable to your opponents. State their arguments as strongly, accurately, and sympathetically as possible. If you can knock down even the best version of an opponent's argument, then you've really accomplished something.

## 12. Red Herring

**Definition:** Partway through an argument, the arguer goes off on a tangent, raising a side issue that distracts the audience from what's really at stake. Often, the arguer never returns to the original issue.

**Example:** "Grading this exam on a curve would be the most fair thing to do. After all, classes go more smoothly when the students and the professor are getting along well." Let's try our premise-conclusion outlining to see what's wrong with this argument:

Premise: Classes go more smoothly when the students and the professor are getting along well.

Conclusion: Grading this exam on a curve would be the most fair thing to do.

When we lay it out this way, it's pretty obvious that the arguer went off on a tangent—the fact that something helps people get along doesn't necessarily make it more fair; fairness and justice sometimes require us to do things that cause conflict. But the audience may feel like the issue of teachers and students agreeing is important and be distracted from the fact that the arguer has not given any evidence as to why a curve would be fair.

**Tip:** Try laying your premises and conclusion out in an outline-like form. How many issues do you see being raised in your argument? Can you explain how each premise supports the conclusion?

### 13. False Dichotomy

**Definition:** In false dichotomy, the arguer sets up the situation so it looks like there are only two choices. The arguer then eliminates one of the choices, so it seems that we are left with only one option: the one the arguer wanted us to pick in the first place. But often there are really many different options, not just two—and if we thought about them all, we might not be so quick to pick the one the arguer recommends.

**Example:** "Caldwell Hall is in bad shape. Either we tear it down and put up a new building, or we continue to risk students' safety. Obviously we shouldn't risk anyone's safety, so we must tear the building down." The argument neglects to mention the possibility that we might repair the building or find some way to protect students from the risks in question—for example, if only a few rooms are in bad shape, perhaps we shouldn't hold classes in those rooms.

**Tip:** Examine your own arguments: if you're saying that we have to choose between just two options, is that really so? Or are there other alternatives you haven't mentioned? If there are other alternatives, don't just ignore them—explain why they, too, should be ruled out. Although there's no formal name for it, assuming that there are only three options, four options, etc. when really there are more is similar to false dichotomy and should also be avoided.



## **So how do I find fallacies in my own writing?**

Here are some general tips for finding fallacies in your own arguments:

**Pretend you disagree with the conclusion you're defending.** What parts of the argument would now seem fishy to you? What parts would seem easiest to attack? Give special attention to strengthening those parts.

**List your main points;** under each one, **list the evidence** you have for it. Seeing your claims and evidence laid out this way may make you realize that you have no good evidence for a particular claim, or it may help you look more critically at the evidence you're using.

**Learn which types of fallacies you're especially prone to,** and be careful to check for them in your work. Some writers make lots of appeals to authority; others are more likely to rely on weak analogies or set up straw men. Read over some of your old papers to see if there's a particular kind of fallacy you need to watch out for.

**Be aware that broad claims need more proof than narrow ones.** Claims that use sweeping words like "all," "no," "none," "every," "always," "never," "no one," and "everyone" are sometimes appropriate—but they require a lot more proof than less-sweeping claims that use words like "some," "many," "few," "sometimes," "usually," and so forth.

**Double check your characterizations of others,** especially your opponents, to be sure they are accurate and fair.

Matthew D. Brown

# I'll Have Mine Annotated, Please: Helping Students Make Connections with Texts

Matthew D. Brown asks students to enter into conversation with the texts they read, connecting personally to make meaning. The process of annotation—analyzing the purposes for annotation, brainstorming connections, developing ideas through peer feedback, and writing detailed responses to text—allows students to consider how active interaction between reader and text is vital to their understanding.

**E**ach year I strive to explain to students why I love to read, to communicate the connection I have with books. Mocking disbelief is usually the only response I receive. How can I get students to see that what they read can connect to their lives—to what is important to them? How can I help students see that reading will help them understand the confusing and chaotic world in which they live?

Two years ago, I sat in on a discussion with Dr. Valerie Wayne at the Folger Shakespeare Library while she was working on the new Arden edition of *Cymbeline*. Of all the people who have worked with this play, she must know it best. She worked for two months that summer, editing and annotating twenty lines of the play each day. Yet, her effort that summer was a small fraction of the time—ten years!—she will spend with the play. For all of us who love plays, the chance to study one so well, so intimately, is a dream. My students, on the other hand, would rather cut grass with nail clippers.

Even so, I was interested in the work that Wayne was doing. Specifically, I was intrigued by the annotations that she was writing to go along with the play's text. While these annotations were not necessarily personal, they reflected her interaction with the text. I wondered what would happen if I had students annotate a piece of text. I wasn't looking for detailed analysis and research, and I certainly wasn't looking for the academic rigor that goes into the annotations of professionally published works, but I wanted a way to view the interactions students

were having with text. What were they thinking about as they read? What connections were they making? What questions did they have, and could they find answers to those questions?

## Allowing Students to Begin a Conversation

Reading is one thing, but getting something of value from what we have read is another. When we take up a text, we are engaging in a conversation with the author, with others, and with ourselves. Yet, so much of what takes place in the classroom isolates reading so that true, authentic, and meaningful interactions with a text are sometimes ignored.

Think back to the books that you love. Why are they so significant to you? I would be willing to guess that there was a personal connection with the text—something that moved you. Yet look at our classrooms today. How much of what we do helps students make those personal connections with the text? And how much of what we do allows students to share those ideas?

I desire to have students enter into a conversation with the text they are reading.<sup>1</sup> Whether it is a conversation with me, their peers, their parents, or themselves, I want them to think about what they have read and then strive to make meaning of that text for themselves. Without allowing students to interact with text in a meaningful way, we miss the chance of allowing them to see the value of what they are reading and to form new ideas about who they are and how they fit into the world in which they live.

## First Steps: Helping Students Make Connections

If I desire that students make some sort of meaning from what they read, then writing is the means that must be used to get them there. Writing helps students think about the text they are reading and work out their ideas.<sup>2</sup> More importantly, though, any writing that students do needs to connect to their personal experiences, and those experiences must inform their understanding of what they have read. Taking a piece of text and annotating it can accomplish that.

I give students a handout with a page of published text that has been annotated. Any play by

**Without allowing students to interact with text in a meaningful way, we miss the chance of allowing them to see the value of what they are reading and to form new ideas about who they are and how they fit into the world in which they live.**

Shakespeare works well as a model since nearly all publishers provide annotations for the text of his plays. (I have found that a selection of a play by Shakespeare from the Red Reader series published by Teacher's Discovery works nicely for this exercise.) The students get into small groups and look at the professional model. They make notes in the

text's margins, describing the kinds of information being given to the reader through these annotations.

Once the small groups have exhausted their ideas, we come back into a whole-class discussion. I ask students to help me create a list—a rubric of sorts—that helps show what good annotations do. Using an overhead, I first ask them to share what they discovered in the professional model. These are easy enough for them to list. Students often point out how annotations

- > give definitions to difficult and unfamiliar words;
- > give background information, especially explaining customs, traditions, and ways of living that may be unfamiliar to us;
- > help explain what is going on in the text;
- > make connections to other texts;
- > point out the use of literary techniques and how they add meaning to the text;
- > can use humor; and
- > reveal that the writer of these annotations knows his or her reader.

The process of generating this list usually moves into a discussion about where these annotations came from—who wrote them and why. Here is a teachable moment. Someone had to write these ideas, to look at the text and do more than just read it, to make a *connection* with the text. It is vital that students begin to realize that our understanding of what we have read comes from our interaction with what is on the page.

I have the class consider the many ways that reading can affect us—how we can connect to something that we are reading. I usually get the ball rolling by sharing how stories that I read often remind me of movies that I have seen. I add this to the list and then ask students to think of some ideas. This list can and often does grow, getting deeper and deeper into students' understanding of what it means to connect to a text.<sup>3</sup> Students often share how a piece of text

- > touches them emotionally, making them feel happiness as well as sadness;
- > reminds them of childhood experiences;
- > teaches them something new;
- > changes their perspective on an issue;
- > helps them see how they can better relate to their parents and others around them; and
- > helps them see the world through someone else's experiences.

Students are now ready to create their annotations, so I take the brainstorming list and generate a guide sheet (see fig. 1). Students must choose a passage from the text we are studying—one that they believe is meaningful in some way. I ask them to type or write out one to two paragraphs of that passage. The text should not take up more than a quarter of the page once it is typed. I know that it may be tempting for teachers to select the passages for the students so that there is variety in the pieces the students annotate, but students become engaged in an assignment when they are given choices.<sup>4</sup> This is especially true since the nature of these annotations is often personal and reveals how students have connected to what they have read. So, I allow students to make their own choices, encouraging them to choose a passage that they like.

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**FIGURE 1. Making Annotations: A User's Guide**


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As you work with your text, consider all of the ways that you can connect with it. Here are some suggestions that will help you with your brainstorming.

- Vocabulary—define words or slang; make them real for us; explore why the author would have used those words.
  - Make connections to other parts of the book. Don't be afraid to use quotes—just use MLA style.
  - Make connections to other visual and graphic material, such as movies; comics; news events; and books, stories, plays, poems, and so on that you have read.
  - For visual connections, include the artwork, photo, or drawing in the footnotes (don't just describe it).
  - Rewrite, paraphrase, or summarize a particularly difficult part of the text.
  - Make connections to your life.
  - Give the historical context of situations described.
  - Give an explanation of the text for clarity.
  - Give an analysis of what is happening in the text.
  - Do research on the Internet to see what others are saying about the text.
  - Challenge yourself: Find some literary criticism on the author or text.
- 

### Making Meaning, Making Annotations

Now comes the fun part! The students create annotations for the text they have chosen. But, like all other writing assignments, there is a process. Students should first take the text they have typed or written out and spend some time brainstorming, making as many connections with words and phrases in the text as possible. Figure 2 shows an example of what Kimberly, a senior, did for a piece of text from *The Great Gatsby*.

While this brainstorming example shows that Kimberly's ideas are somewhat simple ("This is an awkward moment—I've had these."), there is evidence that she is thinking about and connecting with the text. I would even suggest that she has ideas that aren't fully communicated in her brainstorming. But, that is what brainstorming is for—getting ideas on paper. These will then be expanded with more detail as the writing process continues.

From this point, I work with students to help them choose their best ideas to turn into annotations. As the user-guide handout suggests, there are numerous possibilities with annotations, so I encourage students to use as many of the functions of annotations as possible. Variety *is* the spice of life. I ask students to keep this assignment limited to just one page (text and footnotes combined).

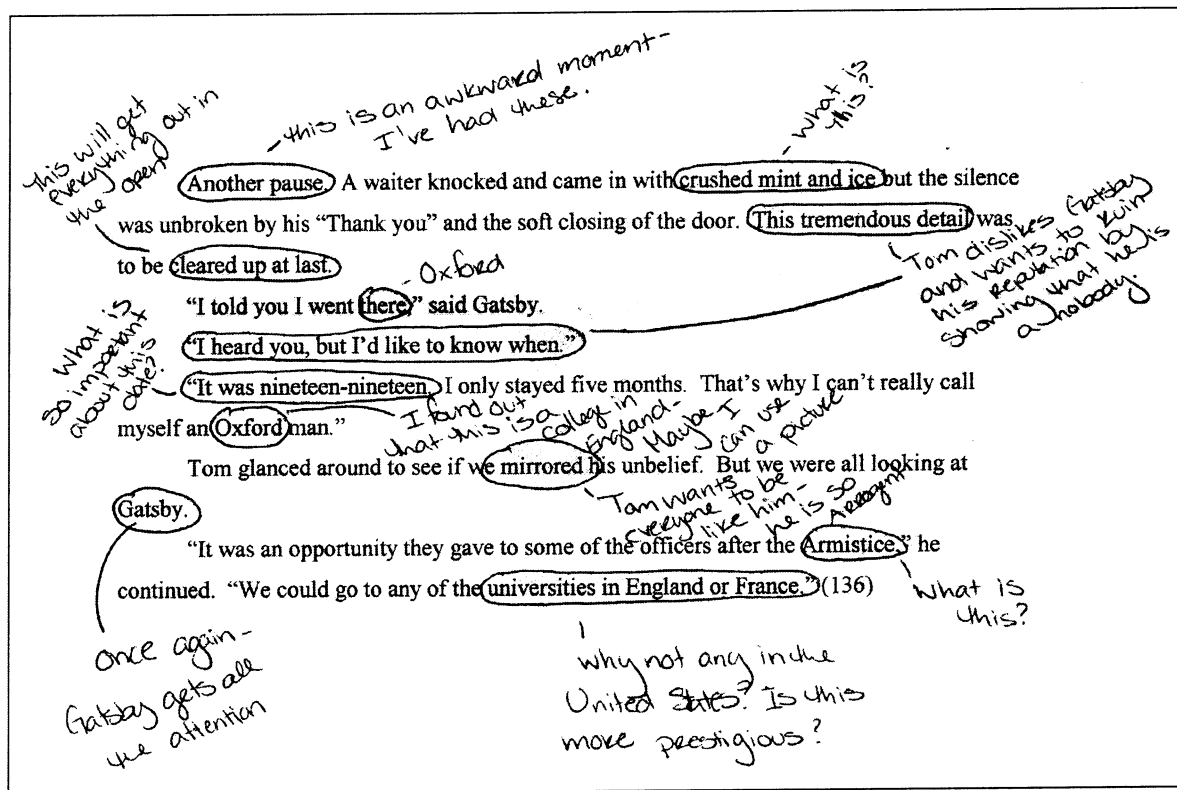
The most difficult part of this assignment for students, then, becomes narrowing down their annotations from the brainstorming that they originally did. I have considered relaxing this one-page limit but have come to the conclusion that I desire to see the most meaningful connections students make with text, not necessarily all the connections that they make.

Before students complete this assignment, I encourage them to get feedback from their peers. To accomplish this in a way that is effective for both the reader and the writer of the paper, I have adapted an idea from Joseph Tsujimoto's work with teaching poetry. Students are required to answer three questions when they read another student's paper:

- > What part of the writing did you like? Why?
- > What part was difficult to read? Why?
- > If this were your paper, what would you change? Why?

Each of these questions gets the students beyond simply stating that a paper is "good." They must point out specific parts and give reasons why those passages elicited either a positive or negative response. The final question helps the peer reader to become a critical reader, looking for ways to

FIGURE 2. Kimberly's Annotations of *The Great Gatsby*—Brainstorming



improve the writing. I have had success with this approach every time.

As the students begin to type up their final drafts, it may be necessary to give a minilesson on how to create footnotes on the computer. The students quickly pick this up and are excited to see their ideas come together. In her final draft (see fig. 3), Kimberly has successfully navigated herself from the beginning stages of a brainstorming session to well-thought-out and detailed responses in her annotations. She defined words, added clip art,<sup>5</sup> explained parts of the text, and gave background information for confusing references in the text. I like how Kimberly made two connections to her life. First, she talked about the awkward silences she can have with her parents. The description she uses ("I pray for someone to call") helps us connect to what the people in *The Great Gatsby* were feeling. She also connects a part of the text with a significant life event: a major move for her family. Only she was able to see this connection; only she was able to identify with the text in this way. I find it thrilling to see how this part of the story helped her

deal with something that was obviously an emotional experience.

### Continuing the Conversation

According to Peter Elbow, writing offers a "metacognitive understanding of the nature of the reading process" (12). That is why annotating a text can be beneficial for students as they explore new ways to understand what they have read. This assignment should only be the beginning. This interaction—this meaning making—should continue in other areas of our classrooms. Imagine the possibilities.

- > Allow students to annotate their books as they read. Have them either write directly in their books or give them sticky notes on which they can write annotations as they read. The connections with text become immediate and meaningful.<sup>6</sup>
- > Hold discussions that explore the important connections students make with the text they have read. You will find that these discussions will focus more on relevant issues in the lives of teenagers and less on literary

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**FIGURE 3.** Kimberly's Annotations of *The Great Gatsby*—Final Draft
 

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Another pause. A waiter knocked and came in with crushed mint and ice but the silence was unbroken<sup>1</sup> by his "Thank you"<sup>2</sup> and the soft closing of the door. This tremendous detail was to be cleared up at last.<sup>3</sup>

"I told you I went there<sup>4</sup>," said Gatsby.

"I heard you, but I'd like to know when."<sup>5</sup>

"It was nineteen-nineteen. I only stayed five months. That's why I can't really call myself an Oxford<sup>6</sup> man."

Tom glanced around to see if we mirrored his unbelief.<sup>7</sup> But we were all looking at Gatsby.

"It was an opportunity they gave to some of the officers after the Armistice,"<sup>8</sup> he continued.

"We could go to any of the universities in England or France." (136)

---

<sup>1</sup> At this point in the story, Jay Gatsby, Nick Carraway, Jordan Baker, and Daisy and Tom Buchanan are all at a hotel relaxing and Tom is trying to put Gatsby in a bad light in front of the others by questioning him about his past.

<sup>2</sup> Whenever I have a fight with my parents, there is always an awkward silence and I pray for someone to call, or the doorbell to ring or something can take everyone's mind off the incident, but even when the phone rings I am always disappointed because they ignore it and say they will return the call later. In tense situations, it can be very unnerving when the silence is unable to be broken.

