Summer Reading Assignment AP English Language and Composition 11th Grade

Reading Assignment #1 – *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves* by Lynne Truss

Read the book carefully. Pay careful attention to what Truss says and how she says it.

Writing Assignment #1 – *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves* Rhetorical Analysis Essay

In an MLA formatted essay of 2-3 double-spaced pages, identify and analyze the rhetorical devices and strategies used by Truss in order to achieve her purpose. (Note: there may be several purposes from which to choose.)

In-Class Assessment – *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves* Exam

During the first week of school, there will be an exam to assess your reading of *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves*.

Reading Assignment #2 – “Learning to Read and Write” an essay by Fredrick Douglass

Perform a close read and annotate the text.

Writing Assignment #2 – “Learning to Read and Write” Rhetorical Analysis Essay

In an MLA formatted essay of 2-3 double-spaced pages, identify and analyze the rhetorical devices and strategies used by Douglass in order to achieve his purpose.

In-Class Assessment – “Learning to Read and Write” Exam

During the first week of school, there will be an exam to assess your reading of “Learning to Read and Write”.

Follow the guidelines provided on how to write a rhetorical analysis essay. Use the following website for information on MLA format- [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

Reading Assignment #3 – *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser

Read the book carefully. Pay careful attention to what Schlosser says and how he says it.

Writing Assignment #3 – *Fast Food Nation* Essay Question Responses Choose 6 essay questions to answer.

Specific Essay Instructions for answering essay questions

- MLA formatting
- Formal, academic voice
- A well-developed response, incorporating appropriate and relevant text citations and references
Essay Questions (choose 6 questions to answer) for Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser

Introduction: Readers must trust the good character, fairness, and reliability of the writer before they are willing to accept his arguments. The philosopher Aristotle called this quality ethos. Analyze the ways Eric Schlosser establishes his ethos, helping the audience to trust the writer and see the importance of his investigation of the fast food industry. Be sure to explore the chapter fully, particularly the second half.

Chapter 1: Some readers find it counter-productive to Schlosser’s argument against the fast food industry that he would create such a sympathetic portrait of fast food pioneer, Carl Kartcher. Discuss the relevance of providing this background information in formulating an argument.

Chapter 2: Analyze how Schlosser’s strategy of comparison between Disney and McDonalds, and their founders, makes important points about the fast food industry and their marketing strategies.

Chapter 3: Logos appeals to the mind; Pathos appeals to the heart. Pretend you are sociologist Robert Leidner who predicted that as businesses increasingly sought greater efficiency and output, workers would become increasingly “interchangeable”. Write a short response to the fast food industry, in the voice of Leidner, which points out the dangers of this policy toward employees. Referencing this chapter, appeal to both the logos and pathos of your audience. You do not need to use a letter format.

Chapter 4: Analyze how Schlosser explores irony in this chapter titled “Success” through his focus on Dave Feamster’s Little Caesar franchise and the concluding spokespeople (especially Reeves) at the sales seminar.

Chapter 5: Scientifically, Schlosser argues that a key factor in the success of the fast food industry is artificial flavor and coloring. What is the effect of his description of “A typical artificial strawberry flavor, like the kind found in a Burger King strawberry milkshake, ...”

Chapter 6: “For a moment, we sat quietly on top of the hill, staring at the speedway bathed in twilight, at this oval strip of pavement, this unsettling omen” (135). What is the primary rhetorical purpose of the sentence, in relation to the entire chapter?
Chapter 7: Upton Sinclair argues in his novel The Jungle “Human beings, had been made ‘cogs in the great packing machine.’” Who is Schlosser arguing are the “Cogs in the Great Machine” in this chapter? Evaluate the analogy.

Chapter 8: Schlosser concludes “The Most Dangerous Job” accounting the trials of Kenny Dobbins. What is the effect of his placing the dramatic story at the conclusion of the chapter rather than at the beginning of the chapter? Do you see similar patterns of organization in other Schlosser’s chapter? If so, which chapters?

