

# English for Degree Entrance

Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor

# ENGLISH FOR DEGREE ENTRANCE (EDE)

CARRIE MOLINSKI AND SUE SLESSOR

Georgian College  
Barrie, Ontario



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# ACCESSING AND USING ENGLISH FOR DEGREE ENTRANCE

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This is a free and openly accessible textbook available online to all students.

This textbook is designed to be accessible (#front-matter-accessibility-statement) using standard web browsers, mobile devices, screen readers and other assistive technology. You can access the book in a number of formats. Requirements, tools and suggestions for navigating and using the book are listed on this page. If you encounter any issues in accessing the book, please connect with your professor.

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<b>Digital PDF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet access</li> <li>• PDF viewer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimized for reading with internet (PDF viewer)</li> <li>• Text-based activities</li> <li>• Clickable links to videos and other resources</li> <li>• Glossary of terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save to a device or drive as desired</li> <li>• Access from your device with/without internet</li> <li>• Use internet access for clickable links/videos</li> <li>• <a href="#">Take digital notes [New Tab]</a> while you read</li> </ul>
<b>Print PDF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet access for initial download</li> <li>• PDF viewer to open file</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ability to print or access to a print shop (recommended)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimized for printing/ accessing offline</li> <li>• Text-based activities</li> <li>• Glossary of terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save to a device or drive as desired</li> <li>• <a href="#">Read offline on device [New Tab]</a> (no active/clickable links)</li> <li>• Print chapters or whole book as needed</li> <li>• Refer back to web book to access links/interactive activities</li> </ul>

Don't forget to [cite/reference your textbook](#) if you use it in your research or assignments.

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- [Front matter](#)
- [Academic Texts](#)

- [Scholarly vs Popular Sources](#)
- [Evaluating Resources and Applying the CRAAP Test](#)
- [Persuasion and Argument](#)
- [Novel Study](#)
- [Literature Criticism](#)
- [Reader's Response](#)
- [Analytical Research Paper](#)
- [Historical/Biographical](#)

## Recommendations

- Check for printing costs at a local print shop (Staples, etc)
- Printing a large document is often significantly less expensive at a print shop than it is to print on your home printer or at the Library
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- Ask about binding or 3 hole punching when you order, as this is usually low cost and will make your textbook easier to use

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# ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

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## Accessibility features in the web version of this resource.

The web version of *English for Degree Entrance* has been designed with accessibility in mind by incorporating the following features:

- It has been optimized for people who use screen-reader technology.
  - all content can be navigated using a keyboard.
  - links, headings, and tables are formatted to work with screen readers.
- All images in this guide are described fully in the text, alt-tags or in an image description section for complex images.
- Information is not conveyed by colour alone.
- Pressbooks has built-in features such as the ability to change font size.

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Efforts have been made to improve the user experience in all formats. If you encounter any access issues or barriers, please connect with your professor.

## Known accessibility issues and areas for improvement

This book's adapters have attempted to improve upon existing features from the original sources and improve these materials for all users.

While we strive to ensure that this resource is as accessible and usable as possible, we might not always get it right. Any issues we identify will be listed below. If you encounter issues with this text, please notify your professor.

### Known accessibility issues

Location of issue	Need for improvement	Timeline	Workaround
APA formatted references (throughout the book)	APA references require the location of resources to be listed as a full URL	Wait for APA update	Reference entry URLs are not “linked” but the full URL is listed in text. Plan to optimize using tagging for next update.
Video Captioning	All videos have accessible CC & transcripts via YouTube or other provider, but may not have transcripts that fully describe non-speech content.		Current provisions meet AODA requirements.
PDF version of book	PDF version of book may not be fully accessible, as it was generated using Pressbooks export.		Text versions of interactive activities added. Work on-going.

## Accessibility standards

The web version of this resource has been designed to meet [AODA requirements \[New Tab\]](#) (<https://www.aoda.ca/the-act/>), along with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 \[New Tab\]](#) (<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>), level AA. In addition, it follows all guidelines in [Appendix A: Checklist for Accessibility \[New Tab\]](#) (<https://opentextbc.ca/accessibilitytoolkit/back-matter/appendix-checklist-for-accessibility-toolkit/>) of the [Accessibility Toolkit — 2nd Edition \[New Tab\]](#).

**This statement was last updated on July 10, 2023.**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This OER was first published on August 18, 2023

This project was supported by the OER Design Studio at the Georgian College Library.

This OER, *English Degree Entrance*, is a collection of resources adapted by Carrie Molinski and Sue Slessor to meet the needs of students in **Academic and Career Preparation**. In most sections of this OER, updates have been made to the existing content to improve usability and accessibility, incorporate interactive elements and improve the overall student experience. This collection reuses content from the following key resources:

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## Contributors

### Pressbook Developers

- Carrie Molinski
- Sue Slessor
- Meghan Luscombe

### EDE Curriculum Development Contributors:

- Madelaine Khan

- Carrie Molinski
- Joanne Pineda
- Sue Slessor
- Linda Thomason

## Pressbook Editors

- Jen Booth
- Jessica Jones
- Carrie Molinski
- Gregory Shanahan
- Sue Slessor

## Book Cover

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# INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to the EDE Pressbook—a comprehensive course designed to meet the English requirement for degree programs through the Academic and Career Preparation program at Georgian College.

In this engaging journey, students delve into the world of academic texts, persuasion, argumentation, literary analysis, criticism, and the profound connections between literature and society.