<sup>3</sup> Earlier this year, my family and I were not sure where we would be moving. My dad had job offers, and the choices were narrowed down to, Miami, Florida, Newark, New Jersey, Chicago, Illinois, and Los Angeles, California. While we waited, it was very stressful to us to not know where we would be moving, and we couldn't wait until the detail was cleared up and we would know what we were going to be doing.

<sup>4</sup> "There" refers to the University of Oxford. Tom Buchanan had been thinking that Jay Gatsby had been lying to everyone about his attending Oxford University.

<sup>5</sup> In the line "I heard you, but I'd like to know when" we see Tom's mistrust and genuine dislike for Gatsby. Throughout the book, Tom disapproves of him all along thinking he is a "Mr. Nobody from Nowhere" (137). Tom continually distrusts Jay, and thinks he is lying by asking Gatsby to keep telling him to tell him of his days at Oxford and not just taking his word for it.

<sup>6</sup> Oxford University is the oldest English-speaking University in the world. It has been around since the eleventh century. The student population of Oxford University numbers over 17,000. Almost a quarter of students are from overseas, and there are more than 130 nationalities are represented at the school.

<sup>7</sup> "Mirrored" commonly refers to the exact same of something, an imitation of an emotion or action.

<sup>8</sup> The term "Armistice" means a ceasing of hostilities as a prelude of peace negotiations. In the context of the First World War, "the Armistice" refers to the agreement between the Germans and the Allies to end the war on November 11, 1918.

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technique and style, but you will also find that these discussions are much more meaningful to the students and will help them connect to the text in more significant ways. The ideas that the students generate will keep the conversation alive in the classroom for quite some time.

- > Rather than using footnotes, have the students create a Web page or a PowerPoint presentation made with hyperlinks in the text. Clicking on one word in the text will link you to another page of text, which could also contain other hyperlinks, revealing a chain of thinking about the reading. If given enough time, students could create an extensive set of links that shows the numerous ways in which someone can enter into and weave through a piece of text.

I may not get all students to love books as much as I do, and I still may not convince students that reading a book is a good way to spend their

free time. But, I will show students how to connect with the text that they read, finding meaning for themselves. As a result, I may one day find my students holed up in a library someplace, poring over a book, wringing from it all that they can.

#### Notes

1. In *Curriculum as Conversation: Transforming Traditions of Teaching and Learning*, Arthur N. Applebee talks about what he calls *traditions*—or ways in which we interact or connect with the world. These traditions form our understanding, and entering into conversations about these traditions allows us to grow and learn. Applebee argues, then, that teachers should tap into the ideas that students bring to the classroom rather than force them to learn information out of context.

2. Jim Burke discusses this effectively in *Writing Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Also, see works by Kathleen Dudden Andrasick, Peter Elbow, and Joseph Tsujimoto.

3. Tim Gillespie wrote a wonderful article entitled "Why Literature Matters" for *English Journal*. He discusses how literature can shape us as human beings. He believes that "literature offers a different form of learning than just

processing information; it requires us to experience, to participate" (20). I couldn't agree more, and I want to use this assignment of annotating a piece of text to prove it to my students as well.

4. A study done in 2001 by the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the National Writing Project and reported by Art Peterson in *The Voice* corroborates this idea of student choice, showing that giving students more freedom within their writing creates better writing.

5. Because of copyright restrictions, the clip art has been removed.

6. In the May 2004 issue of *English Journal*, Carol Porter-O'Donnell discussed this topic in the article entitled "Beyond the Yellow Highlighter: Teaching Annotation Skills to Improve Reading Comprehension."

#### Works Cited

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Throughout his twelve years of teaching English at Santa Clarita Christian School, **Matthew D. Brown** has enjoyed guiding students through their discoveries in the literature that they read. His teaching has been greatly informed through the completion of his MA degree at California State University–Northridge, his work with the South Coast Writing Project, and his experience during the 2004 summer institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library. *email*: [mrbccs@aol.com](mailto:mrbccs@aol.com).

#### READWRITETHINK CONNECTION

Lisa Storm Fink, RWT

Brown reminds us that the best way to comprehend texts is to make personal connections to what we are reading. The lesson plan "Weaving the Threads: Integrating Poetry Annotation and Web Technology" engages students in meaningful research using poetry as a focal point. Students identify words and phrases in a poem by a Native American, and in the process they learn about Native American culture and history. Students create a Web site using the poem as a "launching" space that takes readers into various explanations of words and phrases. While poetry is the genre explored here, this strategy can be used with any text.

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=36](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=36)

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## Winner of the Richard Ohmann Award

Paul Kei Matsuda has been named winner of the 2006 Richard Ohmann Award for his article "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition," which appeared in the July 2006 issue of *College English*.

# King of Mice and Men

of Curley's wife / First appearance of Curley's wife



## imagery:

- rolled clusters like sausages
- thrown forward

## Diction:

- rouged lips and anything red archly / playfully

- red can symbolize danger
- red can symbolize impurity
- red symbolizes / foreshadows blood
- red is a colour "children" (Lennie) are attracted to because it is bright and happy (primary colour)

- she wants admirers and compliments?
- She's trying to win the favour of the men
- love
- attract them with her looks to have friends and attention
- induce

sudden, brisk, playful (like Lennie's sympathy)  
 courting  
 intruding to arouse sexual feelings for advances

"tramp"  
 her behaviour is intended to arouse sexual feelings by "throwing herself at them" to give them a view of her body

Appear impractical for a ranch (form fitting dress, feathered, makeup, nail polish)

Both men glanced up, for the rectangle of sunshine in the doorway was cut off. A girl was standing there looking in. She had full, rouged lips and wide-spaced eyes, heavily made up. Her fingernails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled clusters, like sausages. She wore a cotton house dress and red mules, on the insteps of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers "I'm lookin' for Curley," she said. Her voice had a nasal, brittle quality. George looked away from her and then back. "he was in here a minute ago, but he went." "Oh!" she put her hands behind her back and leaned against the door frame so that her body was thrown forward. "You're the new fellas that just come, ain't ya?" "Yeah." Lennie's eyes moved down over her body, and though she did not seem to be looking at Lennie she bridled a little. She looked at her fingernails. "Sometimes Curley's in here," she explained. George said brusquely, "Well he ain't now." "if he ain't, I guess I better look someplace else," she said playfully. Lennie watched her, fascinated. George said, "if I see him, I'll pass the word you was looking for him." She smiled archly and twitched her body. "Nobody can't blame a person for lookin'," she said. There were no footsteps behind her, going by. She turned her head.

Smile  
 - adds to her appearance  
 - creates a more vivid image of what she looks like

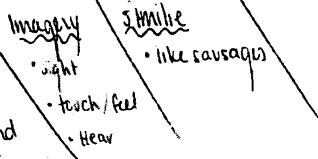
MARR?  
 - it foreshadows that Lennie will touch her hair + kill her, that's why they are giving such a clear image

They depict an image of her hair being in perfect "rolled clusters like sausages". And when Lennie touches it, her obsession with herself and her hair kills her as she did not want Lennie to ruin it (touch but don't get combbed)

## imagery

focused on her ready to show how people are sexually seduced or enticed by her actions

Diction  
 rolled = type of stress  
 rolled = shows anger  
 P throwing up the head and stopping drawing the chin



= Curley's wife dialogue  
 - lots of contractions (what does that mean)  
 - did everyone talk like that

questioning responses / ditz / flirty → teasing and leading men on  
 seeking attention or love that she may not get from Curley because she is the only woman she is lonely  
 Curley is not much company (she is more of a possession than a wife)  
 self obsessed  
 no identity / loss of identity (not even a name)

sexuality is her only weapon  
 reflects the inferior role of women at the time  
 affect the book's plot - build character, theme extend image pattern  
 What → How

## How is the reader affected?

The reader may dislike her because of all the downfalls she created in the other men Lennie especially  
 She is perceived to be the cause of everything that goes wrong  
 (on the other hand you can't hate her because she has dreams)

she knows beauty is power and uses it to get Curley's jobs  
 seductive  
 manipulator of men



**Close Reading:  
Strategies for Understanding Literary Texts**  
Prepared by U of T Professor  
Dr. Tyler Tokaryk

**What is a Close Reading?**

- one of most important skills you need for reading and writing about literary texts
- a basic tool for understanding, taking pleasure in, and communicating one's interpretation of a literary work
- a strategy for paying especially close attention to what is printed on the page
- "explication de texte": to unfold or to make clear the meaning of a text
- a detailed examination of literary passage in order to find the meaning of the microcosm which contains or signals the meaning of the macrocosm
- a reading process that takes language as its subject (because language can operate in different ways to convey meaning)
- an approach to the text that is based first and foremost on the words themselves
- a focus on "what" **AND** "how" a passage means

**Close Reading Does NOT:**

- Rely on historical or biographical details
- Use "ism" or "theory" as a tool to help interpret text
- Use generalizations about characters, themes or the play's broader concerns
- Make claims that cannot be supported with textual evidence from passage under study

**Beginning a Close Reading**

- Read, reread, read aloud
- Annotate
- Paraphrase (for yourself)
- Situate passage (identify speaker and immediate context of speaking / action)
- Ask questions (especially "how" and "why") about the passage
- Look up words in OED

**Things to Look for in Your Analysis**

- Diction (especially denotation, connotation, repetition, similar words)
- Sentence structure, syntax, meter, dialogue

- Figurative language, imagery, figures of speech, tropes, rhetorical devices
- Tone & narrative voice (irony?)
- Elements of fiction (characterization, setting, point of view, plot, etc)
- Sound, rhythm
- Logic of development

### Constructing Your Analysis

- Identify speaker
- Establish context
- BRIEFLY summarize what happens
- Analyze language: introduce and explain relevant words, phrases or tropes (see previous slide for examples)
- Answer “how” and/or “why” questions to explain significance of language (denotative and connotative)
- Make claim about HOW THE PIECES OF THE MICROCOSM FIT TOGETHER and WHAT THE MICROCOSM MEANS
- If possible or necessary, relate microcosm to macrocosm

### Close Reading as Part of a Longer Essay

- Identify speaker & establish context
- Introduce Evidence by Making a Claim
- Cite evidence
  - Cite or refer to relevant words, phrases or tropes (see slide 6 for examples)
- Explain Evidence
  - Answer “how” and/or “why” questions to explain significance of language (denotative and connotative)
- Further Explain evidence by referring to topic sentence and / or thesis

### Don't Forget . . .

- Avoid unsubstantiated generalizations: focus on language only
- Don't follow order or structure of passage (this will sound too much like plot summary)
- Incorporate short quotations in your written analysis (one or two words, specific images)
- Don't start writing until you've understood both the denotative and connotative meanings of the passage
- Relate form to content

My family in China was a mysterious, shadowy presence. There were only a few black-and-white photographs that revealed nothing of the people behind the solemn faces. I had no memory of ever meeting them, although my mother said they always asked about me in their letters, letters written in a script I couldn't read. Even Aunt Hai-Lan and Uncle Jong in Toronto seemed far away. Whenever my friends talked about visits from their grandparents, their aunts, uncles, and cousins, I listened with envy. These were real people who came to visit, whose voices and faces were familiar.

\* \* \*

Close reading of paragraph beginning "My family in China" in Bates' Midnight at the Dragon Cafe

The narrator of Midnight at the Dragon Café defines herself largely in terms of her family and her past. When she refers to the family members living in China, she defines them as "a mysterious, shadowy presence." She knows very little of them, has no memory of them, and so considers them a kind mystery she needs to solve. She thinks of her family as "shadowy," suggesting they are characterized by an absence of light, and are a kind of disembodied, unreal entity in her mind. Her reference to the "black-and-white photographs" of her family expands on this shadow imagery, and further suggests that her family is lifeless; the photographs emphasize the fact that while representations of the bodies are present, the bodies themselves are absent. Su-Jen's family is both physically and metaphysically distant. She has "no memory" of them; she has never met them and has never really communicated with them, because even the letters sent from China are "written in a script [she] couldn't read." The letters, like the photographs, should have connected Su-Jen to her family and her past, but instead they isolate her and emphasize her loneliness. Like the photographs, the letters "reveal nothing of the people" who wrote them. Neither the letters nor the photographs provide information about her family or her past. Unlike her friends who have "real" family members that connect them to a real past, Su-Jen has only shadows of people and memories that are either far away or absent altogether.

\* \* \*

From Munro's "Boys and Girls"

We were afraid at night in the winter. We were not afraid of outside though this was the time of year when snowdrifts curled around our house like sleeping whales and the wind harassed us all night, coming up from the buried fields the frozen swamp, with its old bugbear chorus of threats and misery. We were afraid of inside, the room where we slept. At this time the upstairs of our house was not finished. A brick chimney went up one wall. In the middle of the floor was a square hole, with a wooden railing around it; that was where the stairs came up. On the other side of the stairwell were the things that nobody had any use for any more—a soldiery roll of linoleum, standing on end, a wicker baby carriage, a fern basket, china jugs and basins with cracks in them, a picture of the Battle of Balaclava, very sad to look at.

# CLOSE READING

## Step One: Microcosm – What is happening in the passage?

1. Choose a passage that seems to offer some answer to your question or that references your theme in some way. Make sure it is at least half a page and that it is a logical, cohesive passage; one that fits together and captures an independent narrative moment or character experience.
2. Read. Re-read. Read out loud. Read eight more times, each time considering and taking notes on one of the following details:
  - a. Look at **DICTION**.
    - i. What kinds of words does the author use?
    - ii. Look up any words that are unfamiliar.
    - iii. Does he aim for lofty diction or common diction?
    - iv. Does he repeat any words or phrases?
  - b. Look at **SENTENCE STRUCTURE**.
    - i. Can you map the sentences (find the subject and verb, locate phrases and clauses)?
    - ii. Does the author use active or passive verbs?
    - iii. What rhythms or patterns does the sentence structure create—long flowing ones, short choppy ones?
    - iv. Is there any dialogue?
  - c. Does the passage contain **IMAGERY**?
    - i. What does the description focus on?
    - ii. What senses are appealed to most strongly?
    - iii. How does this affect meaning?
  - d. What **METAPHORS and SIMILES** do you observe?
    - i. What is the significance or effect of the author's use (or lack) of figurative language?
  - e. Has a **SYMBOL** been referenced in the passage?
    - i. How is it described?
    - ii. How does it feature in the passage?
    - iii. How is its meaning altered by this new reference?
  - f. What do you notice about the **STRUCTURE** of the passage?
    - i. Does it have a climax or significant turning point?
    - ii. How does it organize or develop its ideas, impressions, or themes?
    - iii. How does ordering the ideas or images in this way affect the reader?
  - g. What is the **NARRATIVE POINT OF VIEW**?
    - i. Consider the **TONE**. Is the narrator being straightforward, factual, open?
    - ii. Or is he taking a less direct route toward his meaning?
    - iii. Does the voice evoke a particular **MOOD**?
    - iv. Or is it detached from its subject?
  - h. Do you see any examples of **IRONY**?
    - i. Is the character using an ironic tone, or the author using irony in their characterization and setting?
    - ii. How does this use of irony support or reveal meaning?

3. Once you have a grasp of the language, you can begin to move beyond **description to interpretation**. What are the effects of the technical features of the passage when taken as a whole? How do all the parts work together?
4. Propose a unifying **hypothesis**, a statement about how all the parts work together to achieve some effect. For example, “In this passage, Orwell raises questions about Winston Smith’s character by contrasting the reverence Winston expresses for the Proles with his dismissive response to the violence they experience.” You can proceed to fill in the outlines of this point by explaining what you mean, using details and quotations from the passage to support your point.
5. Now, think about **Why?** and **To what effect?** How does this passage advance the plot, develop character, and/or extend the reader’s understanding of the theme you are addressing? Consider how this answers the question you’ve raised, follows through on your argument, and comes to a provocative conclusion.

**Step 2: Macrocosm – How does this passage reflect what is happening in the book as a whole?**

Connect your close reading to the book as a whole:

- Does this passage demonstrate any patterns in the author’s style?
- Does it inform your understanding of a character, a setting, or a symbol in the context of the whole book?
- What other connections can you make to other instances in the novel?
- How does it support your argument and reveal some answer to your question?

Using this method to get started, you will have achieved some very important things:

1. You have chosen a specific piece of the text to work with, hence avoiding generalizations and abstractions;
2. You have moved from exposition (explaining or summarizing what’s there) to arguing a point;
3. You have carved out your *own* reading of the text rather than taking the more well-worn path;
4. You have identified something about the author’s method that may open up other areas of the text for study and debate. Bravo!