Chapter 9: Analyze how Schlosser combines logical and emotional appeals in this chapter to create an effective message. In other words, how does he manage all this scientific data, making it easier to understand and read? Cite specific strategies such as diction, analogy, facts, cause and effect.

Chapter 10: History, places, people and events are often alluded to in this chapter. Cite at least three specific examples, and explain how these are appropriate illustrations for advancing Schlosser’s argument.

Epilogue: An epilogue is actually a conclusion, which, generally, looks to the future from where a book ends. Explain how the content of this chapter is an appropriate conclusion to Schlosser’s criticism of the fast food industry. How, and why, does he employ specific facts and illustrations?

Afterword: An afterword is included to provide additional information after the initial publication of the book. Why would this additional information be relevant to his argument? Discuss how the content of this chapter helps bolster, or discredit Schlosser’s ethos, particularly the section titled “wrong wrong wrong”.

In-Class Assessment – Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser

During the first week of school, there will be an exam to assess your reading of “Learning to Read and Write”.

Essays and written responses are due on the first day of your AP English Language & Composition class. Exams on the reading material will also be given on the first day of class.

See uploaded documents on the school’s website.
FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Learning to Read and Write

Frederick Douglass was born a slave in 1818 in Maryland. He learned to read and write, escaped to New York, and became a leader in the abolitionist movement. He engaged in speaking tours and edited North Star, a newspaper named for the one guide escaping southern slaves could rely on to find their way to freedom. Douglass is best known for his autobiography, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845), from which "Learning to Read and Write" is excerpted. In this selection, Douglass tells the story of his coming to literacy. As you read, keep your eye on the ways in which Douglass describes the world opening up for him as he learns his letters and the range of emotions this process evokes in him.

I lived in Master Hugh's family about seven years. During this time, I succeeded in learning to read and write. In accomplishing this, I was compelled to resort to various stratagems. I had no regular teacher. My mistress, who had kindly commenced to instruct me, had, in compliance with the advice and direction of her husband, not only ceased to instruct, but had set her face against my being instructed by any one else. It is due, however, to my mistress to say of her, that she did not adopt this course of treatment immediately. She at first lacked the depravity indispensible to shutting me up in mental darkness. It was at least necessary for her to have some training in the exercise of irresponsible power, to make her equal to the task of treating me as though I were a brute.

My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tender-hearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slaveholder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that for her to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me. When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tender-hearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear. She had bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and comfort for every mourner that came within her reach. Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamb-like disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness. The first step in her downward course was in her ceasing to instruct me. She now commenced to practise her husband's precepts. She finally became even more violent in her opposition than her husband himself. She was not satisfied with simply doing as well as he had commanded; she seemed anxious to do better. Nothing seemed to make her more angry than to see me with a newspaper. She seemed to think that here lay the danger. I have had her rush at me with a face made all up of fury, and snatch from me a newspaper, in a manner that fully revealed her apprehension. She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other.

From this time I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book, and was at once called to give an account of myself. All this, however, was too late. The first step had been taken. Mistress, in teaching me the alphabet, had given me the inch, and no precaution could prevent me from taking the ell.

The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met in the street. As many of these as I could, I converted into teachers. With their kindly aid, obtained at different times and in different places, I finally succeeded in learning to read. When I was sent of errands, I always took my book with me, and by going one part of my errand quickly, I found time to get a lesson before my return. I used also to carry bread with me, enough of which was always in the house, and to which I was always welcome; for I was much better off in this regard than many of the poor white children in our neighborhood. This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge. I am strongly tempted to give the names of two or three of those little boys, as a
testimonial of the gratitude and affection I bear them; but prudence forbids:—not that it would injure me, but it might embarrass them; for it is almost an unpardonable offence to teach slaves to read in this Christian country. It is enough to say of the dear little fellows, that they lived on Philpot Street, very near Durgin and Bailey's ship-yard. I used to talk this matter of slavery over with them. I would sometimes say to them, I wished I could be as free as they would be when they got to be men. "You will be free as soon as you are twenty-one, but I am a slave for life! Have not I as good a right to be free as you have?" These words used to trouble them; they would express for me the liveliest sympathy, and console me with the hope that something would occur by which I might be free.