Throughout the EDE Pressbook, learners develop their critical reading and writing skills, honing the ability to analyze and interpret various academic texts effectively. Moreover, the course places a strong emphasis on persuasion and argumentation—an asset in both academia and the real world. Understanding how to engage with scholarly literature is crucial for success in higher education, and EDE provides a solid foundation for this. The EDE Pressbook has been tailored to ensure students gain the intellectual tools necessary to thrive in academia and society at large.

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# ACADEMIC TEXTS

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

In this module, you are introduced to the concepts of primary and secondary sources and their differences. You are provided a brief overview of the differences between academic and non-academic texts. These concepts are foundational in developing your knowledge base to dive deeper and explore the differences between academic and non-academic writing in more detail. Being able to distinguish between these sources is not only important for your career, but also for several assignments in this course.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine primary and secondary sources and their impact on research.
- Identify key differences between academic and non-academic writing and texts including their source formats, writing conventions and where they are found.

## To Do List

- Read the Introduction to the differences between academic and non-academic writing.
- Watch the video, *What is Academic Writing?*
- Read, watch, and Check Your Understanding of the 9-video and H5P series on *Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Sources*.
- Complete the Academic and Non-Academic Texts Assignment in Blackboard.

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# ACADEMIC WRITING VS. NON-ACADEMIC WRITING

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## Introduction

Academic writing is typically found in a post-secondary setting where experts have produced works based on research and used others' work to validate their findings. These also tend to be peer-reviewed works that are reliable and can be proven. On the other hand, non-academic writing would typically appear in a “magazine-like” work that is usually written by non-experts for the purpose to entertain, inform or persuade you to believe in something or buy something. For this course, you will be producing academic writing by including various other peer-reviewed materials to support your point.

### Watch It: What is Academic Writing?

**Watch What is academic writing? (3 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/1pE-ohVv9e0>) to review the characteristics of academic writing:

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# ACADEMIC TEXTS: PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY SOURCES

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## Introduction

We classify information or sources in the following three main ways:

- **Firsthand information**—information in its original form, not translated or published in another form (i.e., primary sources)
- **Secondhand information**—a restatement, analysis or interpretation of original information (i.e., secondary sources)
- **Third-hand information**—a summary or repackaging of original information, often based on published secondary information (i.e., tertiary sources)

## Types of Scholarly Sources: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary

### Primary Sources

Primary sources present original findings or research. Authors describe their research and their conclusions

- Journal articles describing original research
- Theses and dissertations

### Secondary Sources

Secondary sources analyze, summarize or synthesize original research. They comment on information presented in primary sources

- Review articles (often have “review” in the title)
- Books (including textbooks)

**Note:** Biotech companies often have review articles on their websites. Though they are designed to sell

products, they can contain useful information and figures. This type of review article is also considered to be grey literature (see end of page for more information).

## Tertiary Sources

Tertiary sources index, abstract, organize, compile or digest other sources.

- Dictionaries and encyclopedias
- Handbooks and guidebooks

## Which Source Should You Use?

It is important to know when to use each type of scholarly source:

- **Primary Sources**—Use primary sources to provide credible evidence for your arguments and to back up specific claims. As primary sources provide authoritative, first-hand research information, they are important to use in your work.
- **Secondary Sources**—Use secondary sources to gain an overview of your topic. As secondary resources summarize or synthesize a number of primary resources, they are useful to understand the various aspects of your research topic.
- **Tertiary Sources**—Tertiary sources are used to provide technical information or general background information. Refer to tertiary sources when you need definitions or basic information about a topic.

## Primary and Secondary Sources

Check your Understanding: Primary and Secondary Sources

**Primary and Secondary Sources (Text Version)**

**Watch Primary and secondary sources with nLibraries (5 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/Ba8oqb4nCrQ>)

You can read the [Primary and Secondary Sources with nCLibraries transcript \[PDF\]](http://tiny.cc/tvx8vz) (<http://tiny.cc/tvx8vz>)

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Primary sources defined (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/bMlR5wMro6o>)

Watch the two previous videos and then answer the question:

1. Which of the following are characteristics of primary sources?
  - a. Created by direct witnesses
  - b. Original documents
  - c. Analyze the work of others
  - d. Both a & c
  - e. Both a & b

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Primary source examples (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/3dXRSn3LMZI>) and answer the following question:

2. For a news item to be considered a primary source, it should be written at the time an event is occurring. True or false?

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: When to use primary sources (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/pAy7G4Wn3vY>) and answer the following question:

3. Primary sources are useful for which of the following purposes?
  - a. Evidence for theories
  - b. Provide perspectives on topics
  - c. Focal point for discussion
  - d. All of the above

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Secondary sources defined (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/lZH9zAbbqgA>) and answer the following question:

4. Which of the following are characteristics of secondary sources?
  - a. They analyze primary sources.
  - b. They are a step removed from what they are describing.
  - c. They are usually published works.
  - d. All of the above.
  - e. None of the above.

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Examples (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/oxpluaxlFzM>) and answer the following question:

5. Which of the following would **not** be considered a secondary source for a paper on Lake Erie yellow perch populations?
  - a. Raw numeric data containing yellow perch counts from Ontario’s Ministry of Fisheries and Natural Resources.
  - b. Journal article titled, “Estimating the size of historical yellow perch runs in Lake Erie” by Chad Meenings and Robert Lackey.
  - c. *The Encyclopedia of Great Lakes Fish* edited by Davis Allorman.
  - d. All of the above.
  - e. None of the above.