Student Name

Ms. Riley

ENG 3U0

February 18, 2014

### The Happy Monster

In William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Caliban is portrayed as a monster, but capable of human qualities such as: emotion, morality, rational values, reason, and most importantly selfishness. Throughout the passage on (III.ii.140-148), Caliban changes from an antagonist—brutal and apish—to an individual who is misunderstood and hopes to achieve more virtuous happiness through pursuing dreams that profit him. Caliban expresses his pursuit for others to see beauty in the things of the island, including himself. He shows his sympathy for others and his ability to comprehend the thoughts of others in saying, "Be not afeared; the isle is full of noises,"(III.ii.140). This illustrates Caliban's ability to interpret and predict the emotions of others. He understands the fear that is associated with the sight of a strange creature such as himself. Caliban develops further as a conscious, mindful being through his appreciation of beauty. Using words such as "sweet,"(III.ii.141), and "delight,"(III.ii.141), he displays that he understands the pleasant things in life in spite of his own appearance. His philosophy towards others is revealed in saying the isle is full of things that, "hurt not,"(III.ii.141). Caliban shows that although he appears a monster he means not to abuse his desires to harm others. Caliban is therefore displayed as a person of morals and kind thought not subject to his primitive or emotional whims. Caliban further demonstrates his appreciation of his thoughts as he says, "A thousand twangling instruments will hum about my ears; and sometime voices,"(III.ii.141-142). This shows his ability to distinguish speech, intelligent sound, from constant meaningless chatter. Caliban is revealed as a being that can consider what he values, and will benefit him, most. He further expresses his ability to appreciate higher values as he says, "if I then had waked after long sleep, will make me sleep again,"(III.ii.144-145), implying that he prefers the illusions of his imagination, where his dreams roam. Caliban is also shown as using reason as he concludes, "when I waked I cried to dream again,"(III.ii.147-148), displaying that he craves his values to the extent that he must have them if he is to

attain happiness. Caliban hopes to achieve his rational desires that are just in order to achieve his own happiness through saying, "in dreaming the clouds methought would open and show riches," (III.ii.145-146). Therefore, Caliban portrays his unhappiness in reality (the clouds) turned to joy in his dream, further showing him as a man capable of understanding both the virtuous and the sorrowful. Hence, Caliban is shown as a thoughtful individual capable of contemplation to achieve desires that benefit him and give him happiness. Throughout the play characters such as Ariel and Prospero reflect Caliban's portrayal of true happiness being a result of attaining self-interested goals. Ariel shows this idea through his desire for freedom despite his debt to Prospero in his lobbying for release from servitude (I.ii.245-249). Ariel's desire for freedom exhibits the same level of consciousness, rational thought, and emotional stability as Caliban. Ariel's consciousness to approach Prospero and ask him for his consent to have his freedom exhibits his ability for rationality and civility. Unlike a monster, he appeals to justice, displaying his ability to control his emotions and honor his moral integrity, conditional for him to achieve happiness. Prospero also displays pursuit of selfish goals to achieve his happiness. Through his manipulation of others and his valuing of his desires over those of others he exhibits his drive to achieve that which makes him happy. He is also shown as rational in his actions and not controlled by his emotions (V.i.26-28). Therefore he is shown as capable of sophisticated calculated thought, exhibiting Caliban's philosophy on reason. Also, Prospero exhibits Caliban's moral integrity through his desire to complete his goal and achieve happiness upon conditions that are humane and play by his code of ethics, (I.ii.216-217). Therefore, Prospero and Ariel exhibit the idea that all action is done in the name of rational self-interest.

One can only achieve true happiness with selfishness.

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Shakespeare, William, and Robert Woodrow Langbaum. *The Tempest*. New York: Penguin Books, 1998.

Print.

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March 7, 2014

### The Value of Genuineness

Social standards heavily influence the way individuals establish themselves. In The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald, there is a myriad of misconceptions about him, made by the strangers he surrounds himself with. This is clearly identified through the event where Nick Carraway and Gatsby first meet and the instance when these two characters last see each other. Fitzgerald conveys a message that building a persona to mask one's true self will ultimately be in vain.

The similarities between the two passages create key distinctions which Fitzgerald uses to communicate how not being genuine makes people think negatively of them. One of these distinctions is the prominent observation of Gatsby's smile as a recurring symbol found at the beginning, and near the end of the book. Gatsby's smile signifies the facade he creates for people to perceive him the way he intends. Nick begins by commenting "He smiled understandingly- much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced- or seemed to face- the whole external world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor" (Fitzgerald, 49). The radiance of Gatsby's smile gives the impression that he can see people for who they really are, and sees people for how they picture themselves at their best.



Gatsby uses his smile to embody a veneer of respectability, and hide the sense that he does not belong in this opulent and judgemental society. The repetition of Gatsby's smile; "broke into that radiant and understanding smile, as if we'd been in ecstatic cahoots on that fact all the time"(Fitzgerald, 146), the last time that Nick talks to him, emphasizes the strength of Gatsby's guise. Despite all the faults and failures of Gatsby's facade, he still manages to fall back to it in his waning moments. The way that Gatsby wants to be perceived turns out to be different than how he is actually seen as. Fitzgerald characterizes Gatsby in that it is evident Nick can see through Gatsby's persona. Although Gatsby uses his appearance and wealth to put on a front, his tendencies are noticed by Nick, who states that "I was looking at an elegant young rough-neck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd" (49). Nick recognizes how careful Gatsby covers up habits that give away who he is; however it only makes him look foolish. This proves that Gatsby's efforts are in vain, as it is obvious to those encompassing him that he is putting on an act.

The discernible changes found through the comparison of the beginning and end passages emphasize the decay of the Gatsby's image. The tone and mood of the story illustrate this change in the way that characters perceive Gatsby. When Nick is first introduced to Gatsby there is a light hearted and charismatic mood invoked by the luxurious and care free party that surrounds them. Gatsby also had a tone which was very careful and charming, visible through the way "he was picking his words with care" (49). This contrasts between the tone and mood of when Nick last talks to Gatsby which is lethargic and looming of despair. Nick can also feel that something bad is going to happen to Gatsby, seen through his actions, "I didn't want to go to the city... before I could get myself away" (146), foreshadowing that the effect of Gatsby's false persona is going to lead to his downfall. The tone also develops so that it is resigned and apologetic, emphasized by

the sentence fragments and tension in the dialogue. The transition in tone and mood explain how as people get to know Gatsby, the enchanting presence he displays dwindles down until they inevitably see him for what he truly is. The colour imagery Fitzgerald employs with; “pink rag of a suit”, “bright spot of colour” and “white steps” (146), symbolize just how apparent it is that Gatsby does not fit in. Just like the bright colours that stand out, he also stands out, proving his efforts to blend in futile.

The author implies the idea that building a persona to mask one’s true self will ultimately be in vain. Fitzgerald exemplifies this through the connection between Nick Carraway and Jay Gatsby when they first and last meet. In our society, it is common for people to judge each other harshly if they do not heed to the social norm. In order to ignore the negative criticism that one receives from others, they need to follow their goals and ambitions without changing to fit social standards.

#### Works Cited

Fitzgerald, Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. London: Penguin, 1950. Print.

# Thesis Statement

The thesis must state the essay's central claim in sufficient detail to interest the reader. Theses also usually suggest how the paper is going to demonstrate the claim.

**Your thesis should:**

- Be stated in abstract terms – focus on themes, not characters.
- Express a relationship – establish cause and effect - HOW or WHY something happens.
- Be arguable – don't give definitions or state the obvious.
- Be important – write about something your reader will find interesting or relevant.

*Too vague:*

There is no limit to the way slavery can be demonstrated in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Shakespeare uses a variety of techniques in *The Tempest* both to manipulate his audience and illustrate his speaker's situation.

*Too irrelevant:*

Shakespeare is hailed the most influential writer in the English speaking language. He wrote many sonnets and plays, one of them being his romantic-comedy, *The Tempest*.

*Just right:*

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare presents a quest for power be it over one's environment, or of one's self. However, deeply rooted within one's quest for power is the desire for freedom. Shakespeare demonstrates that individuals will enslave, manipulate, and rebel in order to obtain and exercise absolute freedom.

So how do you find a 'just right' thesis?

**1. Identify your topic(s)/ theme(s)**

What is your understanding of your topic(s)/ theme(s)?

For example: PRIDE

In the space provided, jot down YOUR definition of pride.

--

**2. Formulate an opinion on your topic(s)/theme(s)**

What are your thoughts and opinion where it concerns PRIDE?

Think: What is pride? Where does it come from? Is everybody prideful (yes it is a word)? Is there good pride and bad pride? If yes, what are the criteria for good/bad pride?

In the space provided, jot down your thoughts on pride in general.

**3. Come up with a question specific to your topic(s)/theme(s)**

For example, if my topic/theme was pride, I could ask: *Why don't people who are proud always succeed?*

The best thesis statements answer questions that usually begin with **HOW** or **WHY**

In the space provided, come up with **NEW** questions for the topic of pride:

**4. Formulate the possible answers to your question**

For example, my answer to the above question could be: *People who are proud do not always succeed because pride usually comes before a fall.*

Or my answer to this question could be: *People who are most proud are also the most insecure and as such, pride stems from insecurity.*

In the space provided, come up with possible answers to the questions you posed above.

**5. Pick the best answer and make it a statement**

For example: *People who are most proud are also the most insecure and as such, pride stems from insecurity.*

Write down the best answer to your question in the space provided:

Eureka! You have a thesis statement.

Also, once you have a statement, be sure it is NOT a fact. After you come up with a statement, to be sure it is strong, ask the question SO WHAT? Why should anyone care about your statement. If you can't answer that question, come up with a better thesis statement.

# How to Construct a “Classic” (5 paragraph) Essay

## The Introduction

- Should have a few general statements about your topic (break the ice)
- Should have the names of your authors as well as the book/essay title (the title of the book should be italicized and the title of the essay should be in quotations).
  - E.g. In Aritha van Herk’s *The Tent Peg* and Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, gender is deconstructed and redefined.
  - In Shakespeare’s *Othello*, the outcome of all situations is determined by the power of one’s will.
- Introduce the specific focus of your essay
- END with the thesis statement

## Body 1: Controlling Idea 1

- Your first sentence should be your first controlling idea. This controlling idea should be the first reason why your thesis statement is true.
- What POINT from your novels prove this claim?
- PROVE your point by providing evidence from the text in the form of a quotation.
- EXPLAIN the quotation by linking it back to the controlling idea and the thesis.
- Repeat.
- Repeat again.
- Link all ideas back to your thesis and **transition** to BODY 2.

## Body 2: Controlling Idea 2

- Your first sentence should be your first controlling idea. This controlling idea should be the first reason why your thesis statement is true.
- What POINT from your novels prove this claim?
- PROVE your point by providing evidence from the text in the form of a quotation.
- EXPLAIN the quotation by linking it back to the controlling idea and the thesis.
- Repeat. Repeat again.
- Link all ideas back to your thesis and **transition** to BODY 3.

## Body 3: Controlling Idea 3

☺ Same as above!

## Conclusion: SO WHAT?

- Essentially says to the reader, “I told you so”.
- Wraps up your essay and includes a few extra pieces of information that helps to finalize your argument.
- You can end with a quotation that doesn’t necessarily stem from your texts.
- Be sure to answer the question: so what?



## Unit 3 : Shakespeare

### Essay Outline Template

Cawthra Park Secondary School  
2013-2014

Student

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ENG 4U0

Monday April 28<sup>th</sup> 2014

### The Female Phenomenon

Its the summer of twenty-thirteen when Miley Cyrus comes raging on stage with more than a dozen giant teddy bears, and wearing little more than a bathing suit (which later turned into much less than that). Indeed Miley promised her performance would be even crazier than Madonna or Britney Spears, and she did not disappoint! While many parents and viewers were concerned about the role it was setting for younger girls, a group by the name *Youth Catalytics* is looking into the causes and effects that has caused the normalization of such images. Their study showed that the sexualisation of girls and women has resulted in detrimental effects where female oppression is deeply rooted within society. These roots can be clearly seen in the writing of *Hamlet* where the female characters suffer many injustices that girls still endure today. Furthermore, during the time of Shakespeare these characters, Ophelia and Gertrude, would have been played by men, demonstrating the patriarchal society that has led to our situation today. Youth Catalytics examined why many of these double standards exist and how they have deeply affected the young women of today both developmentally and sexually. The degradation and rejection of female sexuality is a phenomenon that is closely tied to human civilisation and is perpetuated by the censorship or lack of education, the habitual conventions of parenting and the hyper-sexualisation of females in society.

#### Body Paragraph 1 :

Controlling Idea : The over sexualisation of the female body has allowed the value of girls and women to be determined by their sexuality and through the men in their life.

Lead : When Ophelia loses Hamlet, and therefore her promise of marriage, she is distraught. When combined with the loss of her father, and Laertes far away in Paris, it becomes all too much for Ophelia.

Quotation and transition : Ophelia demonstrates women's dependence on men, but in her last moments she also understands the dominance and hypocrisy of men: "By Gis, and by Saint Charity, /Alack and fie for shame! /Young men will do't if they come to't, /By cock, they are to blame. /Quoth she, before you tumbled me, /You promised me to wed. /He answers: /So would I ha' done, by yonder sun, And thou hadst not come to my bed" (Shakespeare 4.5 57-65).

Explanation :

- Ophelia has gone mad and sings about a women who bedded with a man that promised to marry her, but then the man refused to marry her since she bed him before she wed him, but the man is not to blame because of his male instinct
- demonstrating double-standards for men and how women are used and abused for sexual purposes, even to this day
- Ophelia taught from young age her purpose is to marry Hamlet
- sexually obligated to carry his (male) children, in fact her only purpose and if not fulfilled would have dire consequences
- she only knew her value in life relative to the needs and wants of the men in her life
- when she loses these men, she thinks she has lost all purpose
- she feels she has lost any value she could contribute to her life (result is suicide)

Lead : Generation after generation, girls have been taught that sex can give them power and that in fact this is what their purpose is, without consideration to their own well-being.

Quotation and transition : A study done by the group called *What are we doing to girls?* showed some of the causes and effects of female sexualisation in today's society: "they have a knee-jerk reaction to go find the next guy and use sex to feel better again. You know, we all have a link between love and self-esteem, but for these girls it's love equals sex equals self-esteem. This pattern and internal link is a problem" (Wisman 10).

Explanation :

- the introduction of media has worsened the problem of female sexualisation since the time of Hamlet
- although women are more independent today than Ophelia was, they are still considered subservient to men
- men become a dependency for self-esteem, similar to Ophelia, this leads to depression and suicide
- new problems emerging in the past few decades, girls are engaging in sexual behaviour and maturing at younger ages (although Ophelia was also very young compared to Hamlet)



- the problems from hundreds of years ago are being amplified through media
- media normalizes casual sexual experiences for young girls, promoting self worth through sex

Conclusion : It's clear from *Hamlet*, a play written over 400 years ago, that female oppression has been occurring for a long time. Although women's rights have come very, *very* far since Shakespeare's day, in recent decades to conditions for women have been on a downward trend. The increase of media's influence has only made the over sexualisation of women more widespread and normalized, causing detrimental effects. If it can ever be expected for society to overcome these problems, it is necessary for consumers to rethink what is shown in the media and help change the daily perception and treatment of women.

### Body Paragraph 2 :

Controlling Idea : The normalized conventions of parenting have become habitual, with little variability, and this has perpetuated the problem of female oppression.

Lead : One of the worst ways in which parents allow the degradation of female sexuality to continue is simply teaching through example; here we see the Queen being brutally chastised by Hamlet yet, as his mother, she does nothing to stand up for herself.

Quotation and transition : As the lone female presence in Hamlet's life, she is responsible for Hamlet's perception of women: "Hamlet: Rebellious hell,/ If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,/ To flaming youth let virtue be as wax/ And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame/ When the compulsive ardor gives the charge,/ Since frost itself as actively doth burn,/ And reason panders will./Gertrude: O Hamlet, speak no more!/Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,/And there I see such black and grained spots/As will not leave their tinct" (Shakespeare 3.4 85-93).

Explanation:

- Hamlet turns his mothers lessons back onto her, stating it must no longer be shameful to act on sexual impulses (clearly showing disdain towards women as a whole)
- Gertrude only agrees and begs Hamlet to stop torturing her with her own evils
- if parents cannot show respect for women (or for herself in the case of the Queen) children cannot be expected to either
- girls learn self-destructive habits and boys do not learn to respect women
- controlling parents are pushing children to conform to destructive lifestyles, ie Polonius and Gertrude

- the normalized oppression of women allows even the best of parents to teach destructive habits to children

Lead and transition : The study done by *Youth Catalytics* also showed a direct correlation between the sexual development of children and family dynamics. This study focused on girls and observed a very significant pattern where absent parents or family instability resulted in girls becoming sexually active earlier.

Quotation/Reference : The study concluded that this “strong relationship with parents, family stability, parental supervision, strong personal values and motivations, and access to quality health services – are notably lacking for most high-risk girls; indeed, their very absence is what puts these girls at risk” (Wisman 9).

Explanation :

- this study showed factors like family stress and parental absence have also been linked to early puberty and sexual initiation in girls (similar to Ophelia's missing mother figure)
- Children will often mimic the relationship dynamics or partner choices of parent (similar to Ophelia whose father is manipulative and philosophical much like Hamlet)
- Family stress or parental absence puts girls at a higher risk of difficulty forming positive relationships with other girls, depression and suicide
- Ophelia demonstrates these risks put into play
- Although family problems are normal we have to think of the relationships we want our children to form and demonstrate the same healthy relations

Conclusion : Without a doubt it rests on all of society's shoulders to cure the ills that plague our communities and affect all of us, not just the girls and women. However, above all it is a parent's responsibility to rethink what they are teaching their children and not blindly follow the lessons they themselves were taught. If parents do not accept this responsibility, we can all be to blame for the worsening conditions of women.

### **Body Paragraph 3 :**

Controlling Idea : Even more important than the lessons taught by parents are the lessons that must be taught in a formal setting. A lack and/or censorship of comprehensive health and sexuality programs has been detrimental to the development of both boys and girls.