I was now about twelve years old, and the thought of being a slave for life began to bear heavily upon my heart. Just about this time, I got hold of a book entitled "The Columbian Orator." Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book. Among much of other interesting matter, I found in it a dialogue between a master and his slave. The slave was represented as having run away from his master three times. The dialogue represented the conversation which took place between them, when the slave was retaken the third time. In this dialogue, the whole argument in behalf of slavery was brought forward by the master, all of which was disposed of by the slave. The slave was made to say some very smart as well as impressive things in reply to his master—things which had the desired though unexpected effect; for the conversation resulted in the voluntary emancipation of the slave on the part of the master.

In the same book, I met with one of Sheridan's mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation. These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. They gave tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul, which had frequently lashed through my mind, and died away for want of utterance. The moral which I gained from the dialogue was the power of truth over the conscience of even a slaveholder. What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights. The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts, and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery; but while they relieved me of one difficulty, they brought on another even more painful than the one of which I was relieved. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. I could regard them in no other light than a band of successful robbers, who had left their homes, and gone to Africa, and stolen us from our homes, and in a strange land reduced us to slavery. I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men. As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. As I writhed under it, I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity. I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Any thing, no matter what, to get rid of thinking! It was this everlasting thinking of my condition that tormented me. There was no getting rid of it. It was pressed upon me by every object within sight or hearing, animate or inanimate. The silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness. Freedom now appeared, to disappear no more forever. It was heard in every sound, and seen in every thing. It was ever present to torment me with a sense of my wretched condition. I saw nothing without seeing it, I heard nothing without hearing it, and felt nothing without feeling it. It looked from every star; it smiled in every calm, breathed in every wind, and moved in every storm.

I often found myself regretting my own existence, and wishing myself dead; and but for the hope of being free, I have no doubt but that I should have killed myself, or done something for which I should have been killed. While in this state of mind, I was eager to hear any one speak of slavery. I was a ready listener. Every little while, I could hear something about the abolitionists. It was some time before I found what the word meant. It was always used in such connections as to make it an interesting word to me. If a slave ran away and succeeded in getting clear, or if a slave killed his master, set fire to a barn, or did anything very wrong in the mind of a slaveholder, it was spoken of as the fruit of abolition. Hearing the word in this connection very often, I set about learning what it meant. The dictionary afforded me little or no
help. I found it was "the act of abolishing"; but then I did not know what was to be abolished. Here I was perplexed. I did not dare to ask any one about its meaning, for I was satisfied that it was something they wanted me to know very little about. After a patient waiting, I got one of our city papers, containing an account of the number of petitions from the north, praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and of the slave trade between the States. From this time I understood the words abolition and abolitionist, and always drew near when that word was spoken, expecting to hear something of importance to myself and fellow-slaves. The light broke in upon me by degrees. I went one day down on the wharf of Mr. Waters; and seeing two Irishmen unloading a scow of stone, I went, unasked, and helped them. When we had finished, one of them came to me and asked me if I were a slave. I told him I was. He asked, "Are ye a slave for life?" I told him that I was. The good Irishman seemed to be deeply affected by the statement. He said to the other that it was a pity so fine a little fellow as myself should be a slave for life. He said it was a shame to hold me. They both advised me to run away to the north; that I should find friends there, and that I should be free. I pretended not to be interested in what they said, and treated them as if I did not understand them; for I feared they might be treacherous. White men have been known to encourage slaves to escape, and then, to get the reward, catch them and return them to their masters. I was afraid that these seemingly good men might use me so; but I nevertheless remembered their advice, and from that time I resolved to run away. I looked forward to a time at which it would be safe for me to escape. I was too young to think of doing so immediately; besides, I wished to learn how to write, as I might have occasion to write my own pass. I consoled myself with the hope that I should one day find a good chance. Meanwhile, I would learn to write.