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: When should you use secondary sources? (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/7r0c9EigaJk>) and answer the following question:

6. Secondary sources are good places to find raw, unanalyzed data. True or false?

**Watch Primary and secondary sources compared (< 1 minute) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/4FbxjQ0rp\\_w](https://youtu.be/4FbxjQ0rp_w)) and answer the following question:

7. Which of the following would be considered a secondary source (choose all that apply)?
  - a. *Hamlet* by Shakespeare
  - b. Article titled “Hamlet’s dramatic arras” by Rebecca Olson
  - c. Article titled “Communication in the 21st Century: The Blog” by Mark Kellen
  - d. Transcripts of published blogs
  - e. A documentary on theories of changing owl migratory patterns.
  - f. Data describing population numbers of the spotted owl.

**Check your answer** <sup>1</sup>

**Activity source:** “Primary and Secondary Sources ” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) from “Primary and Secondary Sources” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information Skills Online Handbook* by Jackie Chambers Page and Siscoe

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1. **1)** e. **2)** True **3)** d. Primary sources can be used as focal points for discussions, evidence for theories, and/or to gain perspective on a topic. **4)** d. **5)** a. **6)** False. Raw, unanalyzed data is a primary source. **7)** b, c, & e are all secondary sources.

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## Primary and Secondary Sources: The Importance of Context

Check Your Understanding: Primary and Secondary Sources (Context)

### **Primary and Secondary Sources – Context (Text Version)**

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Context (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/lkFFajTXjus>) and then answer the following question:

If a source is considered primary for one research project, it will be considered primary for all other research projects. True or false?

### **Check your answer<sup>2</sup>**

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2. False. A source’s classification as primary or secondary can change depending on the topic you’re studying.



## Primary and Secondary Sources: Review:

### Check Your Understanding: Primary and Secondary Sources (Review)

#### Primary and Secondary Sources – Review (Text Version)

**Watch Primary vs. secondary sources: Review (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/qCZRMXMs4QE>) and answer the following question:

Which type of source is usually viewed as analysis or interpretation?

- a. Primary
- b. Secondary
- c. Neither
- d. Both

#### Check your answer<sup>3</sup>

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## Summary

This module provided a brief introduction to the differences between academic and non-academic

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3. b. Secondary sources usually interpret or analyze primary sources.

writing and texts as well as primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. In the next module, you will explore the differences between scholarly and popular sources in more detail.

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- Content in “Introduction” section is adapted from “[10 Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Sources](https://opentextbooks.uregina.ca/choosingsources/chapter/primary-secondary-tertiary-sources/)” (<https://opentextbooks.uregina.ca/choosingsources/chapter/primary-secondary-tertiary-sources/>)” In *Choosing & Using Sources: A Guide to Academic Research, 1st Canadian Edition* by Lindsey MacCallum, licensed under [CC BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) Removal of all content except for the introduction.
- Content in “Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Sources” section is adapted from “[1.4 Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Sources](#)” In *Library Skills for 2nd Year Biological Sciences* by Lauren Stieglitz, licensed under [CC BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

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# SCHOLARLY VS. POPULAR SOURCES

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## Introduction

In this module, you will build on your previous knowledge by exploring differences between academic and non-academic writing in more detail. By the end of this module, you will be able to identify and classify sources as either academic or non-academic, identify the differences between scholarly and popular texts, and identify peer-reviewed articles on Georgian College's database.

**Note:** For the purposes of this guide, “scholarly sources” refers to articles in peer-reviewed, academic journals. The terms “scholarly journal”, “academic journal”, and “peer-reviewed journal” are all synonymous and interchangeable. Similarly, non-academic and popular are also synonymous and refer, in large part, to articles found in magazines and newspapers.

## Learning Objectives

- Differentiate between academic/scholarly and non-academic/popular writing conventions.
- Identify sources as either non-academic/popular or academic/scholarly.
- Identify peer reviewed articles on Georgian College's library site.

## To Do List

- Read the information on [Scholarly vs. Popular](#) and make notes on the key differences for content,

- purpose, author, audience, review, citations, frequency and ads.
- Watch the video, *Scholarly vs. Popular Sources of Information*, and take note of the differences for author, audience, visual appearance, length, language, content, and recommended for.
- Watch the video, *What on Earth Does Peer Reviewed Mean anyway?* Explore Georgian's Research Guides and Help Guide
- Read the article, *How to Find Academic Resources*
- Complete the Sources assignment in Blackboard.

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# UNDERSTANDING PEER REVIEW

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## Introduction

Your assignment may require that you include information from “peer-reviewed” articles. These articles are published in scholarly or academic journals after they have gone through a lengthy editorial process which usually involves the author making many revisions. The reviewers themselves are experts in the same field and judge the strength of the article on the originality of the research, the methods used and the validity of findings. The highest standard of peer review is “double-blind”, meaning that both the identity of the authors as well as the reviewers are kept anonymous in order to ensure that bias and subjectivity do not influence the process.

But be careful! Not all content in an academic journal is subject to peer review. There may be other content such as letters, opinion pieces and book reviews that have been edited, but have not necessarily gone through a formal peer review process.

Watch it: Understanding Peer Review

The following KPU Library video describes the process of peer review. To enlarge the video, use the diagonal arrows at the bottom right corner of the video player controls.

**Watch Understanding peer review (2:30 minutes) on the KPU website**

([https://media.kpu.ca/id/O\\_2ylhio73](https://media.kpu.ca/id/O_2ylhio73))

## Check Your Understanding: Summarize The Peer Review Process

### Summarize The Peer Review Process (Text Version)

Number the steps that outline the peer review process, from original research to published article.

Author submits her manuscript to a journal is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Student accesses the article through a Library database is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Author makes suggested revisions is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Reviewers ask the author to make some revisions is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Revised manuscript is accepted and published in journal is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Journal editor assigns the manuscript to a group of peer reviewers is the \_\_\_\_\_.

### Check your answers<sup>1</sup>

**Activity source:** “Peer review process” by Celia Brinkerhoff In *Doing Research*, licensed under [CC BY 4.0./H5P](#) converted into text version.