Lead : In a time where sexual education wasn't even an a concept considered, we can clearly see the differences that it makes. Without sexual education, sexuality becomes a taboo topic filled with shame and disgust.

Quotation and transition : Hamlet cannot understand why his mother would marry Claudius and is horrified by the idea of his mother sleeping with his Uncle: "Not this, by no means, that I bid you do— / Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed,/ Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse,/ And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses/ Or paddling in your neck with his damned fingers,/ Make you to ravel all this matter out:/ That I essentially am not in madness/But mad in craft" (Shakespeare 4.5 185-192).

Explanation :

- Hamlet was very detailed in the sexual activities his mother was NOT to partake in
- demonstrates the phenomenon of men (and women) being disgusted by female sexuality
- attributed to patriarchal society, obsession with phallic objects
- problem worsened when sex becomes a topic that is not allowed to be talked about
- allows assumption that female pleasure is wrong while men's can be excused
- sexual education can teach understanding and compassion of the other sex(es)
- Hamlet might consider Gertrude's perspective by learning that a women's value was determined by men and without one she would be worthless (giving her no choice but to marry Claudius)
- disgust of female sexuality is taught, we must use a comprehensive sexual education to reverse

Lead : The same way sex ed. can help remove the oppression of women, sexual education can be taught so that it is more detrimental than helpful.

Quotation and transition : A comprehensive healthy sexuality program is needed rather than an abstinence-only education which "is out of touch with today's teens, is ill-defined, and uses shaming tactics to control what is, after all, normal developmental behaviour" (Wisman 16).

Explanation :

- a female's value was determined by her sexual worth, and more importantly her virtue, especially in the time period of Hamlet
- Ophelia could not handle the idea of living a life of sin because of the shaming and rejection by society that still goes on today
- Abstinence-only education harbours these same feelings in girls today (which was the only thing taught during the time of Hamlet)

- Censorship of the human body in media also sends a body-shaming message
- Sexuality is indeed normal however the censorship of media and education has caused even girls to hate their own bodies
- Curiosity is also natural and education can help raise self-confidence and self-respect
- Cutting-off access to information drives children to other (more dangerous) sources to learn

Conclusion : Sexuality is a normal and daily part of our lives from the day we are born until the day we die, it is important to learn about this part of our lives in order to live healthily. It is vital that both boys and girls have access to comprehensive sexual education programs so that girls may have a brighter future.

Thoughtless, habitual acceptance has allowed the idea of male dominance to continue for centuries and the accession of negative effects on females is caused by the sexualised perception of women embedded within society, a deprivation of proper education, and the gender-bias raising of children. The sexualisation of women is not just seen within media but also in our literature as well as our everyday speech and our habitual treatment towards women. The way we have formed our education systems and censored our media has normalized this maltreatment of women and teaches self-destructive habits to the youngest of girls. Without education parents are unable to truly understand how they are raising their children, and how they might actually be perpetuating the cycle of a female-oppressive society. Changing these stigmas is a difficult challenge especially with new obstacles being identified for parents in a quickly changing world. As if the misrepresentation of one gender was not enough, in the twenty-first century we now realize gender is a much more complicated issue. It raises the question as to how society will live within a patriarchal society when most definitely more than half the planet does not identify as male.

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Wednesday, May 14, 2014

### Fear Is Our Compass

One thing that we are promised when we enter this world is the fact that one day we will die. It is our unavoidable fate, something we must accept and cope with. This is a concept that is very clearly displayed in George Orwell's novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, I think the perspective on death that Orwell demonstrates in the book differs greatly from the perspective of most people in this day and age. In a TED Talk by speaker, Stephen Cave, he gives us a good idea of how people of our society cope with this unavoidable fate that is death. These two very different views on the topic brought me to question: how does our knowledge of death affect the way we live? Why do people constantly try to escape this inevitable fate?

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, we get a good look at how the character Winston Smith deals with knowing that he will die. It is interesting in this story because he accepts death as a part of life and doesn't shy away from it. In fact, through his rebellion, he takes risks that actually raise his chances of dying. A section in the book states, "He was already dead, he reflected. It seemed to him that it was only now, when he had begun to be able to formulate his thoughts, that he had taken the decisive step. The consequences of every act are included in the act itself. He wrote: Thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death." (Orwell 42-43) Winston knows that with his actions comes penalty, yet he still decides to commit thoughtcrime and doesn't conform to the laws of the Party. Also, both he and Julia knew that their secret love affair would eventually end in punishment, which they predicted would be death. These actions would lead me to believe that in a society like that of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, those who take risks look at death and take action anyway, because they are aware that the end result will always be

consistent.

Through his TED Talk, Stephen Cave shares with us a contrasting argument to my question. He too, like Orwell, brings up the fact that we all come to the realization that we will one day die. However, he says, "We develop our world views...in order to help us manage the terror of death." ("Stephen Cave: The 4 stories we tell ourselves about death") He says that we will believe anything that makes us feel like life goes on forever even if we know we are going to die; he calls this the biggest bias of all. Unlike Winston in the society of 1984, Cave's TED Talk informs us that we should not be so focused on death because we will never experience life and death at the same time. He shares a quote from Ludwig Wittgenstein that says, "Death is not an event in life: We do not live to experience death. And so, in this sense, life has no end." ("Stephen Cave: The 4 stories we tell ourselves about death") This varies from the view of character Winston because he acts based on his knowledge of death as he knows it is inevitable and lives almost as if he is already dead, whereas Cave tells us to worry not about death for we are never 100% sure of when it is to come.

After looking at the viewpoints of both Orwell and Cave, I feel that they both show how there is a correlation between death and risk taking. But I think that their viewpoints come across differently because of two things: fear and consciousness. I've once heard that fear is our compass and I think that statement holds true when looking at this question. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston commits several crimes against the Party even in a society where he is constantly under surveillance, but I think that he is able to do this because he is not afraid of death. When reading the book, we constantly question whether he is an idealist or fatalist and whether he is scared of dying but I think he is more afraid of conforming to the Party than he is afraid of death. I feel that death is a getaway for Winston, an escape from the thing that he hates so greatly, that being the society in which he lives and Big Brother. In today's society, I feel that death is something that most people fear, and so, at times when the danger of death is present,

most people will refrain from taking chances. However, our lives vary greatly from Winston's because we are not constantly thinking that we are in danger of death. It is not something that is always in the forefront of our minds, and so, our lack of consciousness constitutes our lack of fear. Just as Cave pointed out, we are biased towards anything that convinces us that eternal life is possible and helps us ignore the haunting reminders of death.

So after looking at both the authors' presentations of death through the novel and TED Talk, as well as the themes of fear and consciousness, I think I've come to a conclusion that one who is unafraid of death is unafraid of chance. I think that Winston and Julia were able to be in love with each other and to rebel because they were more afraid of living a life in which they could not love each other than not living at all. This is because they thought that they were going to die regardless of the choices they made, which is why they surrendered to their desires. We are able to live our lives to the fullest and take chances because we are not stuck in the mindset that death is always around us like the characters of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and we can see this through the immortality stories that Cave teaches us about. We resist our unavoidable fate because the thought of it traps us, it confines us to a place in our minds where there is no freedom, no spontaneity, and no living. Cave tells us, "overcoming this bias is not easy because the fear of death is so deeply embedded in us, yet when we see that the fear itself is not rational, and when we bring out into the open the ways in which it can unconsciously bias us, then we can at least start to try to minimize the influence it has on our lives" ("Stephen Cave: The 4 stories we tell ourselves about death") and when we overcome the irrational fear, that is when I feel that we are actually alive.

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Student

B. McLeod

ENG 4U0 – H

Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014

### War Stories

I never liked reading war novels; whatever a war novel constituted as. Even as a young boy, I always believed that war was too dismal and monotonous to ever have any value in personal growth. Only tales of heroism and adventure, like *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *Treasure Island* occupied my reading queue, hoping that I, too, could grow up to be like Jim Hawkins; on my way to find the answers to the mysteries of the world. While war is usually portrayed as a medium, precipitating drastic change, it was impossible to see how the transfigurative experience could be anything but simple deterioration. To me, then, war fiction could never, truly, be a bildungsroman. Yet, *Slaughterhouse-Five* compels me to reassess my previously held notions on the value of war literature in comprehending the implications of warfare and the suffering that it causes.

The aversion to military fiction probably stemmed from my grievance at having the television set eternally tuned in to the BBC as a young child or my mother's insistence in teaching me about the significance of 9/11, terrorism and, subsequently, Middle Eastern conflict, right as the events were unfolding. In watching the news reports in the Middle East and other parts of the world, I felt like the more I saw the less I felt. Likewise, I believed I knew *how* these horrific stories of mass exodus and indiscriminate bombings but I never understood *why*. Now, reading Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* has a similar effect, evident in the lack of concrete descriptions after the firebombing of Dresden where the guards are described as looking in horror at the ruins of the devastated city that Billy Pilgrim describes them as akin to a "silent film of a barbershop quartet" experimenting "with one expression and then another, said nothing, though their mouths were often open" (Vonnegut 178). There seems to be an understanding of the incommunicability of destruction within *Slaughterhouse-Five*, yet I must ask: should



this expedite the diffusion of responsibility? Should the pervasiveness of suffering, death and turmoil give way to complacency?

It isn't until recently that I realize that I have been exposed to war narratives for most of my childhood life whenever the old German man, sharing the same first name as the *Slaughterhouse-Five* author, who my grandmother remarried and didn't have children of his own, would come for visits. Always providing me with tales about his experiences of the Second World War, I remember he was amiable from the start. The man in his late-seventies mustering such an undaunted enthusiasm at having another person to retell his stories to that his heavily furrowed face, almost like trenches, almost seemed young again. Kurt told his stories with much embellishment and diversion from the truth that they always seemed fantastical. They recall a Roland Weary, in his self-imposed role as Billy's saviour. I imagine him in German calling his companions "The Three Musketeers" just as Roland had. Even though my grandmother confessed that these stories after while became tired, "I put up with them" she says with a kind smile, although, I was ever happy to hear them. I felt that when Kurt was spinning his tales they must have taken on a new life in his effort to translate them from German to English. He was always trying to tell his story and I was always listening, although I didn't always understand.

Now, I always got the sense that Kurt was withholding the darker parts of the war. He never once mentioned the Holocaust. I was too afraid to ask. Moreover, I always wondered why Kurt would always tell these stories. Perhaps it was a way of trying to make sense of the senseless. The thought always lingered the back of my mind in recalling Kurt: what if these stories, like Billy's description of his experiences in the war only "portrayed, in the most glowing and impassioned hues, their virtue and magnanimity, the imperishable honour they acquired for themselves, and the great services they rendered to Christianity" (51)? After all, it is this sort of irresponsible delusions of nationalistic pride and justice that allows for the continued genocidal siege and turmoil of defenseless peoples around the world today.

However, it is the communal lack of responsibility for the people directly affected by war that implicates us in the suffering. Lofty notions like patriotism and protean equity permits what Vonnegut describes as "the extent of the success [of the firebombing in Dresden] had been kept a secret for many

years after the war—a secret from the American people. It was no secret from the Germans, of course” (191). I can’t help but think that secrets like this authorize the careless commendations of women and gay people finally being able to serve in the front ranks of an institution responsible for the mass exodus and killings of vulnerable people around the world. Essentially, they may make indiscriminate firebombings into discriminate ones. Besides, war stories can only be war stories, even the expressive medium of literature is unable to fully grasp the destruction and suffering. Yet, this all too human tendency to divert from the horrific sights of war indicates the indescribability of destruction and suffering.

I now understand why my grandmother’s husband, Kurt was telling his stories: it was for him a contribution to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, meaning the processes of dealing with the past, a term integral in studying post-1945 German culture. In the same sense, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is important in that it shows us why telling war stories is important in understanding the senseless nature of warfare. In that sense, Vonnegut’s insistence on the futility of writing anti-war books because “there would always be wars” is proven inaccurate or at least incomplete. We must understand that while war is war, death is death, suffering is suffering and they may always persist, it is important for us to start listening so we may better understand, for in ignorance, we become complicit in the indescribable horror.

#### Works Cited

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five, Or, The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death*. New York, NY: Dell, 1991. Print.

# Introductions and Conclusions

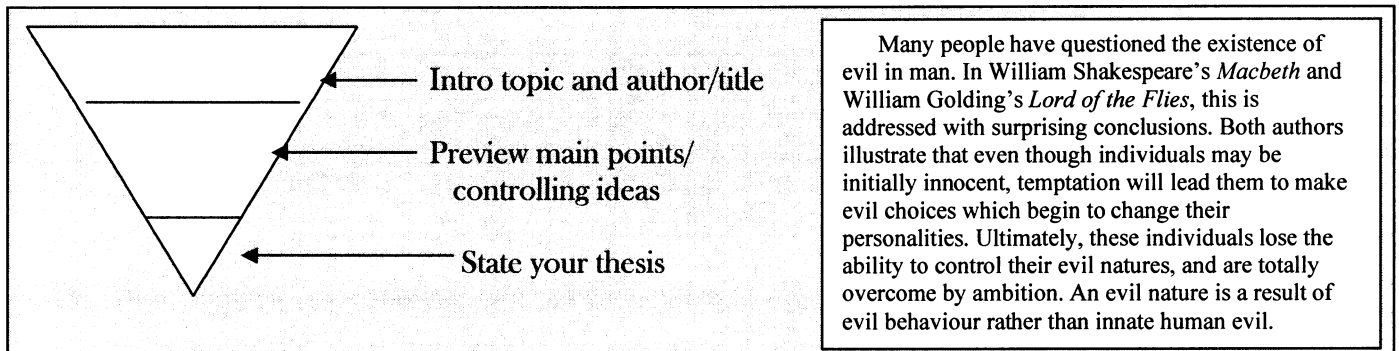
Aristotle's basis for argumentative writing:

*Tell them what you're going to say,  
tell them,  
then tell them what you have said.*

Following this logic, we can build our introduction and conclusion paragraphs.

In your introduction: *Tell them what you're going to say*

- Begin with a **general statement** about your topic - this can be a hint to your reader that catches their attention. It should make them want to read on.  
*The idea is to identify which set of ideas you are hoping to better understand based on the novel.*
- Mention the **title and author** of the novel you are analyzing.
- **Preview your three controlling ideas** in the order in which they will be presented. This is the "tell them what you're going to say" part.
- End your introductory paragraph with your **thesis**.



General statement of topic:

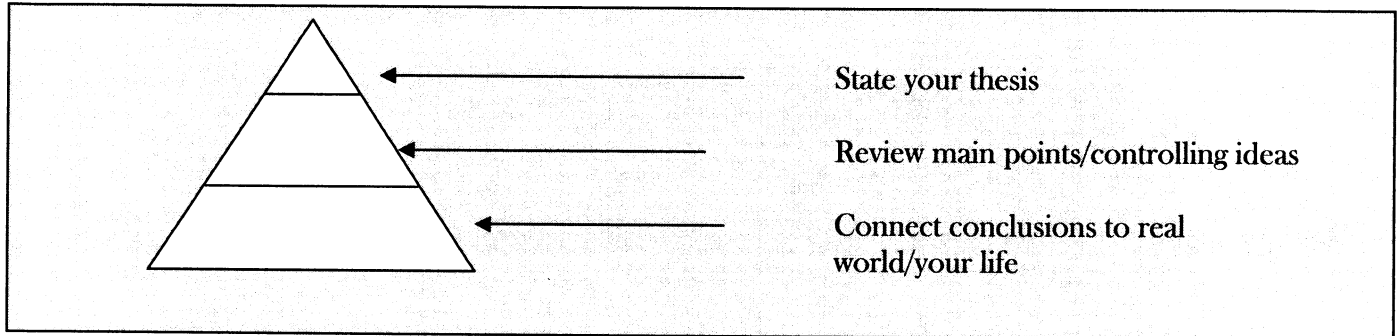
Author(s) and Title(s):

Controlling ideas:

Thesis:

Concluding Paragraphs: *Tell them what you have said*

- Restate your thesis in the first sentence.
- Review your three controlling ideas (not your examples, just your topic sentences from each paragraph).
- In another three or four sentences, try to answer “Why is this topic important?” and “What can we learn about ourselves or society from this novel?”. Extend your ideas and challenge your reader to apply this lesson to him or herself.