The idea as to how I might learn to write was suggested to me by being in Durgin and Bailey's ship-yard, and frequently seeing the ship carpenters, after hewing, and getting a piece of timber ready for use, write on the timber the name of that part of the ship for which it was intended. When a piece of timber was intended for the larboard side, it would be marked thus—"L." When a piece was for the starboard side, it would be marked thus—"S." A piece for the larboard side forward, would be marked thus—"L. F." When a piece was for starboard side forward, it would be marked thus—"S. F." For larboard aft, it would be marked thus—"L. A." For starboard aft, it would be marked thus—"S. A." I soon learned the names of these letters, and for what they were intended when placed upon a piece of timber in the ship-yard. I immediately commenced copying them, and in a short time was able to make the four letters named. After that, when I met with any boy who I knew could write, I would tell him I could write as well as he. The next word would be, "I don't believe you. Let me see you try it." I would then make the letters which I had been so fortunate as to learn, and ask him to beat that. In this way I got a good many lessons in writing, which it is quite possible I should never have gotten in any other way. During this time, my copy-book was the board fence, brick wall, and pavement; my pen and ink was a lump of chalk. With these, I learned mainly how to write. I then commenced and continued copying the Italics in Webster's Spelling Book, until I could make them all without looking on the book. By this time, my little Master Thomas had gone to school, and learned how to write, and had written over a number of copy-books. These had been brought home, and shown to some of our near neighbors, and then laid aside. My mistress used to go to class meeting at the Wilk Street meetinghouse every Monday afternoon, and leave me to take care of the house. When left thus, I used to spend the time in writing in the spaces left in Master Thomas's copy-book, copying what he had written. I continued to do this until I could write a hand very similar to that of Master Thomas. Thus, after a long, tedious effort for years, I finally succeeded in learning how to write.

For Discussion and Writing

1. List the different ways Douglass taught himself to read and write. List also some other things he learns.

2. The main focus of this passage is the process by which Douglass began to become literate. Who else in the passage undergoes a "learning" process, and what are the results?

3. Douglass teaches himself to read and write in a society that condemns
MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS
These multiple-choice questions refer to paragraphs 1-4.

1. The overall organization of this excerpt can best be described as
a. a chronological sequence of events
b. a first-person narrative with little analytical commentary by the speaker
c. an angry polemic against the evils of slavery
d. a statement of the narrator's accomplishment followed by an explanation of how he reached it
e. a sympathetic portrayal of a system that victimized both the oppressor and the oppressed

2. The final sentence in paragraph 1 includes which of the following?
I. understatement
II. figurative language
III. a complex sentence
a. I only
b. II only
c. I and II only
d. II and III only
e. I, II, and III

3. In paragraph 2, Douglass uses all of the following EXCEPT
a. metonymy
b. personification
c. anaphora
d. allusion
c. connotation

4. What does Douglass mean by his description of his mistress as "an apt woman" (paragraph 2)?
a. admirable
b. appropriate
c. deceptive
d. intelligent
e. shrewd

5. What is the rhetorical purpose of paragraph 3?
a. to qualify points made in the previous paragraph
b. to emphasize how Douglass's reactions turned to action
c. to offer a counterargument to the one presented in the previous paragraph
d. to qualify Douglass's understanding of the importance of learning to read
e. to provide a transition from Douglass's past experiences to those in the present

6. What is Douglass's attitude toward the young boys he describes in paragraph 4?
a. angry reproach
b. studied indifference
c. condescending pity
d. reflective appreciation
e. grudging respect

7. In the context of this passage, all of the following are examples of irony except
a. "lacked the depravity" (paragraph 1)
b. "the simplicity of her soul" (paragraph 2)
c. "anxious to do better" (paragraph 2)
d. "first step had been taken" (paragraph 3)
e. "I was much better off in this regard" (paragraph 4)