But how can you, the researcher, recognize a peer-reviewed article?

Fortunately, the library’s Page 1 search and most of our databases have a filter or limit which will help you find the right type of information. Various databases will use different terms: look for “academic” or “scholarly” or “peer reviewed.”

There are other clues you can look for.

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1. Author submits her manuscript to a journal is the **first step**. Student accesses the article through a Library database is the **sixth step**. Author makes suggested revisions is the **fourth step**. Reviewers ask the author to make some revisions is the **third step**. Revised manuscript is accepted and published in journal is the **fifth step**. Journal editor assigns the manuscript to a group of peer reviewers is the **second step**.

**Tip: Clues to help you decide if it is peer reviewed**

<b>Author's credentials and affiliations</b>	Look for the author's degrees, as well as the university or research institution they are affiliated with.
<b>References</b>	Any peer-reviewed article will have a lengthy list of sources used by the author.
<b>Submission guidelines</b>	Somewhere on the journal's homepage will be a link for submitting an article for review. You may have to dig around a little!
<b>Journal publisher</b>	Is the journal published by a scholarly society? A university press?

## Check Your Understanding: Summary

Pick the correct statement.

### Peer Review: Summary (Text Version)

1. Pick the best source of information for your research paper on Canadian immigration policy after World War II.
  - A chapter in an edited book about immigration to Canadian cities from post-war Europe.
  - A post on Reddit.
  - An article in last week's newspaper about migrants seeking asylum in Quebec.
  - A page from the Immigration and Citizenship Canada government website
  
2. Peer reviewed publication appear soon after an event has taken place.
  - The reviewers in a peer review process are usually members of the general public who determine whether the article will have wide-spread appeal for readers of various backgrounds.
  - Primary research is seldom published in peer reviewed articles.
  - Peer review is generally accepted as the highest standard of quality for scholarly

literature.

### Check you answer<sup>2</sup>

**Activity source:** “Peer Review: Summary” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) from “[Understanding Peer Review \(https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/doingresearch/chapter/peer-review/\)](https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/doingresearch/chapter/peer-review/)” In *Doing Research*, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). / Converted into text version.

## Summary

*Information creation is a process that results in a variety of formats and delivery modes, each having a different value in a given context.*

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “[Understanding Peer Review \(https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/doingresearch/chapter/peer-review/\)](https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/doingresearch/chapter/peer-review/)” In *Doing Research* by Celia Brinkerhoff, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). / Adaptations include minor accessibility updates

Video source:

“[Recognize Types of Information](#)” by [KPU Library](#) is licensed under [CC0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

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2. **1)** A chapter in an edited book about immigration to Canadian cities from post-war Europe. **2)** Peer review is generally accepted as the highest standard of quality for scholarly literature.



# INFORMATION EVALUATION: SCHOLARLY VS. POPULAR

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## Scholarly vs. Popular

An important part of gathering and evaluating sources [New Tab] (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/c.php?g=4009&p=3777564>) for research projects is knowing the difference between popular and scholarly.

- Popular magazine articles are typically written by journalists to entertain or inform a general audience.
- Scholarly articles are written by researchers or experts in a particular field. They use specialized vocabulary, have extensive citations and are often peer reviewed.

The physical appearance of print sources can help you identify the type of source as well. Popular magazines are usually glossy with many photos. Scholarly journals are usually smaller and thicker with plain covers and images, and in electronic sources you can check for bibliographies and author credentials or affiliations as potential indicators of scholarly sources.

**Popular Magazines vs. Scholarly (including peer-reviewed)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Popular Magazines</b>	<b>Scholarly (including peer-reviewed)</b>
<b>Content</b>	Current events; general interest articles	Research results/reports; reviews of research (review articles); book reviews
<b>Purpose</b>	To inform, entertain, or elicit an emotional response	To share research or scholarship with the academic community
<b>Author</b>	Staff writers, journalists, freelancers	Scholars/researchers
<b>Audience</b>	General public	Scholars, researchers, students
<b>Review</b>	Staff editor	Editorial board made up of other scholars and researchers. Some articles are peer reviewed
<b>Citations</b>	May not have citations, or may be informal (ex. "according to..." or links)	Bibliographies, references, endnotes, footnotes
<b>Frequency</b>	Weekly/monthly	Quarterly or semi-annually
<b>Ads*</b>	Numerous ads for a variety of products	Minimal, usually only for scholarly products like books
<b>Examples on Publisher Site</b>	<u>Rolling Stone</u> ( <a href="http://www.rollingstone.com/">http://www.rollingstone.com/</a> ); <u>Wired</u> ( <a href="https://www.wired.com/">https://www.wired.com/</a> )	<u>Developmental Psychology</u> ; ( <a href="http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/dev/index.aspx">http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/dev/index.aspx</a> ) <u>The American Journal of Occupational Therapy</u> ; <u>New England Journal of Medicine</u>
<b>Examples in Georgian College Library Databases</b>	<u>Rolling Stone</u> ( <a href="https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?inst=georgian&amp;url=https://search-ebshost-com.georgian.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&amp;db=eon&amp;bquery=Rolling+Stone&amp;cli0=EH1&amp;clv0=Y&amp;type=0&amp;searchMode=Standard&amp;sitelive=eon-live&amp;scope=site">https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?inst=georgian&amp;url=https://search-ebshost-com.georgian.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&amp;db=eon&amp;bquery=Rolling+Stone&amp;cli0=EH1&amp;clv0=Y&amp;type=0&amp;searchMode=Standard&amp;sitelive=eon-live&amp;scope=site</a> ); <u>Wired</u>	<u>Developmental Psychology</u> ( <a href="https://georgian.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCLS_GEORG/i2sg4e/alma991004393902607306">https://georgian.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCLS_GEORG/i2sg4e/alma991004393902607306</a> ); <u>The American Journal of Occupational Therapy</u> ; <u>New England Journal of Medicine</u>


\*Ads will not be visible when viewing articles through a library database.