Thesis:

Review main points/controlling ideas:

Extend to “so what?”:

# Signal Words

## 1. Continuation Signals (Warning—there are more ideas to come.)

and also another	moreover next one reason
again and finally first of all	other secondly similarly
a final reason furthermore in addition	too with
last of all likewise more	

## 2. Change-of-Direction Signals (Watch out—we're doubling back.)

although but conversely	the opposite on the contrary on the other hand
despite different from even though	rather still yet
however in contrast instead of	while though
in spite of nevertheless otherwise	

## 3. Sequence Signals (There is an order to these ideas.)

first, second, third A, B, C	into (far into the night) until
in the first place for one thing	last during
then next	since always
before now	o'clock on time
after while	later earlier

## 4. Time Signals (When is it happening?)

when immediately now	at the same time final after awhile
lately already little by little	once during

## 5. Illustration Signals (Here's what that principle means in reality.)

for example specifically	such as much like
for instance to illustrate	in the same way as similar to

## 6. Emphasis Signals (This is important.)

a major development it all boils down to	a distinctive quality should be noted
a significant factor most of all	above all the most substantial issue
a primary concern most noteworthy	by the way the main value
a key feature more than anything else	especially important the basic concept
a major event of course	especially relevant the crux of the matter
a vital force pay particular attention to	especially valuable the chief outcome
a central issue remember that	important to note the principle item

## 7. Cause, Condition, or Result Signals (Condition or modification is coming up.)

because if of	as whether in order that
for from so	so that therefore unless
while then but	yet thus due to
that until since	resulting from consequently without

**8. Spatial Signals (This answers the “where” question.)**

between	below	about	left	alongside	east	on	opposite	over			
here	outside	around	close	to	far	south	there	inside	in	front	of
right	over	away	side	near		under	these	out	behind		
near	in	into	beside			across	this	adjacent	above		
middle	next	to	beyond	north		toward	west	by	upon		

**9. Comparison-Contrast Signals (We will now compare idea A with idea B.)**

and	or	also			much	as	like	analogous	to
too	best	most			but	different	from	still	
less	than				yet	however	although		
more	than	same	better		opposite	rather	while		
even	then	half			though				

**10. Conclusion Signals (This ends the discussion and may have special importance.)**

as	a	result	consequently	finally		in	summary			
from	this	we	see	in	conclusion	hence	last	of	all	therefore

**11. Fuzz Signals (Idea is not exact, or author is not positive and wishes to qualify a statement.)**

almost	if	looks	like		nearly	might	reputed		
maybe	could	some			seems	like	was	reported	purported
except	should	alleged			sort	of	probably		

**12. Nonword Emphasis Signals**

exclamation	point	(!)		indentation	of	paragraph		
<u>underline</u>				graphic	illustrations			
italics				numbered	points	(1, 2, 3)		
<b>bold type</b>				very	short	sentence:	Stop	war.
subheads, like	The	Conclusion		“quotation	marks”			

Fry, E. B., Kress, J. E., & Fountoukidis, D.L. (1993). The reading teacher’s book of lists, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp.185-187. By permission.  
© 1993 by Prentice Hall

# MLA Formatting

- Use Times New Roman in 12 point font. Double space.
- Use an MLA Header -Format using the example below. Don't forget to include your last name and page number in the top right corner.

	Robbins 1
Lucy Robbins	
Mrs. Moore	
ENG2D0	
March 30, 2014	
Transformation from Good to Evil	
In Lady Macbeth's soliloquy (1.5), Shakespeare creates a tone to describe corruption that transfers good to evil. As a key theme in the play, Shakespeare uses figurative imagery to illustrate how the evil will transfer from Lady Macbeth to Macbeth. Lady Macbeth states, "That I may pour..."	

- *Italicize* any titles of novels, books, anthologies, or plays. Use "quotation marks" for titles of short stories, essays, poems, or articles.
- Indent each new paragraph but DO NOT leave an extra space between paragraphs.
- Use quotation marks around any direct quotes. Use embedded citations after the quote to indicate the source.
- Use the appropriate citation style:
  - for Shakespeare - (Shakespeare 1.3.45)
  - for novels - (Golding 45)

## Embedded References

There are two ways to use the words and ideas of an author in an essay or a research paper. The first way is to take an author's ideas and to *paraphrase* them (put them into your own words). The second way is to take a *direct quotation* from the text. The six example references that follow are from a book entitled Victims of War by Robin Cross, published in 1993. The references are meant to direct the reader to an entry which would be listed in a Works Cited list. Here is the entry which would be used for Cross's book:

Cross, Robin. Victims of War. East Sussex, England: Wayland Publishers Limited, 1993

### Paraphrasing:

#### *Example 1: Author's Name Not Used in the Text*

Some soldiers during World War II suffered from mental as well as physical wounds. This phenomenon was known as shell shock or battle fatigue (Cross 9).

#### *Example 2: Author's Name Used in the Text*

According to Cross (9), some soldiers during World War II suffered from mental as well as physical wounds. This phenomenon was known as shell shock or battle fatigue.

### Direct Quotations:

#### *Example 3: Author's Name Not Used in the Text*

Some soldiers suffered from mental as well as physical wounds: "In the Second World War shell shock was named battle fatigue—mental breakdown caused by front-line fighting" (Cross 9).

#### *Example 4: Author's Name Used in the Text*

According to Cross, some soldiers suffered from mental as well as physical wounds: "In the Second World War shell shock was named battle fatigue—mental breakdown caused by front-line fighting" (9).

#### *Example 5: The Sentence Fragment*

According to Cross, some soldiers suffered from ". . . battle fatigue—mental breakdown caused by front-line fighting" (9).

#### *Example 6: The Block Quote* – used when the text to be quoted is longer than 3 to 4 lines

During the war, casualties came in many different forms, including mental breakdowns caused by a phenomenon known as shell shock:

In the Second World War shell shock was named battle fatigue—mental breakdown caused by front-line fighting. In warfare mental wounds are as inevitable as those suffered from bullets and shrapnel. In the Second World War, on average, about 10-15 per cent of British and US battle casualties were cases of mental breakdown. For every five soldiers wounded, one was killed and another became a psychiatric casualty. (Cross 9-10)

Many people had no sympathy for these victims, who had no obvious physical wounds. One such unsympathetic character was General George S. Patten of the U.S. Army.



## A FEW FINAL WORDS

- Writers of essays and research reports usually use a mix of the six different styles of embedded references. The choice of whether to paraphrase an idea or to use a direct quotation is usually a judgment call on the part of the writer. You should, however, remember to use direct quotations *with restraint*. Your research paper ought to be much more than a patchwork arrangement of direct quotations. As much as possible, you must absorb the ideas that you have read about and express them in your own words.
- Also, it is not easy to draw the line between paraphrases which need to be referenced and those which do not. A rule of thumb is that if a fact or idea is generally known, then it is not usually necessary to acknowledge a specific source of information.

## WORKS CITED LIST

The Works Cited list is located at the end of an essay and its title should be underlined. It should be arranged alphabetically by the authors' last names, and, in the case of identical family names, by given name. A work for which no author or editor is known appears in the reference list under the title of the work, alphabetized by the first word *that is not "an," "a," or "the."*

The Works Cited list of a paper is single-spaced. There should be one blank space between each entry. The first line of each entry begins from the left-hand margin, and all later lines are indented five spaces.

### BASIC FORMAT FOR A BOOK

Author's Family Name, First Name. Title of The Book: Subtitle of The Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, year of publication.

### BASIC FORMAT FOR AN ARTICLE or SHORT STORY

Author's Family Name, First Name. "The Title of The Magazine Article." The Title of the Periodical day & month of publication: page numbers.

# Blending Quotations

When including quotations in an expository paragraph, you will use the MLA style embedded citations.

Embedded citations require that you:

- Blend your quotations directly into one of your own sentences by stating WHO and WHEN - who is speaking and when it is happening.
- Give the citation in brackets that tells your reader where you found the quotation.

*For example:*

One reason the weather is to blame is that it makes Benvolio and Mercutio argue with each other, putting Mercutio in the mood to fight. Mercutio starts to argue with Benvolio, accusing him of being "as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy" (3.1.11-12) even though Benvolio is actually a calm person.

First of all, Friar Laurence agreed to perform the marriage ceremony for Romeo and Juliet, thinking that it would end the grudge between the families. "For this alliance may so happy prove, To turn your households' rancour to pure love" (2.3.91-92).

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Secondly, Friar Laurence was the one who gave Juliet the potion to drink without informing Romeo, leading him to make rash decisions. "Take thou this vial and this distilling liquor drink thou of" (4.1.94-95).

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Romeo, at the party: "O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!" (1.5.45)

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Prince, at the end: "All are punished!" (5.3.294)

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# Narrative Essays

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As a mode of expository writing, the narrative approach, more than any other, offers writers a chance to think and write about themselves. We all have experiences lodged in our memories which are worthy of sharing with readers. Yet sometimes they are so fused with other memories that a lot of the time spent in writing narrative is in the prewriting stage.

In this stage, writers first need to select an incident worthy of writing about and, second, to find relevance in that incident. To do this, writers might ask themselves what about the incident provided new insights or awareness. Finally, writers must dredge up details which will make the incident real for readers.

## Principles of Writing Narrative Essays

Once an incident is chosen, the writer should keep three principles in mind:

1. Remember to involve readers in the story. It is much more interesting to actually recreate an incident for readers than to simply tell about it.
2. Find a generalization which the story supports. This is the only way the writer's personal experience will take on meaning for readers. This generalization does not have to encompass humanity as a whole; it can concern the writer, men, women, or children of various ages and backgrounds.
3. Remember that although the main component of a narrative is the story, details must be carefully selected to support, explain, and enhance the story.

## Conventions of Narrative Essays

In writing your narrative essay, keep the following conventions in mind:

- Narratives are generally written in the first person, that is, using "I." However, third person ("he," "she," or "it") can also be used.
- Narratives rely on concrete, sensory details to convey their point. These details should create a unified, forceful effect, a dominant impression. More information on sensory details is available.
- Narratives, as stories, should include these story conventions: a plot, including setting and characters; a climax; and an ending.

Perfect

A young woman stands outside of the brown looming building, waving some sign in her hand at the cars that zoom past. Her mousy brown hair is slicked back, her shirt buttoned up to the very top of her neck. As my strides bring me closer and closer to her, I can make out the message on her sign. "IT'S MURDER", blazed across a picture of a mother cradling her swollen pregnant belly. I shudder and a wave of nausea washes over me. My boyfriend Trent's arm wraps protectively around my body as his low voice whispers,

"It's almost nine, we going to be late".

The waiting room is stuffy and too hot. A burly nurse sits behind a desk, protected by a sheet of glass covered in fingerprints. Her ginger hair frazzled and her scrubs wrinkled, preoccupied with documentation on a brown clipboard.

"Claire Reynolds, 9:15 time slot", I hear myself saying.

"Just sit down dear", her soft and calming tone contradicting her strong build.

Trent and I turn to sit on the only two chairs not occupied by a small swollen belly. I hover almost, feeling strangely out of place. I don't belong in this room. Fidgeting with the foam poking out of the burnt yellow seat covers, I have a moment to take in my surroundings. Deep green wallpaper lines the small square space, watercolour paintings of forests and rivers trying to conceal the patches that are peeling. How ironic, I thought to myself, trying to fix a problem by covering it up. The stench of sterile supplies and out patient forms lies thick in the air. My thick winter parka suffocates me, even though I was freezing in the frigid January air just minutes ago. Trent grabs my hand in reassurance. I don't pull it away, but I don't squeeze back either. Rows of colourful pamphlets line the wall to my right, beside the tabloid magazines gossiping about who broke up with who. 'FAMILY PLANNING - BE SAFE' screams out at me. That's what my mother used to tell me, to be safe. I remember getting ready to go out in my room, which was always in pristine condition, while my mother watched. Her frame swallowed by baggy wrinkled pajamas, and her hair sticking out in every direction. Cradling my face and looking into my big eyes, she said,

"You're a smart girl baby, I know you'll do what you know is right".

How

Back in the waiting room I hear her voice resonating in my head. It may not be right for the lady shoving her morals down everyone's throats outside, but it was right for me. Then, like clockwork, the nurse stands and bellows,

"Claire, they're ready for you".

The operating table is cold and unforgiving. I lay there motionless as I watch a doctor and a couple of nurses mill about getting ready. Staring up at the operating light, I try to convince myself that once this is over, things will be back to normal again. I'll go back to dancing and my studio, no longer hiding my swollen belly behind baggy tops and sweaters. I'll be able to go back to my perfect grade point average, no longer losing sleep over this mistake that's been haunting me for weeks. I'll be back to my perfect boyfriend and my immaculate life. The anesthesiologist, outfitted in baby blue scrubs, fits a mask snugly over my ski slope nose,

"Okay Claire, count back from ten for me honey" she says.

"Ten seconds", I chant to myself. Ten seconds to perfection.

"Ten...nine...eight...seven", the room had started to fuzz and fade away, the voices around me becoming deep and muffled. I was going back to the old me. The perfect me.

WAW

Mrs. Evans  
June 16th, 2014

## Deep

My grandmother once told me that it isn't safe to swim alone. She said that if I ever dared to enter by myself, monsters and all manner of deep dwelling creatures would come and carry me away. She told me that they would grab me down so far i would not be able to see my own hands.

I didn't listen.

The water called to me. When the tide came in; I saw hands and fingers clawing at the shoreline, beckoning me to join them...and I obeyed. At first just a singular toe managed to venture out, no more, no less, (testing the limits I was about ready to defy), then a foot followed suit. The waves were so warm and welcoming, so I decided maybe a little further. First; to my knees, then belly button, a shiver of pleasure arose from the leaping of the miniature waves, then shoulders, neck, the act of defiance brought adrenalin and lust, and before I knew it...

I was surrounded, swallowed whole by the fathomless mass of liquid. It moved, I followed; I moved, and it reluctantly gave way. Ripples encompassing my body. The feeling of weightlessness was a pleasant one. I was just a mere piece of seaweed, loose and free in a world of salt and sea creatures. The gentle waves a lullaby, and the sweet smell of ocean water engulfed my senses, I was powerless against it. I then glanced down into the depths below, and found myself compelled to dive. It wouldn't be smart, it wouldn't be wise...but it would be new. A spontaneous, whimsical, unadulterated shout out into the void. I took a breath, the longest, largest breath I could possibly hold down. And with as much strength as I could collect I thrust my body downward. A giant rush of sound stormed past by my ears...and then absolutely nothing. The world I had entered was quiet and still. Air bubbles slipped from my parted lips, a steady path of oxygen racing to the surface world. To view the world hidden beneath white-capped waves. To my left a small red and yellow fish went gliding on an invisible current. I took note of the tender way in which it's fins flowed through the water; the way his gills gradually inhaled and exhaled. The darkness that ate him when he got too far down.

This extraordinary world felt as if it were all mine, but unfortunately it could only remain so for a few moments. I felt my chest become tight and a bit sore, my air supply was quickly coming to an end. I wished to stay, to remain frozen, in this perfect world for just a while longer. But nothing lasts forever... and the more I tried to fight my land-dwelling, oxygen-breathing instincts, the harder it became to resist the soft, rhythmic tug of the ocean. And soon I was sinking, down deeper, and into ever so darker waters. I drifted, the way an autumn leaf drifts from it's tree, the only home it had ever known...I continued, towards the blackness that had swallowed the red and yellow fish, and before I knew it, I couldn't even make out my hands among the salt water now pickling my lungs.

My grandmother had forgotten to tell me; these supposed monsters of the deep...were dwelling within me.

Ms. Riley

ENG-3UO

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### Echo

She was pure and innocent; I could tell by her steps. She would float into History class just in time to sit down as the bell rang. She would let herself fall into her chair; sometimes causing her light brown hair to get caught in the air above, and fall from behind her ears. She would slide her fingertips along her cheekbones then behind her ears, returning the mousy strands to where they belonged. She would lean back in her chair, and listen to her music. She would close her eyes, avoiding the imperative small talk and gossip that I mindlessly participated in. I would discuss last night's episode of *American Horror Story*, Leah and Matt's insignificant relationship, and sometimes even the weather, while she left her physical body behind and relished in her mind's wonders. Her silent presence emanated maturity. It was as if she had enough going on in her head that she didn't need to contribute to our empty conversations. I always envied that. She didn't need the social acceptance that I craved. She was very much her own person – I was not. I began to unconsciously mimic her solitary behavior. I would walk into class with earbuds in, escaping the obligatory chitchat as she did. I admired her sequestered life; I wanted to be as content with my life as she seemed to be with her own.

Her happiness wasn't very loud – instead it was quiet and humble. Her small brown eyes didn't invoke any emotion, her lips were thin and her skin was pale –she was very average looking. She wore jeans that loosely fit her thin frame and simple blouses that yawned with her movements. She wore a lot of blue; I assumed it was her favourite colour. Blue suited her; being the colour of the sky and the sea, it has a calming effect. She was always calm and tranquil. She did her best to keep attention away from herself. She didn't stand out. I'm not sure if even the teacher had taken time to learn her name.

On a hopelessly slow Wednesday I walked into History class late. Her seat was empty. For the entire class, the vacancy of her desk bothered me. I created excuses for her absence, to satisfy my own worries. After a couple of days, "an appointment" was no longer a suitable explanation. *She must be sick*, I thought. It was February and my friend Emma had the flu, it made sense for her to have caught it as well. As weeks passed I realized this wasn't a temporary absence; it wasn't an appointment, an illness, or vacation. I found myself thinking of her new life more than the history lesson. I would trace the freckles on my arms and wonder why she left us. I didn't care about the old wars and the old men with white powdered wigs and extravagant mustaches. I cared about a girl I had never talked to, and how she could be so happy.

A month had passed.

dialog

"Where's Marisol?" I asked my friend.  
 "Who's Marisol?"



It then occurred to me: all that I am is what others perceive of me. I saw Marisol as an <sup>confident</sup> intelligent, independent, inspiring individual. She may have been none of those things, but my perception of her led me to believe so. I had never had a real conversation with her, meaning the Marisol I knew was based purely on observation – Marisol was a bird and I was an <sup>ornithologist</sup> ornithologist, watching and justifying her behavior from afar. I wondered if birds ever disappeared as Marisol had; without warning, no signs of disarray or danger – just an abrupt disappearance. They just chose to leave because they could.