8. The primary audience that Douglass is addressing in this excerpt is/are
a. slaveholders
b. Master Hugh's family
c. sympathizers to the abolitionist cause
d. other ex-slaves
e. readers of The Columbian Orator

SUGGESTED WRITING ASSIGNMENTS
1. Write an essay in which you analyze the appeals to ethos, logos, and pathos in "Learning to Read and Write."
2. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the experiences of Frederick Douglass and Malcolm X as they learned to read and write.
3. Douglass finds that the learning he has experienced has a negative side as well as a positive side. Write about a time when you learned something that had both advantages and disadvantages, or that both helped and harmed you.
4. Define another literacy that you have besides being able to read and write (for example, computer literacy, a second language, numerical literacy). What power does it give you? How does it make you a member of a community or of certain groups?

CONNECTIONS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE 50 ESSAYS
INSIDE
The following essays address the power inherent in the mastery of language (reading, writing, speaking):
- "Learning to Read" by Malcolm X
- "Aria: Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood" by Richard Rodriguez
- "I Just Wanna Be Average" by Mike Rose

OUTSIDE
- African American poet Robert Hayden's 1962 poem "Frederick Douglass," which appeared on the 2001 AP Literature exam, offers a tribute as well as an interpretation of this excerpt by Douglass. Students might discuss how Hayden's view is supported by the essay "Learning to Read and Write" and the biography of Frederick Douglass: www.citadams.com/roberthaydenl.html
- Students might read Douglass's famous speech "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" delivered on July 5, 1852, as a study in rhetorical strategies. Since it is quite long, excerpts would be appropriate: douglasarchives.org/doug_a10.htm
- Both Douglass and Malcolm X comment on the role of education in a democracy that has ostensibly failed them or excluded them. Their writings, if coupled with those of early educational theorists like John Dewey and Horace Mann, and with those of more contemporary analysts like Neil Postman and Diane Ravitch, could make for an interesting dialogue about educational development. For a more creative assignment, consider a conversation between, for instance, Douglass, Malcolm X, Dewey, and Ravitch on today's public urban school systems.
HOW TO WRITE: AP Rhetorical Analysis Paragraphs and Essays

Things you must know in order to accurately analyze a text:

1. SOAPS
2. Rhetorical Strategies
   a. Appeals (ethos, logos, pathos)
   b. Style (diction, syntax, details, imagery, tone, etc.)
3. Why did the author choose these strategies for the particular audience, occasion, and/or purpose?
   a. This is the analysis part! Without this, you are merely summarizing the text.
   b. Think about these questions:
      i. HOW do the rhetorical strategies help the author achieve his/her purpose?
      ii. WHY does the author chose those strategies for that particular audience and for that particular occasion?

Once you’ve identified the information above, it’s time to begin putting your thoughts and ideas into a format that proves you have accurately analyzed the text. There are many ways to write an effective rhetorical analysis essay. Below is one way that is a good, simple format to help you get started. You may find as you become more comfortable with analysis that you want to deviate from this format. That’s fine as long as you are still focusing on numbers 1-3 from above.

Introduction
The introductory paragraph to an analysis essay is usually brief. However, it must contain some essential information.

Put SOAPS in your introduction and follow this format:

FORMAT:
1. Speaker, Occasion, and Subject
   (Writer’s credentials), (writer’s first and last name), in his/her (type of text), (title of text), (strong verb – see list at end of this handout) (writer’s subject).
2. Purpose
   (Writer’s last name)’s purpose is to (what the writer does in the text).
3. Audience
   He/she adopts a[n] (adjective describing the attitude/feeling conveyed by the writer) tone in order to (verb phrase describing what the writer wants readers to do/think) in his/her (intended audience).

EXAMPLE:
Novelist, Amy Tan, in her narrative essay, “Fish Cheeks,” recounts an embarrassing Christmas Eve dinner when she was 14 years old. Tan’s purpose is to convey the idea that, at fourteen, she wasn’t able to recognize the love her mother had for her or the sacrifices she made. She adopts a sentimental tone in order to appeal to similar feelings and experiences in her adult readers.
Body
This is the analysis part! This is where you include a detailed explanation of strategies used by the writer.