## Watch It: Scholarly vs Popular Sources of Information

### **Watch Scholarly vs popular sources of information (4 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/-aHlfcDjtc>)

## Identifying a Journal Article

In the following source type examples, examine the different sources and click on the  symbol to learn about each cue that helps identify a source's type.

First, we will examine a scholarly journal article.

Explore: a scholarly journal article found in the Library database

### **Explore: a scholarly journal article found in the library database (Text Version)**



A scholarly article found in library database search results.

The record in the library database search results displays the following information:

**Name of the article:** *"Watch Out for Their Home!": Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early*

*Childhood Education*. Click on the title of the article to view more information about the resource, a brief description of the work and options to access, save or email the article.

**Expert authors:** Nancy van Groll and Heather Fraser

**Journal information:** Journal of childhood studies (Prospect Bay), 2022, p.47-53. Peer reviewed. Open Access.


**Access options:** Click “Get PDF” to access the whole article in PDF format. Click “Available Online” for other access options.

**Activity source: “Source Type: Journal Article Cues”** In *APA Style Citation Tutorial* by Sarah Adams and Debbie Feisst, University of Alberta Library, used under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) . / Screenshot of peer-reviewed journal article updated. Article displayed: Van Groll, & Fraser, H. (2022). “Watch Out for Their Home!”: Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Childhood Studies (Prospect Bay)*, 47–53. <https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs202219894> , licensed under [CC BY-NC](#). Screenshot of Primo database is used under Fair Dealing.

Explore: first page of a scholarly journal article


**Explore: first page of a scholarly journal article (Text Version)**

## “Watch Out for Their Home!”: Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education

Nancy van Groll and Heather Fraser 

Nancy van Groll is an instructor in the School of Education and Childhood Studies and a pedagogist at ECEBC (Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia) living, working, and learning on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the seŋilwitulh (Tseil-Wautuh), sŋwəwú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. In her writing, research, teaching, and advocacy, Nancy pays attention to lively relations and activates slow, situated, and spiralling pedagogical projects with(in) 21<sup>st</sup>-century contexts. Email: nancyvangroll@capilano.ca

Heather Fraser is a forest educator and the owner of Saplings Outdoor Programs, located on the traditional territories of Coast Salish peoples, including seŋilwitulh (Tseil-Wautuh), sŋwəwú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. Her passionate advocacy focuses on working with young children in outdoor contexts as they develop responsive relationships with place.

 *The frictions of living and learning in times of climate precarity, global unrest, and uncertainty require educators to consider the ways we can collectively engage in speculative pedagogies that respond to the complex, coinherited common world(s) we inhabit. This conceptual and practice-based paper considers the way early childhood education is implicated in ongoing settler colonialism. It aims to notice, generate, and stay with the trouble of stories that disrupt and unsettle the extractive and colonial dialogues about the forest as a resource and pedagogical tool.*

**Key words:** forest pedagogies; climate precarity; early childhood education; settler colonialism

Human relationships with old-growth forests saw an increase in public attention and concern in 2021, with news cycles dominated by an extremely active forest fire season in western North America (CBC News, 2021), historic old-growth logging protests (McKeen, 2021) and a landmark call to action by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC; 2021). In these times of climate precarity and uncertainty, educators, instructors, pedagogists, and researchers who work, think, and engage with young children in settler colonial contexts are compelled to engage in speculative pedagogical processes that respond to the complex worlds that are coinherited, coconstructed, and coinhabited by human and more-than-human communities. In this conceptual and practice-based paper we consider the ways early childhood education is implicated in and reproduces ongoing

systems of settler colonialism. We aim to notice, generate, and “stay with the trouble” (Haraway, 2016) of stories that disrupt and unsettle colonial dialogues that often reverberate within forest pedagogies. According to Donna Haraway (2016), troubles are tensions, complexities, or knots that challenge us to “stir up potent response” (p. 1) in our pedagogical practice. We see troubles as generative entry points for resisting taken-for-granted practices in early childhood education and for speculating about how we might be able to activate new ways of living well together (Government of British Columbia, 2019). Throughout this piece, we respond to a series of everyday moments that occurred in a forest-based early learning program (forest school) that operates out of a municipal park on unceded Coast Salish territory (land colonially known as coastal British Columbia (BC), Canada). The narrative below illustrates the complicated and, at times, troubling relations between children, educators, and place. As we think carefully with these happenings, we take up David Greenwood’s (2016) invitation to pay attention to the paradoxical nature of place as both a concept and a relationship. We see place as meeting ground and contact zone (the collision of conflicting values, discourses, logics, and practices) that locates us within the past, present, and future of settler colonial contexts (Greenwood, 2016).

**Image Source:** “Watch Out for Their Home!”: Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education by Nancy van Groll and Heather Fraser, [CC BY-NC 4.0](#)

**Name of the journal:** Journal of Childhood Studies

**Expert authors:** Nancy van Groll and Heather Fraser

**Abstract:** The frictions of living and learning in times of climate precarity, global unrest, and uncertainty require educators to consider the ways we can collectively engage in speculative pedagogies that respond to the complex, coinherited common world(s) we inhabit. >This conceptual and practice-based paper considers the way early childhood education is implicated in ongoing settler colonialism. It aims to notice, generate, and stay with the trouble of stories that disrupt and unsettle the extractive and colonial dialogues about the forest as a resource and pedagogical tool.