All that was left of Marisol was her empty desk, and the semblance she left in me. Her behaviour dawdled within my own. She was an inkling, silently shifting through my soul, reminding me that solitude is safer, and small talk is stupid. Marisol's sudden departure was a wake-up call for me. I realised the way you interact with others is all that you are. The way you carry yourself through the halls can define you. Marisol's graceful strides, impeccable timing, and ethereal existence allowed me to define her as perfect. My friends however, left her as Untitled. Her existence was perhaps a little too ethereal for them. They did not see the beauty of her tenuous presence.

All that was left of Marisol were my memories of her perfection, other's memories of her unimportance, and the lingering impression she left in me.

All that was left of Marisol was her echo.

Student

Ms McLeod

ENG3U0

Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Eric Walters

I sprint down my carpeted staircase. I tear open the closet door and plunge into the darkness, throwing around worn shoes and heavy winter jackets. After a while I emerge grunting and slam the closet door closed. I run as fast as my six year old legs can take me and make my way through the living room and into the kitchen, tossing aside anything that may be hiding what I'm looking for. As I come into the kitchen I take a glance at the green light up numbers on the stove. The clock reads 8:55; my skating lessons begin in 5 minutes. I let out a frustrated groan as I circle back out through the living room and into the front hall. This happens every week.

I stand still for a minute to catch my breath and take a look at my surroundings. The fuzzy black mat by the front door is covered with a jumble of shoes and widowed gloves. Next to it sits a rectangular wooden chest where a yellow wired cage holds our pet hamster Eric, named by my brother after his favourite author, Eric Walters. Beside his cage, right in plain sight, sits a black cotton bag with the logo of my mom's company. *Aha!* I rush over and rip open the bag. Sure enough there sit my black CCM hockey skates. A mixture of relief and disappointment washes over me. Maybe if I pretend I lost them I won't have to go to class. I dismiss the idea immediately; I'm not in the mood to get yelled at by my mom and I only have two skating lessons left in the season. I think I can manage. I heave the bag on my shoulder and grab my winter coat off the coat rack.

"Mom! Luke! Hurry up I'm ready to go!"

"Two minutes!" I hear my mom call back. I sigh and plop down onto the stairs. I hear the sound

of water running, hopefully meaning my mom is finishing brushing her teeth. I stare at the hockey shoes in my bag, black, clunky, and nothing like the pristine white skates that every girl in my skating class owns. I sigh again. My gaze shifts to the hamster cage across from me. Eric lies inside unmoving. I decide to get up and walk over to the cage. "Hi Eric" I say to the fuzzy golden brown body lying inside. I tap on the cage to get his attention. He doesn't move. *He must be really tired*, I think. I give the cage a little shake. "Hey Eric wake up." He still lays motionless. I start shaking the cage rapidly back and forth. He doesn't even flinch. I hear the sound of quick, light footsteps coming down the stairs behind me.

"Okay I'm ready." I turn to find my brother standing at the base of the stairs. His black curly hair is askew and he wears a blue winter jacket zipped up to his chin despite the early spring breeze outside. He sees the look on my face and immediately asks,

"What's wrong?"

"Umm, Eric's not moving." I say. I see panic start to form in his eyes.

"What? What do you mean?" He pushes past me and shakes the cage. After inconclusive results he takes off the lid and reaches down to touch the hamster. The moment he does the colour drains from his face and his brown eyes start to shine with tears.

"He's cold!" he cries. I stare back at him with confusion, not fully understanding what he's hinting at.

"What does that mean?" I ask.

"It means he's dead!" He starts to cry, tears leaving long streaks down his face.

"Oh" I say. I shift uncomfortably and look away. I don't feel any tears coming to my eyes. I hear another pair of footsteps coming down the stairs.

"What's wrong?" my mom asks hazel eyes wide. She looks from me, to Luke, and to the open hamster cage.

“Eric’s dead.” I say.

“Oh no” she runs over and gives my brother and I a hug. She then starts into what she tries to make an inspirational talk, ending with “Well at least we won’t have to listen to him banging around in his cage in the middle of the night anymore.” My brother laughs and wipes the tears from his eyes.

“We should have a funeral,” he says between snuffles.

We find an old shoebox in the closet and place Eric inside with a couple of his favourite toys, including the glittery purple ball my friend used to put him in and kick around like a soccer ball. We dig a little hole in the backyard and place the shoebox inside. My brother takes out a piece of paper containing words he quickly wrote up.

“Dear Eric,” he begins. He continues on to talk about all the great memories we’ve had with him. From all the creative ways he would try to escape from his cage, to when our cousin would put him in a remote control car and drive him around the street. He finishes saying, “I will always remember you Eric,” and then tosses the little white paper into the grave. It slowly flutters down, drifting from side to side, before it finally lands on top of the shoe box.

“Anything you want to say?” My mom turns to me.

I’m not good at thinking on the spot so I say, “Bye Eric, I’ll miss you,” and blow him a little kiss.

I then start to think about life and how quickly things can change in an instant. I remember my mom once telling me to expect the unexpected and I can see now what this means. This will be just a minor bump in our lives however we will get past this. It is important to move on. I look up at the sky as a dark cloud begins to form. A small raindrop cascades towards the ground and drops on my face. *How ironic*, I think. My mom grabs the shovel and fills the grave up with dirt. I don’t go to my skating lessons that day.

# You've Written Your Essay - Now What?

## Editing and Proofreading

### **Editing**

Once you have finished writing your paper, there are still some important stages you will need to go through before you can hand it in. Editing is the stage that immediately follows the writing process; it involves going over what you have already written and revising it to make the essay into a more readable paper. During the editing stage, correct any grammatical and word choice errors and ensure that the same voice and tone is used throughout the paper. Below is a checklist that can help you get started in the editing process. It has been adapted from *Thinking it Through: A Practical Guide to Academic Essay Writing*.

### **Checklist: Editing Your Essay**

#### **Topic and Thesis**

1. What is your essay about? Is your topic/thesis clear?
2. Does your essay make any promises to its readers? If so, are these promises kept?
3. Does everything in your paper relate to your topic/thesis and have you clearly identified how they relate?
4. Do you have plenty of quotations, references, accurate facts and examples to support your thesis and other statements in your essay?

#### **Organization**

1. How is your essay organized?
2. Do you indicate which ideas are of major importance and give these ideas proper emphasis?
3. Have you used transitions to show the relations between the points you make?

#### **Voice**

1. Have you maintained the same voice throughout the essay?
2. Is your writing overly formal or informal? Do you use "I," "we," and "one" appropriately?
3. Have you used the active voice as much as is suitable? Are your verbs expressive and strong?

#### **Diction**

1. Have you used language that is clear and easy to understand?
2. Is your language as concise as possible? Cut unnecessary words and clichéd expressions.
3. Have you avoided slang or jargon? Is your writing too informal?

#### **Grammar**

1. Consult previous marked essays to ensure that you don't repeat grammatical errors.

## **Proofreading**

Proofreading and editing are two different stages in the writing process. When you have finished revising your paper and there are no more changes that you want to make to it, then it is time to proofread your work. You should print out a copy of your final draft and proofread the paper copy, making any necessary alterations with a pen or pencil.

Proofreading on paper, as opposed to on the computer, allows you to take yourself out of the context of the “writing” stage and allows you to look at your paper as a potential reader might. When proofreading, you will be looking for any typographical or spelling errors that may have occurred during the writing process. Below is a checklist that is meant to aid you in the proofreading process; it has also been adapted from *Thinking it Through: A Practical Guide to Academic Essay Writing*.

### **Checklist: Proofreading Your Essay**

1. Are your words spelled correctly?

It is important that you read your paper over and make sure that words are spelled correctly and that the proper words are being used. There are some words that have more than one way to spell them, like centre and center. Make sure that you choose one way of spelling and stick with it throughout your paper.

2. Are you using the right word?

Although the spell check function on your computer is a useful tool, it won't catch typographical errors that produced another proper word. For example, hear instead of here, there instead of their, etc. It's important to read your paper over to catch these kinds of mistakes.

3. Have you indicated which words and phrases in your text are titles?

The titles of books, journals, plays and films should either be underlined or printed in italics. It's best to check with the teacher for whom you are writing and see which they prefer or consult the appropriate style guide. Quotation marks should be placed around the titles of chapters of books, articles, short stories and short poems.

### **General Tips for Editing and Proofreading**

- **READ OUT LOUD!** Reading sentences that you are unsure about out loud helps you to detect whether or not the sentence is awkward.
- Have a friend look over your paper and provide you with feedback. It will give you a fresh perspective on what you have written and your friend might catch mistakes that you may have missed.
- Don't use words if you don't know their meaning. Using a word that you see commonly in your research might not be a good idea if you don't understand its meaning. Misusing a word could change what you are intending to say.

### **Work Cited:**

Boyne, Martin et. al. *Thinking It Through: A Practical Guide To Academic Essay Writing*. Third edition. Peterborough: Trent University, 2005.

# Formal and Informal English

Academic essays are usually written in **formal** English. Formal English is the language used for most legal documents, textbooks, essays, business letters, and research reports. Although there are degrees of formality, some of the features that characterize more formal writing are as follows:

- Formal writing may contain lengthy sentences, complex sentence structures, and specialized or sophisticated vocabulary.
- No contractions are used in formal writing.
- Abbreviations are avoided.
- Formal writing uses absolutely correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Formal writing requires an impersonal tone (rather than a relaxed, conversational tone).

When writing essays, we avoid some of the following informal types of writing:

**Slang** is informal words, phrases, and expressions used by a particular group of people. It is a highly informal language that sometimes only the people using it can understand. Slang is usually spoken and usually changes very quickly.

**Idioms** are phrases or expressions whose meaning cannot be deduced from the words themselves. We tend to use these expressions in conversation as a substitute for formal description of an event, experience, or emotion.

**Dialect** is a form of speech in which vocabulary and pronunciation are peculiar to a region or group of people.

**Clichés** are words or phrases that are overused. Many clichés are metaphors or similes that have been used so often that they no longer conjure up an image or comparison.

Avoid the temptation of putting colloquial, slang, or other informal expression or words in quotation marks to make them acceptable in formal writing. If you are unsure about the appropriateness of a word or expression, don't use it. If you do use it, omit the quotation marks unless it is a direct quotation.

<b>Unacceptable</b>	The author of this book has a “totally awesome” gift for storytelling.
<b>Informal</b>	The author of this book has a totally awesome gift for storytelling.
<b>Formal</b>	The author of this book has a remarkable gift For storytelling.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS/SECTION \_\_\_\_\_

### **Manipulating Sentences**

The following passage is from the book *The Island Keeper* by Harry Mazer (Dell Publishing, 1981). Read the paragraph to yourself. After reading it, pick one sentence that you feel is interesting. Underline that one sentence and then complete the questions following the passage.

Cleo Murphy was late boarding the flight from Chicago to New York because Eric Weeser, her father's secretary, insisted on coming in with her and carrying her bags to the American Airlines booth even though she could handle her two suitcases better than he could. And then he stood there telling her how "time heals all wounds," even those of the "recent tragic events." That was the way he talked. He was an old man, and he droned on as if he had all the time in the world.

1. What feelings or emotions do you think the author is trying to elicit in this paragraph? Why do you think that?
2. Which sentence from the above passage would you like to manipulate? Write the sentence below. Underline the subject once and the verb (or verb phrase) twice.
3. List the nouns in this sentence.
4. List the verb (or verb phrase) in this sentence.
5. List the adjectives.



6. List the adverbs.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What words are left?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Looking at the sentence you chose, what are some other adjectives you could use, but keep the same meaning of the sentence?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Looking at the sentence you chose, what are some other adverbs you could use, but keep the same meaning of the sentence?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Looking at the sentence you chose, what is another verb (or verb phrase) you could use, but keep the same meaning of the sentence?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Rewrite the sentence using different adjectives, adverbs, and verbs but keep the same meaning.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Rewrite the sentence using different adjectives, adverbs, and verbs but *change* the meaning of the sentence.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Complete Sentences: Exercise, Level 2

*Underline all the complete sentences. Correct all the fragments, adding or changing words or punctuation where necessary.*

1. Ah, cruising down the Don Valley Parkway in a 1992 Suzuki Jeep.
2. I continually have to remind myself that it's all right not to look like a fashion model. A problem that is shared by many women all over the world.
3. When the doctors finished with my back, they took me to the x-ray department. There they threw me on the table like a sack of potatoes.
4. Every kind of person was downtown that night. Punks with pink and green Mohawk haircuts, leather fanatics, and men singing songs about dreams that would never come true.
5. Wives and husbands, parents and children, all laughing, chatting and having fun browsing in the stores, looking at exciting new merchandise and making their purchase decisions together.
6. On April 27, 1992 seemed to start like any other day.
7. I saw that we had been hit from behind by a white van. And that the driver was still in the driver's seat taking his seatbelt off.
8. Marijuana, the dried leaves extracted from the female hemp plant grown throughout the world for thousands of years.
9. True education is knowing the reality of life. Knowing people, their culture, their needs. Knowing nature and most of all yourself. Knowing things that you will never be able to find in books.
10. Men should support the women's movement, and women's struggle to participate freely in social life. Because this means there is less and less pressure on men.
11. Hearing the sound of jet fighter engines in the sky, looking up and seeing the fighters diving to bombard you. A few seconds later when the smoke and dust settle down, nothing but blood and dead bodies everywhere.
12. Football and warfare are similar. Even the words used to describe a football game are from the military lexicon. Words like "trenches," "suicide squad," "field general," "bomb" and "enemy line."

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Complete Sentences: Exercise, Level 3

*Underline all the complete sentences. Correct all the fragments, adding or changing words or punctuation where necessary.*

1. We often hear of parents who leave teenagers home alone to go on holiday. Only to return home and find that some disaster has occurred in their absence.
2. As I walked through the mall looking for that special gift, until it captured my attention.
3. How strange it is to see a lake without life. Its crystal clear waters unable to sustain even the simplest life forms.
4. Every person is equal under the law, and the right to be himself or herself without discrimination based on race, national origin, colour, religion, sex or age.
5. The famous electric can opener with "reliable rotating engine, high speed cutting heads, easy to clean lever, and high quality galvanized steel frame," all guaranteed never to fall apart.
6. The World Tae Kwon Do Federation has developed three major forms of fighting for international championships, with new improved safer methods and rules.
7. Sooner or later almost everybody buys a car. A choice that is difficult to make. An investment that loses money, because the value of the car decreases day by day. A decision that leads to environmental tragedy as well.
8. In the First World children have the right to leave home and become independent as soon as they reach age 16. After which, some would rarely return home to visit their parents. Why, then, would parents want to have any children?

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Comma Splice and Fused Sentence: Exercise, Level 1

*Correct the comma splices and fused sentences below. If an item contains no error, write "Correct" after it.*

1. Winter came, the wind was howling outside.
2. It was exactly 8:00 in the morning people were rushing to work.
3. I ran toward the back of the house to see what had happened.
4. I wasn't sure of myself, I thought she would laugh at me.
5. I could not put pressure on my foot, therefore I could not walk, run or dance.
6. Oil is a gift of nature, no one can create it but only discover it.
7. I looked at my fingers they were covered with blood.
8. Life is like playing chess, in order to be successful, you must be patient.
9. Even with government help, student finances are tight.
10. Some hockey clubs have three or four goon players however, this strategy may not win games.
11. I was shocked I didn't know what to do.
12. Aging is not under our control, therefore, we should make the most out of life.
13. In a few minutes the dentist came in she put on a mask and a pair of gloves.
14. The night was silent, time stood still, I had no thought of the events going on around me.
15. In the past, bicycles were made to last a lifetime.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Comma Splice and Fused Sentence: Exercise, Level 2

*Correct the comma splices and fused sentences below. If an item contains no error, write "Correct" after it.*

1. The black belt has nine levels, each level is called a dan.
2. You can't hide from acid rain as long as there is wind, acid rain can reach you.
3. Our cat wouldn't keep still, it would run around in circles, tearing bits and pieces out of the chesterfield in an uncontrollable fury.
4. Strength is essential when tactics are fairly even the stronger team will dominate.
5. For a thrill, a laugh, a lesson or a reason for a date, go to the movies.
6. The girl was naive and trusting, therefore she thought it was all right if her date came up to her room.
7. A security guard faces four main problems every day they are the boss, the co-workers, the paperwork and the public.
8. No matter what I have done, my parents will never abandon me, they will always be there to guide me.
9. At this point I couldn't handle the pressure, my heart ached to talk to her and be near her.
10. When you drive long distances you never know what can go wrong it could be a flat tire or a blown transmission.
11. I was sitting in the front of the stalled van when I saw the signal with my heart pounding I shouted to the others, "Get out of the van everybody the train is coming!"
12. Martha and I love to insult each other, the nastier the insult, the harder we laugh.
13. Some critics felt that the novel lacked sustained power, it had inconsistent ideas, some went so far as to say that it was a dull book.
14. I loved the scent of the double cheese spewing from the sides of the pizza box, and the grease dripping from my fingers was enough to drive me into a frenzy.
15. It does not matter how successful you are if your luck turns bad who knows, you might be the next homeless person.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Run-on Sentence: Exercise, Level 1

*The word “and” is the main cause of run-on sentences. In the passages below, cross out as many “and”s as you can. Replace them with more exact coordinators (see page 117), with well-chosen subordinators (see page 91) or with the right punctuation. Where necessary, rewrite in the space.*

**Example:** I have learned an important lesson in my life, ~~and that is,~~ there is no need to impress anyone.

1. Love is true AND lust is false.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. My car is eight years old, AND it still looks and drives like new.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I know one thing AND that is to fight.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Each day a great miracle occurs AND a newborn child enters the world.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Bifocals can be helpful AND also dangerous.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I flicked the switch several times AND no light came on.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. People in the city do not try AND make contact with others.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. If you want to double your money at the races, fold it in half AND put it in your pocket AND just watch.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Mom doesn't like it when I talk back AND she gets upset AND I know I have it coming.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. There is one big disadvantage to being single AND that is being lonely.  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. The old man tried to cross the street at a crosswalk AND the cars did not even stop.  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Now it is evening AND the sun is setting in the west AND the sky is changing to a clear bright blue.  
\_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Run-on Sentence: Exercise, Level 2

*Correct these run-on sentences by substituting more accurate connecting words or punctuation, by crossing out all deadwood, or, if necessary, by completely rewriting in the space.*

1. To become an achiever you must try and be optimistic.

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2. In five minutes a slow song came on and I walked across the dance floor and asked her to dance and she said, "Sure."