When writing an analysis, it is crucial that you work chronologically through the text. This means that you start at the beginning of the text and work your way through it by discussing what the writer is saying and the effectiveness of the strategies he/she is using at the beginning, middle, and end of the text.

Sometimes this means that you will discuss each paragraph (one at a time), and sometimes this means that you will divide the text into sections and discuss the beginning, middle, and end of the text. Whether you discuss each paragraph or each section depends on the length and organization of the text itself.

To help you move chronologically through the text, there are transition words you can use. A few of them are listed below:

- Begins
- Opens
- Closes
- Contrasts
- Shifts to
- Juxtaposes
- Ends
- Moves to

Every analysis paragraph MUST:

- Identify the part of the text you are analyzing by using transition words and strong verbs to explain what is being said.
- Identify the strongest rhetorical strategies used in that particular section. This includes incorporating specific text examples (exact words from the text – see last page of this handout for proper format) into your own words. Do NOT try to discuss every strategy the writer uses; pick the strongest!
- Clearly and specifically explain how the rhetorical strategies are used to help the writer achieve his purpose and reach his audience.
- The above items must be woven together seamlessly into one sophisticated paragraph of the body of your analysis essay. A sample format is below:

**FORMAT and EXAMPLE** [from Pres. Reagan’s speech after the space shuttle *Challenger* explosion in the 1980s]:

1. The first sentence identifies which section of the text you are discussing and the main idea of that section.

   (Writer’s last name) (transition word) his/her (type of text) by (strong verb) that (main idea of this section of the text).

   Reagan begins his tribute to the *Challenger* astronauts by acknowledging that the shuttle accident has appropriately postponed his planned State of the Union address and by expressing the depth of his and his wife’s personal grief.

2. The second sentence conveys the writer’s support for the main idea by identifying and providing a specific example for one rhetorical strategy used by the writer. [This sentence is repeated if you want to discuss more than one rhetorical strategy.]

   He appeals to the mournful emotions of the audience by admitting that he and Nancy are “pained to the core” (3), that today is rightfully a “day for mourning and remembering” (2-3), and that the accident is “truly a national loss” (4).
3. The third sentence explains how the rhetorical strategies you discussed in the previous sentences help the writer achieve his purpose by using an in order to statement.

He joins in this time of mourning in order to unify the nation and humbly admit that “we share this pain with all of the people of our country” (4).

4. The fourth sentence identifies the effect of the writer’s use of these rhetorical strategies on the audience.

This outpouring of emotion from the president conveys a calming tone that reassures the Nation that their grief is both understandable and proper.

Put it all together and this is what one paragraph of the body of a rhetorical analysis essay might look like:

Reagan begins his tribute to the Challenger astronauts by acknowledging that the shuttle accident has appropriately postponed his planned State of the Union address and by expressing the depth of his and his wife’s personal grief. He appeals to the mournful emotions of the audience by admitting that he and Nancy are “pained to the core” (3), that today is rightfully a “day for mourning and remembering” (2-3), and that the accident is “truly a national loss” (4). He joins in this time of mourning in order to unify the nation and humbly admit that “we share this pain with all of the people of our country” (4). This outpouring of emotion from the president conveys a calming tone that reassures the Nation that their grief is both understandable and proper.

**Conclusion**
The conclusion is probably the easiest part. Be brief. In one-two sentences, simply remind your reader of the things you said in the introduction.