**Volume and issue number:** Vol. 47 No. 3

**Activity source:** “Source Type: Journal Article Cues” In *APA Style Citation Tutorial* by Sarah Adams and Debbie Feisst, University of Alberta Library, used under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) . / Screenshot of peer-reviewed journal article updated. **Article displayed:** Van Groll, & Fraser, H. (2022). “Watch Out for Their Home!”: Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Childhood Studies (Prospect Bay)*, 47–53. <https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs202219894> , licensed under [CC BY-NC](#).

## Article Information

### Name of the journal

Journal articles are collected and published in scholarly journals. Often (but not always), the word “journal” in the scholarly journal’s name is a good indicator. Look for the name of the journal in the document header (top left or right corner of each page in the article) or document footer.

### Volume & issue number

Volume and issue numbers are most commonly used with journal articles and scholarly journals. Look for these following the name of the journal and the date or year of publication, typically in the header or footer of the document. They may be written as *Volume 35, No. 3* or *35(3)*. The page numbers of the article are often located near the volume and issue number.

## Expert authors

Articles are written by experts in their field who often have high levels of education and professional experience. Their experience may be included in the article. In journal articles, the author's names are often listed immediately under the article title.

## Abstract

Abstracts are usually found in journal articles and provide a summary of an article's research findings. Often this summary of the article will be found in the top half of the first page of the article. Some journals use a shaded box to make the abstract stand out from the rest of the text, and abstracts are usually labeled accordingly.

## More information found in the library database entry

If you're looking at journal articles in a library database, you can often find a marker that indicates that the material has been peer reviewed. It may be specifically stated, or you may also see the "source type" indicating a scholarly journal.

- **Peer reviewed:** Scholarly journal articles are peer reviewed by subject experts. Peer-review indicators may be found in database or library catalogue descriptions or on the journal article (*article received, article accepted*).
- **Source type:** Library catalogue and database descriptions often identify the source type of a work.

[Anatomy of a Scholarly Article \[New Tab\] \(http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-articles/\)](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-articles/)

This interactive page illustrates the different sections that are often present within scholarly/academic articles.

### **Anatomy of a Scholarly Article (Text Version)**

See below the anatomy of a scholarly article. The order in which the elements are organized here is typical of a scholarly article, though the order may vary based on publication and aesthetic design.

#### **Title**

- The title occurs first at the top of the page.
- The **title** of a scholarly article is generally (but not always) an extremely brief summary of the article's contents. It will usually contain **technical terms** related to the research presented.

#### **Authors**



- Authors and their credentials will be provided in a scholarly article. Credentials may appear with the authors' names, as in this example, or they may appear as a footnote or an endnote to the article. The authors' credentials are provided to establish the authority of the authors, and also to provide a point of contact for the research presented in the article. For this reason, authors' email addresses are usually provided in recent articles.

### Publications

- On the first page of an article you will usually find the journal title, volume/issue numbers (if applicable) and the page numbers the article appears on in the journal. This information is necessary for you to write a citation of the article for your paper.  
The information is not always neatly outlined at the bottom of the first page; it may be spread across the header and footer of the first page, or across the headers or footers of opposite pages, and for some online versions of articles, it may not be present at all.

### Abstract

- The **abstract** is a **brief summary** of the contents of the article, usually under 250 words. It will contain a description of the problem and problem setting; an outline of the study, experiment or argument and a summary of the conclusions or findings. It is provided so that readers examining the article can decide quickly whether the article meets their needs.

### Introduction

- The **introduction** to a scholarly article describes the topic or problem the authors researched. The authors will present the thesis of their argument or the goal of their research. The introduction may also discuss the relevance or importance of the research question. An overview of related research and findings, called a **literature review**, may appear in the introduction, though the literature review may be in its own section.

### Charts, graphs and equations

- Scholarly articles frequently contain **charts, graphs, equations and statistical data** related to the research. **Pictures are rare** unless they relate directly to the research presented in the article.

### Article text

- The **body** of an article is usually presented in sections, including an **introduction**, a **literature review** and one or more sections describing and analyzing the **argument, experiment or study**. Scientific research articles typically include separate sections addressing the **methods** and **results** of the experiment and a **discussion** of the research findings. Articles typically close with a **conclusion** summarizing the findings. The parts of the article may or may not be labeled, and two or more sections may be combined in a single part of the text. The text itself is typically highly technical and assumes a



familiarity with the topic. **Jargon, abbreviations** and **technical terms** are used without definition.

### Conclusion

- A scholarly article will end with a **conclusion**, where the authors **summarize the results** of their research. The authors may also discuss how their findings relate to other scholarship, or encourage other researchers to extend or follow up on their work.

### References

- Most scholarly articles contain many references to publications by other authors. You will find these references scattered throughout the text of the article, as footnotes at the bottom of the page or endnotes at the end of the article.

Most papers provide a list of references at the end of the paper. Each reference listed there corresponds to one of the citations provided in the body of the paper. You can use this list of references to find additional scholarly articles and books on your topic.

**Text version source:** "Anatomy of a Scholarly Article (Text Version)" content for text version was obtained from [Anatomy of a Scholarly Article \(https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-articles/\)](https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-articles/) by NCSU Libraries, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 US](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/)

## Scholarly – Popular Comparison

## Review typical differences between popular and scholarly articles

Criteria	Popular Articles	Scholarly Articles
Author	Journalists Professional writers	Scholars Faculty members Researchers Professionals in the field
Audience	General public	Other scholars or professionals
Visual appearance	Often include color, photos, advertisements	Mostly text, but may include a few graphs or charts
Length	Tend to be short	Tend to be lengthy
Language	Can be understood by the average reader	Use professional jargon and academic language
Content	Gives a broad overview of issues of interest to the general public Rarely gives full citations for sources	Covers narrow topics related to specific field Includes full citations for many credible sources
Recommended for:	Enjoyable reading material Finding topic ideas Learning basics or different perspectives for your topic	Sources for academic work Professional Development Learning about new research being conducted

**Table Source:** Scholarly & Popular Articles by adstarkel. Used under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0. / Converted to HTML.