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3. Many people have big families and not enough income.

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4. The ambulance attendants arrived and put bandages on my head and carried me into the ambulance.

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5. It rained that afternoon, and planning to get a suntan on the beach was out of the question.

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6. Many people ignore the basics and jump right into the middle and start to learn from there.

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7. My grandfather's apartment was like a prison because there were metal bars on the windows and five locks on the door and two chain locks.

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8. People are getting lazier because now most of their work is being done by machines and the people hardly have to use their bodies and put in an effort and get something done.

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9. The economy before the invasion was very good and people were better off financially and were living peacefully in a quiet atmosphere, enjoying their lives.

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Parallel Form: Exercise 1

*One item in each series is not parallel to the other items. Cross it out, then substitute an item that is parallel.*

**Example:** eating  
drinking  
~~talked~~  *talking*  
sleeping

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. see<br>hear<br>feel<br>touching<br>taste                | 11. Spain<br>France<br>Italy<br>Ireland<br>London   |
| 2. tall<br>wide<br>thick<br>heaviness                      | 12. under the table<br>after dinner<br>in the closet<br>behind the chair                      |
| 3. to write<br>speaking<br>to read                         | 13. Monday<br>Wednesday<br>April<br>Saturday  |
| 4. confidence<br>authority<br>skilfully<br>judgement       | 14. honesty<br>intelligent<br>integrity<br>loyalty  |
| 5. yellow<br>large<br>green<br>red                         | 15. beaten<br>vanquished<br>overpowered<br>losing   |
| 6. frying<br>baking<br>to roast                            | 16. to plough the soil<br>planting the seeds<br>to cultivate the earth<br>to harvest the crop |
| 7. steer<br>shifted gears<br>park<br>accelerate            | 17. Chevrolet<br>Ford<br>Harley-Davidson<br>Oldsmobile  |
| 8. lack of exercise<br>excess of food<br>drinking too much | 18. love<br>hate<br>jealousy<br>friendliness<br>angry   |
| 9. newspapers<br>books<br>magazines<br>going to the movies | 19. hockey<br>football<br>playing tennis<br>basketball  |
| 10. to skate<br>skiing<br>swimming<br>dancing              | 20. spring<br>June<br>fall<br>winter  |



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Parallel Form: Exercise 2

*Change the faulty sentences so that each is parallel in form. Retain all the facts, but in each case use the method of revision that seems best. If the form is already parallel, write "Parallel" in the space.*

**Example:** In my free time I listen to records, go to movies and <sup>take</sup> long walks.

1. My brother prefers luxuries like eating good food and nice clothing.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. In Canada we have snow, rain, sun, cloudy, wind, warm and cold.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The walkman can be worn while skiing, taking a bath, working out, jogging, cycling, walking, relaxing, suntanning, boating or even swimming.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Like many of the schools in Trinidad, we all had to wear uniforms.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. My office position requires me to answer phone calls, filing charts, using the computer to assist me in reaching the information that I need, and to retrieve charts for nurses and doctors.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. The role of women in supporting the family is as important as men.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Some cars are sporty models, luxury, family, economic, trucks and vans.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. The television habit is as hard to break as taking drugs.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. If teachers lack the basic skills to teach a language, then so will the students.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**Economy: Exercise, Level 1**

*To chop waste from your draft, examine each word. Does one repeat another? Does one even imply the meaning of another? If so, cross one out. Practise this strategy on the following expressions that were found in actual student essays.*

- |                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. truly astounded                 | 21. quite obvious              |
| 2. in the future ahead             | 22. very fascinating           |
| 3. products produced by industries | 23. extremely miserable        |
| 4. the final result                | 24. positive self-esteem       |
| 5. good advantages                 | 25. reappear again             |
| 6. emotional feelings              | 26. easily without any trouble |
| 7. cheap in cost                   | 27. very obvious               |
| 8. very fascinating                | 28. 600 hundred students       |
| 9. a true fact                     | 29. very chaotic               |
| 10. at that moment in time         | 30. so crucial                 |
| 11. very unique                    | 31. rectangular in shape       |
| 12. merge together                 | 32. a light green colour       |
| 13. 8:00 a.m. in the morning       | 33. quite impossible           |
| 14. in the coming future           | 34. in the month of June       |
| 15. our surrounding environment    | 35. light brown in colour      |
| 16. very crucial                   | 36. old age people             |
| 17. many different countries       | 37. rather unique              |
| 18. self-confidence in myself      | 38. no other alternative       |
| 19. and etc.                       | 39. competitive competition    |
| 20. \$150 dollars                  | 40. in my own personal opinion |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Economy: Exercise, Level 2

*Improve the economy and style of the passages below by crossing out wordiness and repetition or by rewriting in the space provided. If no revision is needed, write "Correct" in the space.*

**Example:** The room is square ~~in shape~~.

1. Arteries are blood vessels that carry blood.

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2. The time was 9:30 p.m. at night.

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3. Immigrants come to Canada with high aspirations of hope.

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4. An older brother is like a second father.

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5. Many teenagers' lives have been snuffed out by fatal car accidents.

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6. Friends are a necessity that we need to have.

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7. Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, is a French community of 1800 hundred people.

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8. Another useful item is the grape crusher, which crushes the grapes.

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9. Living away from home is a very unique experience.

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10. The cost of having a television set is expensive.

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic Sentences: Exercise

*Underline the statement that you believe would make the best topic sentence of a paragraph. Remember that opinion is usually stronger than pure fact.*

1.
  - a. Chainsaws make a great deal of noise.
  - b. The chainsaw is the most dangerous tool that can be operated without a permit.
  - c. Some chainsaws now have a chain brake to reduce bucking.
2.
  - a. In Vancouver the lineups for movies are often a block long.
  - b. I go to the movies almost every weekend.
  - c. The convenience of watching television will never replace the thrill of going to the movies.
3.
  - a. We used to shoot off firecrackers every Victoria Day.
  - b. A cousin of mine lost the last joint of his index finger by holding onto a "TNT bomb" too long.
  - c. Fireworks are still a hazard to children.
4.
  - a. In today's economy, couples are choosing to have fewer children.
  - b. Some families are large, while others are small.
  - c. I have three brothers and four sisters.
5.
  - a. Scuba diving can be a safe sport if you know what you are doing.
  - b. A scuba diver I know almost drowned when he caught his foot on some old wire at the bottom of a river.
  - c. The term "scuba" stands for "self-contained underwater breathing apparatus."
6.
  - a. Ice cream is a popular food.
  - b. I often eat ice cream as a snack.
  - c. Ice cream contains more chemical additives than almost any other food we eat.
7.
  - a. You see pickup trucks everywhere these days.
  - b. City people drive pickup trucks for the same reasons they wear blue jeans and cowboy boots.
  - c. Most pickup trucks get worse gas mileage than cars.
8.
  - a. I saw wolf tracks one morning outside our cabin.
  - b. The wolf is a large mammal of the northern forest.
  - c. It is our prejudice against wolves that leads to their destruction.
9.
  - a. I love hockey.
  - b. Hockey is an extremely popular sport in Canada.
  - c. Wayne Gretzky is the greatest player in the history of hockey.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Unity in “Main” Paragraphs: Exercise

*Revise the following paragraphs to achieve unity of purpose. First underline the topic sentence. Then delete or replace any material that does not support it. If the paragraph does not reflect the topic sentence at all, revise the topic sentence.*

1. Many English teachers dress poorly. They wear blue jeans, corduroy jackets and sandals, as if they were still living in the sixties. Or they wear ragged pants and old baggy sweaters, as if they plan to dig in the garden after class. Or they wear shockingly mismatched colours — blue pants, brown jacket and purple tie — as if they were colour-blind. However, I once had a math teacher who looked even worse: he wore a blue and red plaid jacket, green bow tie and grey and white pinstriped trousers.
2. Having to share a bedroom with my brother taught me how to get along with others. We each had to respect the other person's half of the room, for example, by not throwing our dirty clothes on each other's bed. We had to take turns cleaning and sweeping. We had to discuss what colour to paint the walls and which posters to put up. Most important of all, we had to be quiet when the other person was trying to study or sleep. As a result of this trying experience, I have learned that it is hard to get along with others. I'm glad that I have left home, because now all the fighting is over.
3. The Olympics have become a fraud in which innocent victims — the athletes and the general public — are manipulated by business and government. In a cynical bid for world prestige, wealthy nations regiment and train their athletes almost like soldiers. These professional “amateurs” then walk off with the gold medals. In greedy schemes to attract tourists or to encourage construction and investment, municipalities such as Montreal lavish hundreds of millions on Olympic facilities — only to sink their own citizens in municipal debt for decades to come. And worst of all, in a spirit of crass hatred, terrorist groups hatch plans to murder the innocent and idealistic individuals who make the whole event possible: the athletes. Almost as bad is the illegal use of steroids by many of the contestants, both male and female.
4. Many homeowners plant species of trees that cause problems later on. The Chinese elm that looks so attractive when it is ten feet high soon becomes a sickly monster dropping hundreds of little sticks onto the roof and lawn every time the wind blows. The silver maple that grows so conveniently fast soon becomes a rotten hulk ready to crush a roof or a parked car when a storm rips off its branches or even its trunk. (The sugar maple is much better, strong as well as attractive.) But the ailanthus, the so-called “tree of heaven” that is so delicately beautiful, clogs sewers with its greedy roots and every spring produces flowers that emit a sickening, rotten stench.
5. The North American free trade pact is an excellent change for Canada's future. Trade will increase dramatically, although most factories now in this country will move south of the border where wages are lower. High-tech jobs, in particular, have already begun to flee, leaving Canada as a supplier of raw materials which will be turned into profits by other nations.
6. Jogging is an excellent means to physical fitness. Heavy persons should avoid it, though, to prevent a heart attack caused by the sudden overload of violent action. Women are advised to avoid jogging, too, because in some cases the movement can cause the uterus to loosen — a potentially serious medical problem. Bone spurs in the foot, tearing of the Achilles' tendon and deterioration of the knee joint are other common hazards of jogging. Some joggers have even been killed by traffic, because people with jobs tend to run at night when visibility is poor. But all in all, jogging has become one of our most popular forms of exercise.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Improving “Thin” Paragraphs: Exercise

*The most frequent weakness of paragraphs is “thinness.” Add details to develop the following examples into vivid and convincing paragraphs. Write your new versions on a separate page, adding words, phrases or whole sentences of example, image or fact. Remember to follow, all the way through, the direction set by the topic sentence.*

1. Having brothers or sisters is not easy. You have to tolerate each other’s behaviour, and you must learn to share. But this effort is worthwhile, because it prepares you for your own family life in the future.
2. For many students, car ownership is not worth the expense. The car itself must be paid for, then maintained through costly visits to the garage. Gas and oil are increasingly expensive. Worst of all is the astronomical price of insurance.
3. Many parents dread rock concerts. They worry about the effect of the music on their children. They wonder what kind of people their children will meet. And they wonder whether their children will try new and forbidden experiences in the anonymity of the crowd.
4. American television drama has a heavy influence on our own. Many Canadians think CBC series are boring, and would rather turn to American sitcoms or police shows. Thus Canadian producers are tempted to win viewers by imitating the format and style of the American product.
5. This year’s fashions for women are silly. Some of the clothes are unflattering. Others are uncomfortable. Why do we keep spending our hard-earned money on this trash?
6. School cafeteria food leaves something to be desired. It is heavy in starches, grease and sugar. It tends to be overcooked. Finally, it is often expensive.
7. Never before has music been so closely identified with the lives of its fans. People who dress in certain fashions and adopt a particular behaviour tend to favour one kind of music, or even a specific band. This music then becomes an expression of their lifestyle.
8. Computers now control many aspects of our lives. We come under their influence at school, at work and even at home.
9. A good holiday can shake us out of the old rut and show us new paths to follow. Going to other places stimulates the imagination. Meeting new people can teach us a great deal. Why stay at home all the time when there is so much to learn elsewhere?
10. Great numbers of people in other countries admire Canada and, if they had the chance, would move here. Canada is rich in natural resources. It is beautiful. It is relatively unpolluted. Its standard of living is among the highest in the world. Most importantly, it is a nation at peace.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Commonly Confused Words: Exercise

Circle the correct choice in the parentheses.

1. A person must (*accept / except*) all that life has to offer, both good and bad.
2. Mom warned us not to eat all the candy, but we ignored her (*advice / advise*).
3. Oil slicks in the ocean have a devastating (*affect / effect*) on wildlife.
4. The presence of parental love can (*affect / effect*) the child's ability to love others.
5. How do dreams change (*are / our*) lives?
6. I am so attached to my cat that I cannot (*bare / bear*) to part with it.
7. Some people get all the (*brakes / breaks*).
8. When oil is applied to the water, increasing the surface tension, the mosquito larvae can no longer poke their tubes up into the air to (*breath / breathe*).
9. A beginner will go to the nearest sports shop and (*buy / by*) every piece of equipment in sight.
10. Saint John's is the (*capital / capitol*) of Newfoundland.
11. One of the most important preparations for cross-country skiing is selection of light (*clothes / cloths*) that can be worn in several layers.
12. By the time I finished high school, I had never had a (*coarse / course*) in art.
13. A municipal (*council / counsel*) tends to be divided into prodevelopment and antidevelopment factions.
14. Large parts of Africa are turning into (*desert / dessert*).
15. Let's give credit where credit is (*do / due*).
16. In 1982 my parents (*emigrated / immigrated*) to Canada.
17. I swam laps in the pool till I thought I could go no (*farther / further*).
18. Old people feel isolated because they cannot (*hear / here*) well.
19. Desdemona is a tragic (*heroin / heroine*).
20. My sister ate the (*hole / whole*) pizza.
21. A dog is faithful to (*its / it's*) owner.
22. You never (*know / no / now*) what can happen.
23. Through the example of their parents, children are (*lead / led*) to cheat in society.
24. To (*loose / lose*) a game is to learn a lesson.
25. Police associations say that even the most disciplined force cannot function well if the (*moral / morale*) is low.
26. A year (*passed / past*) before Stephen Leacock found himself teaching at Upper Canada College.
27. I wanted a (*peace / piece*) of the action.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Agreement: Exercise, Level 2

*Cross out each error in agreement and write a correction in the blank at the end of the line in which it occurs. If a passage contains no errors, write "Correct" after it.*

**Example:** The number of white-collar crimes ~~have~~ risen sharply.

has

1. I like to read the newspaper, which is where you learn what is happening around you in our daily lives. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The day I started working for the city of Regina, I was so nervous that my insides felt like it was going through a blender. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The next time you walk by a homeless person, do not treat them like an animal. Give them the dignity and respect they deserve. \_\_\_\_\_
4. At one end of the room is the tuner, turntable, speakers and two shelves of albums. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Gambling can bring one's life up to heaven or down to hell, depending on how much they know about the game and how long they spend practising. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The interest rate a company will charge a person to use one of its cards is astonishing. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have been to Montreal several times. I like to travel on their subways because it's clean and attractive. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Either slavery or rebellion are the reaction of a child raised by authoritarian parents. \_\_\_\_\_
9. If you are neat, then it is hard for you to get along with a person who throws their clothes around or leaves their dirty dishes in the sink. \_\_\_\_\_
10. What makes hockey bloodier than other major sports is the fact that for 60 minutes of playing time, each of the players carries a large weapon in his hands, a stick that measures five feet in length and has a pointed tip, the better with which to jab your opponent in the gut. \_\_\_\_\_
11. An entire industry of cosmetic products have been created to prevent aging. \_\_\_\_\_
12. In Canada the government acts as a medical insurance company. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Why would one risk going into business for oneself, if not to manage your own business the way you wish to, without interference from others? \_\_\_\_\_
14. In Toronto no one talks to anyone unless they know them. \_\_\_\_\_



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Commas: Exercise

*In the passage below, cross out all commas that appear in the wrong places and add all necessary commas that are missing. If a passage contains no comma fault, write "Correct" after it.*