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**Strong vs. Weak Verbs**
To help you move away from summary and toward ANALYSIS, you need to begin to incorporate strong verbs into your writing when discussing the writer’s rhetorical choices. Below is a list of verbs that are considered weak because they imply summary and a list of verbs that are considered strong because they imply analysis. Strive to use the stronger verbs in your essays to help push yourself away from summary and toward analysis: “The writer flatters…” NOT “The writer says…”

**WEAK VERBS (Summary)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>says</th>
<th>relates</th>
<th>goes on to say</th>
<th>tells</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>this quote shows</td>
<td>explains</td>
<td>states</td>
<td>shows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STRONG VERBS (Analysis)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>implies</th>
<th>trivializes</th>
<th>flatters</th>
<th>qualifies</th>
<th>processes</th>
<th>describes</th>
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<td>suggests</td>
<td>denigrates</td>
<td>lionizes</td>
<td>dismisses</td>
<td>analyzes</td>
<td>questions</td>
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<td>compares</td>
<td>vilifies</td>
<td>praises</td>
<td>supports</td>
<td>enumerates</td>
<td>contrasts</td>
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<td>emphasizes</td>
<td>demonizes</td>
<td>establishes</td>
<td>admonishes</td>
<td>expounds</td>
<td>argues</td>
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<td>defines</td>
<td>ridicules</td>
<td>minimizes</td>
<td>narrates</td>
<td>lists</td>
<td>warns</td>
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</table>
Powerful and meaningful verbs to use in your analyses

Alternatives to “show”

Acknowledge
Address
Analyze
Apply
Argue
Assert
Augment
Broaden
Calculate
Capitalize
Characterize
Claim
Clarify
Compare
Complicate
Confine
Connect
Consider
Construct
Contradict
Correct
Create
Convince
Critique
Declare
Deduce
Defend
Demonstrate
Deny
Describe
Determine
Differentiate
Disagree
Discard
Discover
Discuss
Dismiss
Distinguish
Duplicate
Elaborate
Emphasize
Employ
Enable

Engage
Enhance
Establish
Evaluate
Exacerbate
Examine
Exclude
Exhibit
Expand
Explain
Exploit
Express
Extend
Facilitate
Feature
Forecast
Formulate
Fracture
Generalize
Group
Guide
Hamper
Hypothesize
Identify
Illuminate
Illustrate
Impair
Implement
Implicate
Imply
Improve
Include
Incorporate
Indicate
Induce
Initiate
Inquire
Instigate
Integrate
Interpret
Intervene
Invert
Isolate
Justify
Locate
Loosen
Maintain  Regard
Manifest  Reject
Manipulate  Relate
Measure  Rely
Merge  Remove
Minimize  Repair
Modify  Report
Monitor  Represent
Necessitate  Resolve
Negate  Retrieve
Nullify  Reveal
Obscure  Revise
Observe  Separate
Obtain  Shape
Offer  Signify
Omit  Simulate
Optimize  Solve
Organize  Specify
Outline  Structure
Overstate  Suggest
Persist  Summarize
Point out  Support
Possess  Suspend
Predict  Sustain
Present  Tailor
Probe  Terminate
Produce  Testify
Promote  Theorize
Propose  Translate
Prove  Undermine
Provide  Understand
Qualify  Unify
Quantify  Utilize
Question  Validate
Realize  Vary
Recommend  View
Reconstruct  Vindicate
Redefine  Yield
Reduce
Refer
Reference
Refine
Reflect
Refute
Analyzing DICTON

Diction is simply the words the writer chooses to convey a particular meaning.

When analyzing diction, look for specific words or short phrases that seem stronger than the others (ex. Bragg’s use of slingshot instead of travel). Diction is NEVER the entire sentence!

Also, look for a pattern (or similarity) in the words the writer chooses (ex. Do the words imply sadness, happiness, etc?). This pattern helps to create a particular kind of diction.

This pattern can also include repetition of the same words or phrases. Repeating the same word or phrase helps the reader emphasize a point, feeling, etc.

Effective diction is shaped by words that are clear, concrete, and exact. Good writers avoid words like pretty, nice, and bad because they are not specific enough. Instead, they rely on words that invoke a specific effect in order to bring the reader into the event being described.

**Examples:**
A coat isn’t torn; it is tattered.
The US Army does not want revenge; it is thirsting for revenge.
A door does not shut; it thuds.