Watch It: What Does Peer Review Mean

**Watch What on Earth does “peer reviewed” mean, anyway (2 minute) on YouTube**  
(<https://youtu.be/zeghs5BcL80>)

## Things to remember about peer-reviewed (scholarly) articles:

1. Typically written by professors, scholars, professional researchers or experts in the field.
2. Before publication, articles are scrutinized by other experts in the same field (that’s why we call it “peer review”).
3. Because of this rigorous review process, peer-reviewed articles are considered to be among the most authoritative and reliable sources you can choose for your research paper or project.
4. Peer-reviewed articles usually have a narrow focus and often report the results of a research study. You must think critically and carefully about how such an article applies to your topic. Often, they can provide excellent examples or case studies to support the arguments or explanations within your research paper.
5. Occasionally, academic/scholarly journals publish articles that have not been peer reviewed (e.g., an editorial opinion piece can be published in a scholarly journal, but the article itself is not “scholarly” because it hasn’t been peer reviewed).

## Watch It: Identify a Peer Reviewed Article

Your teacher may ask you to use scholarly or peer-reviewed sources for your assignments.

**Watch Identify a peer reviewed article (3 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/SnI9pyW89dY>) for tips on how to identify a peer-reviewed article to use for research:

## Summary

In this module you learned about scholarly and popular sources and peer-reviewed sources by examining their writing conventions and processes. In addition, you moved beyond just listing differences between scholarly and popular sources and are now able to identify them.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, “Information Evaluation: Scholarly Vs. Popular” by Academic and Career Preparation, Georgian College, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#). is adapted from sources as follows:

- The section “Scholarly vs Popular” was adapted from “[Popular, Scholarly, or Trade?](#)” by University of Texas Libraries, licensed under [CC BY-NC 2.0](#). Retrieved September 26, 2022./ Adaptations include changing content to reflect Georgian College Library materials, removal trade publication information and addition of YouTube videos.
- The section ” Identifying Journal Articles” was adapted from “[8.3 – Source Type: Journal Article Cues](#)” In *Communication Essentials for College* by Amanda Quibell & Emily Cramer, Georgian College is licensed under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#). Retrieved May 5, 2023./ Adaptations include the inclusion of Anatomy of a Scholarly Article.
  - “[Source Type: Journal Article Cues](https://openeeducationalberta.ca/introapatutorial7/chapter/) (<https://openeeducationalberta.ca/introapatutorial7/chapter/>

- [journal-article-cues/\)](#)” In *APA Style Citation Tutorial* by Sarah Adams and Debbie Feisst, University of Alberta Library , used under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 International License](#). / Adaptations include updates for accessibility and changed the journal example used to a CC licensed journal.
- Van Groll, & Fraser, H. (2022). “Watch Out for Their Home!”: Disrupting Extractive Forest Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Childhood Studies (Prospect Bay)*, 47–53. <https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs202219894> , licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)
  - The section “Scholarly- Popular Comparison” was adapted from “[Types of Sources: Scholarly vs Popular](#)” In *Information Evaluation* by Los Angeles College Valley Library, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#). Retrieved September 26, 2022. / Adaptations include removal of database and library related resources and addition of Georgian College peer reviewed video.

# EVALUATING RESOURCES AND APPLYING THE CRAAP TEST

English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreeentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

In this module, you will explore the importance of critical thinking when evaluating scholarly and popular sources. You will learn how to use the CRAAP test to help distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources.

## Learning Objectives

- Explain the role of critical thinking when evaluating information.
- Apply the CRAAP test to determine if an article is appropriate for research writing.

## To Do List

- Watch a series of nine videos on Evaluating Internet Sources and Fake News with ncLibraries.
- Complete the Check Your Understanding for the matching nine videos in the series.
- Watch the Evaluate What You Find With the “CRAAP Test” video
- Complete your CRAAP assignment in Blackboard.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, “Evaluating Resources and Applying the CRAAP Test” by Academic and Career Prep, Georgian College, is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

# THE CRAAP TEST AND EVALUATING RESOURCES

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## Why Do We Evaluate Resources?

The importance of choosing a properly fitted resource can make or break the quality of your work. A resource that contains information that does not quite support your point, or worse, provides inaccurate or false information, can cause damage to your written work. As a writer, you must decipher the validity of articles you may want to include. How can you tell if a resource has what you need? Knowing how to evaluate sources has a huge impact on the quality of your writing. Having the skills to evaluate your resource ensures your audience believes in you as a writer, your writing prowess and what you have to say. Developing the ability to evaluate resources gives you the tools and skills needed to choose an appropriate resource to use for reference in your writing.

## Evaluating Sources

This module will outline some key concepts to consider when analyzing internet sources. This knowledge will help you do better research for assignments and daily life.

Watch it: Evaluating Internet Sources and Fake News

**Watch Evaluating internet sources and fake news with nLibraries (8 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/fh9vDmlzznl>)



## The Importance of Evaluating Sources:

### Check Your Knowledge: Why is Evaluating Sources Important?

#### Evaluating Sources I (Text Version)

**Watch Why is this important?(≤ 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/7jZVj-ijx1Y>) and answer the following question:

Knowing how to evaluate information is only useful for school assignments. True or false?