**Example:** I love to cook, myself, and eat at home.

1. As I put my coat on the dentist and receptionist had a brief discussion.
2. Sharon flirted outrageously with Michael and Kenny and Jason flirted with her.
3. Ham radio, has become my obsession.
4. The sediment on the ocean floor, hundreds of metres below sea level is up to 300 m thick.
5. One of my math teachers, helped me learn, to achieve my goal, in the subject, by spending a great deal of time working with me.
6. The activities of juvenile gangs, are most noticeable in the increase of vandalism.
7. My brother grandfather and I had been going to the races since before I could remember.
8. It's no secret that a life of freedom, especially in small and less powerful countries, is a rare commodity.
9. I love to play hockey but, studies come first.
10. Patients must be fed when they are too weak to eat themselves.
11. Our diet should contain dairy products rich in protein and vegetables.
12. Television reaches almost every part of the earth.
13. If you can use cash or make your payments promptly.
14. The peace that broke out when the Cold War ended, did not last.
15. Harsh lighting, produces harsh photographs.
16. I am amused by how fast Hollywood stars fall in love, get married, have affairs, get divorced, fall in love again, get married again and so on.
17. The last step is to record the time drug and dosage on the patient's chart.
18. When rivers lose their velocity suspended particles of clay and silt are deposited creating fertile soils in river deltas.
19. My problems in math started the day I began school.
20. People in Istanbul, seem to think that hamburgers and fries are not worth eating.
21. Alcohol has become a problem for our schools and teachers are deeply concerned.
22. Divorce, like birth and death occurs every day.
23. The truth is that many alcoholics never seek help resulting in their own destruction.
24. As society becomes more and more prosperous, and small cities become big cities, the crime rate also increases.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Semicolon, Colon, Question Mark and Exclamation Point: Exercise

*Correct all misused semicolons, colons, question marks and exclamation points. Add punctuation marks where they are needed but missing. If a passage is already correct, write "Correct" after it.*

1. A Canadian citizen enjoys many rights and freedoms including: voting in federal and provincial elections, running for public office, travelling outside Canada with a Canadian passport, etc.
2. As soon as I saw my brother; I knew that something was wrong.
3. When was the last time you stopped to appreciate the things around you?
4. Why is it that Canadians go south for the winter, instead of looking for something in their own back yards.
5. In Toronto two of the largest buildings are: the Eaton Centre and Commerce Court!
6. Nowadays the thought of a couple happily married after 50 years is incomprehensible to many people; however, my Grandma and Grandpa Wilcox are living proof of a happily married couple after 50 years of togetherness.
7. Although I was swamped with projects, essays and homework; I now know that the workload could have been worse.
8. Bank robberies are meticulously planned to the finest detail to include: the time of the operation; the getaway route; disguises; choice of bank; and a look at police surveillance in the area.
9. In prison we could play: volleyball, soccer and table tennis.
10. Try to analyze what kind of car you need? Is it for city driving? Are you going to use the car in your work? Do you mind the gas money, or is convenience all you care about?
11. Since I had arrived early and knew the area well; I went to a nearby doughnut shop for a cup of coffee.
12. How we all love to eat!
13. Living with four people I learned two things compromise and respect for others.
14. At a wedding you see bright happy colours such as: red, white, purple, green and pink. At a funeral you see dark depressing colours such as: blue, brown and black.
15. Permissive parents always say "yes"; strict parents always say "no."
16. According to scientists; if our population continues to increase, we will have big troubles.
17. There are five major types of energy. Mechanical, chemical, electrical, atomic and solar.
18. I wonder how families can afford more than one car?
19. On page 71 Dickens describes Stephen "He was a good power-loom weaver, and a man of perfect integrity."
20. In Toronto the most common transportation vehicles are: streetcars, subway cars, buses, automobiles and motorcycles.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

## Apostrophes: Exercise

*Whenever you find an apostrophe error below, write the correction, with the word in which it occurs, in the blank at the right. Write "C" after any sentence that is correct.*

**Example:** The sun's ~~rays~~ become more direct in spring.

rays

1. All pet's should receive more sympathy than they do. \_\_\_\_\_
2. For entertainment Oshawa has movie theatres, ice rinks, roller arena's, nightclubs and all sorts of gym's to work out at. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Beatles influence and popularity will live as long as rock and roll exists. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The present art of producing with an assembly line system has come a long way since it's introduction. \_\_\_\_\_
5. As I plunged into the water, its cold temperature chilled every bone in my body. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Its exciting to see a great horse thundering down the track. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The only way to reduce student's financial problems is to increase their grants and loans. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Students who are 18 and over are the one's who need money the most. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Thousands of people fish Ontario's lake's and river's each year, but how many will take a minute to consider the result's of fished-out waters? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Driving a motorcycle give's one a sense of independence, because the rider know's people are watching. \_\_\_\_\_
11. People who have no confidence in their own work will try to use others ideas. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Politic's is what get's everyone talking and moving in this world. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Parent's moral values are passed on to the next generation. \_\_\_\_\_
14. My parent's emigrated from Greece. \_\_\_\_\_
15. The Rolling Stones' music was unique for its time. \_\_\_\_\_
16. After each goal the team that was scored against get's possession of the ball behind it's net. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Its a holiday to escape from work and see who can catch the most fish. \_\_\_\_\_
18. It's my parent's duty to take care of me; they are legally required to. \_\_\_\_\_

- Use a **dash** to set off words that interrupt the main thought of a sentence, or to show a sudden change of thought.  
EXAMPLE: The robber ran right by me—I could see his sweaty face—and disappeared down the alley.
- A dash can also be used to introduce information or an explanation. It can be used to mean “in other words” or “that is.”  
EXAMPLE: There’s only one way you’ll ever get me to jump out of an airplane—make sure it never leaves the ground.

**Add dashes where they are needed in the sentences below.**

1. There was a loud thud what a surprise from the back of the bowling alley.
2. We all turned around Marci even jumped up to see what was making the strange sound.
3. Paul Devereaux you know the person I mean told me the football game would be decided by a single touchdown.
4. I thought about taking another route the one through southern Manitoba.
5. I’d love to see *Love’s Labours Lost* again perhaps in August and bring Ravi.
6. There’s only one way to ride that bull take out millions of dollars in accident insurance.
7. Our plane left for Angola at long last around 2:45 P.M.
8. In the story Victor had one option marry the Count’s stepsister.
9. The conclusion to the mystery I don’t mind saying is somewhat elementary.
10. We ended up not going to the movie but that’s another story.
11. Horror movies I’m afraid to say are not my favourite form of entertainment.
12. The band leader and everyone else in her group should be congratulated.
13. It was the part of the play if you can believe it that was meant to add suspense.
14. This building and every one on the street like it must be demolished.
15. This man’s the culprit I recognize his face.
16. The game much to our annoyance has been postponed until May 1.
17. We finally arrived at the restaurant after the door was locked.
18. I know I can do it just give me a chance!
19. We want to travel in Canada maybe to the Maritimes later this summer.
20. My grandparents and others of their generation love to have visits with young people.

## **Some tips for Seminar Presentations**

### **Language is persuasive, formal, and clear (diction, syntax)**

When presenting, you need to use words that are precise and that maintain an academic tone.

Make sure you are preparing and rehearsing your script ahead of time, so that you stay clear under pressure. Use the vocabulary of literature that we've studied to model proper literary analysis for your classmates. Make sure that your syntax, grammar, and spelling are totally correct, both in your script and on any materials you share with the class. Also look up how to pronounce tricky words; mispronouncing words or misspelling them on materials undermines your credibility as an expert.

### **Links ideas effectively through the use of transitions**

Just like in your writing, you need to use transitions when you are speaking too. Cue the audience to the relationship between the ideas you are presenting, moving us carefully from your introduction/thesis/answer, through your premises, to your supporting proof, and finishing with your conclusion/extension. Pausing or changing your voice can help signal these shifts too. Also, don't be afraid to repeat key ideas (your thesis and premises, especially) so that they really sink in and people get them down in their notes.

### **Uses voice to communicate ideas (volume, pacing, inflection)**

Focus on using a strong, clear voice when presenting in class. This sometimes means slowing down and really enunciating (if you tend to mumble), or it might mean adding some energy to your voice and varying your volume and tone to keep the audience's attention. Getting louder at key moments, changing your inflection to emphasize key words, or pausing at key points are all signals that help listeners catch the most important ideas in what you are saying.

### **Uses body language to communicate ideas (eye contact, gestures, physicality)**

When we're nervous, it can be tempting to read word for word from our scripts or off of the overhead/powerpoint, but that's a sure way to lose the audience. You should use your body language to show how confident you are that your analysis is right! Show us you're the expert! Look around at everyone so that they feel like you're talking right to them (and not the back wall or your notes). Use your hand gestures to emphasize key points. Stand up and move around your "stage" space to draw the audience's attention to you. Body language really matters, too, if you're working in a group. When you're done talking, don't slouch off and stare at the floor - look at your group mates while they talk. Act like you're interested! If you look bored, we'll be bored too.

### **Think about it:**

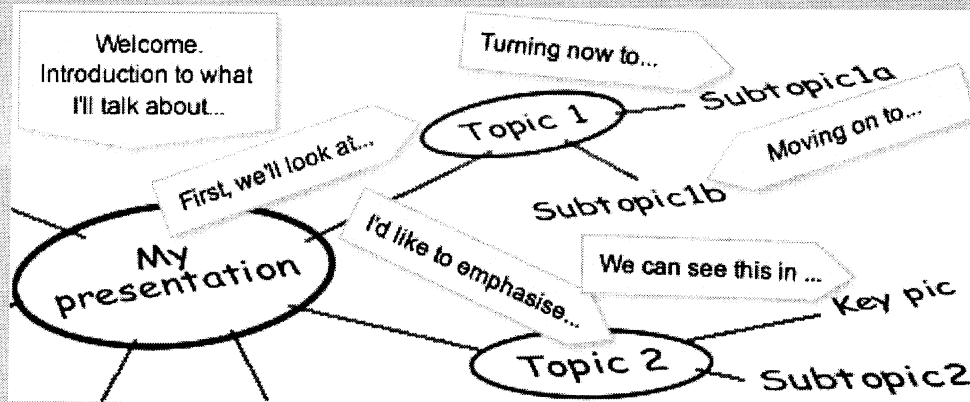
When it comes to presentations, what are you good at?

What are you working to improve? How will you do this?

# Oral Presentations – Sign Posting

## Using 'signposting'

In oral presentations you need to make it clear to your listeners when you are moving to a new section, and when you are telling them something significant. This is known as 'signposting'.



[D]

Here are some useful signposting phrases:

- I think it's important to emphasise...
- What's significant here is that...
- I'll move on now to...
- Turning now to...
- In conclusion...
- To summarise...

You can draw attention to a point by using phrases like:

- You might be wondering about...
- You've probably realised that...

A useful technique for beginning a new section or for highlighting an important point is to use a question, for example:

- What is the significance of...?
- What are the consequences of...?
- What recommendations can be made in these circumstances?

A useful technique for Concluding your oral essay is to create a boildown, for example:

- So what have I told you today?
- So what is the most important lesson I've taught you today?

**Tip:** Observe other presenters to identify their signposting strategies, and develop a repertoire of your own.

# What can be done about listening?

Ralph G. Nichols

*The Supervisor's Notebook*, Scott, Foresman & Co.

Vol. 22, No. 1, Spring 1960

The business of becoming a good listener primarily consists of getting rid of bad listening habits and replacing them with their counterpart skills.

## Ten Bad Listening Habits

Several years ago I identified what seemed to me to be the ten worst listening habits in America today. Though my discussion of them here is in relation to the ways they may affect us in a formal listening situation, the effects of these habits can be just as devastating in less formal listening situations at home, at school, in business or social groups.

### 1. Calling the Subject Dull

Bad listeners often find a subject too dry and dusty to command their attention and they use this as an excuse to wander off on a mental tangent. Good listeners may have heard a dozen talks on the same subject before, but they quickly decide to see if the speaker has anything that can be of use to them.

The key to good listening is that little three-letter word **use**. Good listeners are sifters, screeners, and winnowers of the wheat from the chaff. They are always hunting for something practical or worthwhile to store in the back of their mind to put to work in the months and years ahead. G.K. Chesterton said many years ago that in all this world there is no such thing as an uninteresting subject, only uninterested people.

### 2. Criticizing the Speaker

It's the indoor sport of most bad listeners to find fault with the way a speaker looks, acts, and talks. Good listeners may make a few of the same criticisms but they quickly begin to pay attention to what is said, not how it is said. After a few minutes, good listeners become oblivious to the speaker's mannerisms or his/her faults in delivery. They know that the message is ten times as important as the clothing in which it comes garbed.

### 3. Getting Overstimulated

Listening efficiency drops to zero when the listeners react so strongly to one part of the presentation that they miss what follows. At the University of Minnesota we think this bad habit is so critical that, in the classes where we teach listening, we put at the top of every blackboard the words: **Withhold evaluation until comprehension is complete – hear the speaker out**. It is important that we understand the speaker's point of view fully before we accept or reject it.

### 4. Listening Only For Facts

I used to think it was important to listen for facts. But I've found that almost without exception it is the poor listeners who say they listen for facts. They do get facts, but they garble a shocking number and completely lose most of them.

Good listeners listen for the main ideas in a speech or lecture and use them as connecting threads to give sense and system to the whole. In the end they have more facts appended to those connecting threads than the catalogers who listen only for facts. It isn't necessary to worry too much about fact as such, for facts have meaning only when principles supply the context.

### 5. Trying To Outline Everything

There's nothing wrong with making an outline of a speech -- provided the speaker is following an outline method of presentation. But probably not more than a half or perhaps a third of all speeches given are built around a carefully prepared outline.

Good listeners are flexible. They adapt their note taking to the organizational pattern of the speaker--they may make an outline, they may write a summary, they may list facts and principles -- but whatever they do they are not rigid about it.

### 6. Faking Attention

The pose of chin propped on hand with gaze fixed on speaker does not guarantee good listening. Having adopted this pose, having shown the overt courtesy of appearing to listen to the speaker, the bad listener feels conscience free to take off on any of a thousand tangents.

Good listening is not relaxed and passive at all. It's dynamic; it's constructive; it's characterized by a slightly increased heart rate, quicker circulation of the blood, and a small rise in bodily temperature. It's energy consuming; it's plain hard work. The best definition I know of the word **attention** is a "collection of tensions that can be resolved only by getting the facts or ideas that the speaker is trying to convey."

## 7. Tolerating Distraction

Poor listeners are easily distracted and may even create disturbances that interfere with their own listening efficiency and that of others. They squirm, talk with their neighbors, or shuffle papers. They make little or no effort to conceal their boredom. Good listeners try to adjust to whatever distractions there are and soon find that they can ignore them. Certainly, they do not distract others.

## 8. Choosing Only What's Easy

Often we find the poor listeners have shunned listening to serious presentations on radio or television. There is plenty of easy listening available, and this has been their choice. The habit of avoiding even moderately difficult expository presentations in one's leisure-time listening can handicap anyone who needs to use listening as a learning tool.

## 9. Letting Emotion-Laden Words Get In The Way

It is a fact that some words carry such an emotional load that they cause some listeners to tune a speaker right out: such as, affirmative action and feminist—they are fighting words to some people.

I sometimes think that one of the most important studies that could be made would be the identification of the one hundred greatest trouble-making words in the English language. If we knew what these words were, we could ring them out into the open, discuss them, and get them behind us. It's so foolish to let a mere symbol for something stand between us and learning.

## 10. Wasting the Differential Between Speech and Thought Speed

Americans speak at an average rate of 125 words per minute in ordinary conversation. A speaker before an audience slows down to about 100 words per minute. How fast do listeners listen? Or, to put the question in a better form, how many words a minute do people normally **think** as they listen? If all their thoughts were measurable in words per minute, the answer would seem to be that an audience of any size will average 400 to 500 words per minute as they listen.

Here is a problem. The differential between the speaker at 100 words per minute and the easy thought speed of the listener at 400 or 500 words per minute is a snare and a pitfall. It lures the listener into a false sense of security and breeds mental tangents.

However, with training in listening, the difference between thought speed and speech speed can be made a source of tremendous power. Listeners can hear everything the speaker says and not what s/he omits saying; they can listen between the lines and do some evaluating as the speech progresses. To do this, to exploit this power, good listeners must automatically practice three skills in concentration:

**Anticipating the next point.** Good listeners try to anticipate the points a speaker will make in developing a subject. If they guess right, the speaker's words reinforce their guesses. If they guess wrong, they'll have to do some thinking to discover why they and the speaker failed to agree. In either case, their chances of understanding and remembering what was said is nearly double what it would have been if they had simply listened passively.

**Identifying supporting material.** Good listeners try to identify a speaker's supporting material. After all, a person can't go on making points without giving listeners some of the evidence on which the conclusions are based, and the bricks and mortar that have been used to build up the argument should be examined for soundness.

**Recapitulating.** With the tremendous thought speed that everyone has, it is easy to summarize in about five seconds the highlights covered by a speaker in about five minutes. When the speaker stops to take a swallow of water or walks over to the blackboard to write something or even takes a deep breath, the experienced listener makes a mental summary. Half a dozen summaries of the highlights of a fifty-minute talk will easily double the understanding and retention of important points in a talk.