Diction depends on subject, purpose, occasion, and audience.
The subject often determines how specific or sophisticated the diction needs to be. For example, articles on computers are filled with a specialized language: e-mail, e-shopping, web, interface.
Many topics generated special vocabularies to convey meaning.

The writer’s purpose – whether to persuade, entertain, inform – partly determines diction. Words chosen to impart a particular effect on the reader reflect the writer’s purpose. For example, if an author’s purpose is to inform, the reader should expect straightforward diction. On the other hand, if the author’s purpose is to entertain, the readers will likely encounter words used in ironic, playful, or unexpected ways.

Diction also depends on occasion. Formal diction is reserved for scholarly writing and serious texts. Informal diction is often used in narrative essays and newspaper editorials. Colloquial diction and slang are typically used to capture the language of a particular time frame or culture.

Finally, the type of diction a writer uses depends on the audience (readers, listeners). An author who uses sophisticated diction knows he is writing for an intelligent audience. An author who uses more informal diction knows he is writing for an audience of varied intelligence.

When you are writing an essay in which you are analyzing the diction of the writer:
Avoid saying: “The writer used diction…” – since this is obvious (diction IS the words on the page; without them, the page would be blank 😐).
Instead, say: “The writer creates a ______________ diction through the use of…” OR “The language of the text is ______________.”

Below are just a few words that you may use to **describe the type of diction** used by the writer. You may want to add words to this list or circle the ones you use frequently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Learned</th>
<th>Literal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
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<td>Insincere</td>
<td>Vulgar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jargon</td>
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</table>
Analyzing SYNTAX

Syntax refers to the way words are arranged within sentences.

Schemes
One aspect of syntax is schemes. Most English sentences follow a subject-verb-object pattern (ex. I went to the store.) Deviating from this pattern can serve to add emphasize to the author’s ideas. [See the scheme section of your Style handout for different ways authors can change the pattern of their sentences.]

Sentence Length
Another aspect of syntax is sentence length. Good writers will use a variety for emphasis.

- **Short sentences** – imply straightforward
- **Long sentences** – imply descriptive, detailed

Sentence Type
A third aspect of syntax is sentence type. Again, good writers use a variety.

- **Simple**: subject-verb (I went to the store.)
- **Compound**: 2 independent clauses joined by a conjunction (I went to the store, and I bought candy.)
- **Complex**: independent clause and dependent clause (While traveling to the store, I saw my friend.)
- **Compound-complex**: 2 independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses (While traveling to the store, I saw my friend, and she gave me money for candy.)
- **Declarative**: statement (I went to the store.)
- **Exclamatory**: strong feeling (What a wonderful candy store!)
- **Interrogative**: question (Is this a store?)
- **Imperative**: command (Go to the store.)

Punctuation
A final aspect of syntax is punctuation. Yes, good writers use a variety here too.

- **Semicolon** (;) gives equal weight to two or more independent clauses in a sentence. Writers use this to reinforce parallel ideas and show how both ideas are equally important
- **Colon** (:) directs the reader’s attention to the words that follow. Writers use this to show the reader that the information after the colon is important.
- **Dash** (-) marks a sudden change in thought or tone or sets off a brief summary
Analyzing TONE

**Tone** is the writer’s attitude or feeling about the subject of his text.

It is a special kind of rhetorical strategy because **tone is created by the writer’s use of all of the other rhetorical strategies**.

- Diction & Tropes
- Syntax & Schemes
- Details & Lack of Details

When discussing an author’s tone, you must be careful to **choose the right word**. Below is a small list of tone words (there are hundreds). Use them in your essays to describe the tone of the piece but only if you are sure you know the word’s meaning (not sure – look it up in a dictionary).

When **writing your essay**, avoid saying: “The writer uses tone” since ALL writers use a tone of some kind. Instead, say: “The writer creates a __________ tone…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Angry</th>
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<th>sentimental</th>
<th>cloying</th>
<th>bitter</th>
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<td>proud</td>
<td>frivolous</td>
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<td>contemptuous</td>
<td>giddy</td>
<td>irreverent</td>
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<td>Happy</td>
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