**Check your answer:** <sup>1</sup>

**Activity source:** “Evaluating Sources I” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) from “Evaluating Resources” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information Skills Online Handbook* by Jackie Chambers Page and Siscoe Boschman, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)

## Consider the Source:

### Check Your Understand: Consider the Source

#### Evaluating Sources II (Text Version)

**Watch Consider the source (1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/hrCOMRAseSM>) and answer the following question:

Where can you look to find author information for a website:

---

1. False

1. About
2. Information
3. All of the above
4. None of the above

**Check your answer:** <sup>2</sup>

**Activity source:** “Evaluating Sources II” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) from “Evaluating Resources (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ncinfoskills/chapter/evaluating-information-sources/>)” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information Skills Online Handbook* by Jackie Chambers Page and Siscoe Boschman, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)/ Converted into Text Version by Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell, edited by Jessica Jones.

## Motivation & Bias:

### Check Your Understanding: Motivation and Bias

#### Evaluating Sources III (Text Version)

**Watch Motivation/bias (2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/HBkFMKjoMPO>) then answer the following question:

Shortening the URL to find the homepage of the site that you’re viewing might also give you information about any groups or organizations that this information is aligned with. True or false?

**Check your answer:** <sup>3</sup>

**Activity source:** “Evaluating Sources III” compiled by Jessica Jones , licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) from “Evaluating Resources (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ncinfoskills/chapter/evaluating-information-sources/>)” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information*

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2. 3. If author information is not clearly stated elsewhere, checking the “About” or “Information” pages of a website may provide additional clues.  
3. True. Shortening the url to find the homepage of a site is a helpful way to trace back the source.

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## Check the Evidence:

### Check Your Understanding: Evidence

#### Evaluating Sources IV (Text Version)

**Watch Evidence (< 1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/KYeCP9nTK1c>) and answer the following question:

The more verifiable evidence a site uses, the more likely the information that site is trying to convey is accurate. True or false?

**Check your answer:** <sup>4</sup>

**Activity source:** “Evaluating Sources IV” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) from “[Evaluating Resources \(https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ncinfoskills/chapter/evaluating-information-sources/\)](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ncinfoskills/chapter/evaluating-information-sources/)” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information Skills Online Handbook* by Jackie Chambers Page and Siscoe Boschman, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)/ Converted into Text Version by Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell, edited by Jessica Jones.

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4. True. The more evidence to support a claim, the better!

## Timeliness:

### Check Your Understanding: Timeliness

#### Evaluating Sources V (Text Version)

**Watch Timeliness (< 1 minute) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/pvAMuqI\\_h40](https://youtu.be/pvAMuqI_h40)) and answer the following question:

Which of the following is important when evaluating a source from the web:

1. The author or creator
2. The date posted
3. Supporting evidence
4. All of the above
5. None of the above

#### Check your answer: <sup>5</sup>

**Activity source:** “Evaluating Sources V” compiled by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) from “Evaluating Resources (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ncinfoskills/chapter/evaluating-information-sources/>)” In *Niagara College Libraries + Learning Commons Information Skills Online Handbook* by Jackie Chambers Page and Siscoe Boschman, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)/ Converted into Text Version by Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell, edited by Jessica Jones.

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5. 4. All of the criteria listed are important for evaluating internet resources.

# The CRAAP/RADAR Test:

## Check Your Understanding: CRAAP Test

### Evaluating Sources VI (Text Version)

**Watch Evaluating sources: CRAAP/RADAR (1 minute) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/hd5zhcZrQ3A>) and answer the following question:

Which of the following is **not** part of the CRAAP test?

1. Currency
2. Relevance
3. Authority
4. Aptitude
5. Purpose

### Check your answer: <sup>6</sup>

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6. Aptitude is not part of the CRAAP test.

## What Makes News “Fake”?

### Check Your Understanding: Fake News

#### Evaluating Sources VII (Text Version)

**Watch Fake news (< 2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/92DdYk5nRBM>) than answer the following question:

You can trust the headline to represent the content of an online news source. True or false?

**Check your answer:** <sup>7</sup>

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## Be a Skeptic!

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7. False. You should always read beyond the headline.

# EVALUATE WHAT YOU FIND WITH THE "CRAAP TEST"

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## Watch It: CRAAP Test

**Watch Chapter 8 video 2 (3 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/Q9b9exH0IBk>) about how to apply the CRAAP test and then read the text below.

Sources to evaluate in the Video:

- Wikipedia entry on Online Social Movements [New Tab] ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online\\_social\\_movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_social_movement))
  - Consider this a good starting point and look at the sources below for more information.
- Blog written by a professor: *Role of Social Media in Social Movements: Egyptian Revolution and Occupy Wall Street* [New Tab]
  - Select "Author", "Author – Main Publications"
  - This article is not peer reviewed; consider why.
- Peer Reviewed (Open Source): *The Digital Evolution of Occupy Wall Street* [New Tab] (<http://europepmc.org/backend/ptpmcrender.fcgi?accid=PMC3667169&blobtype=pdf>)
  - This article *is* peer reviewed. Why?
  - Look at the conflict of interest note at the beginning.

Evaluating your sources is critical to the academic research process. The CRAAP test allows you analyze your sources and determine whether they are appropriate for your research or just plain crap! The CRAAP test uses a series of questions that address specific evaluation criteria like the authority and purpose of the source. You should use this test for all your sources. **Note:** it is not intended to make you exclude other, less authoritative sources, but to help you analyze how you intend to use them to support your arguments.

**C = Currency:** The timeliness of the information.

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work?

**R = Relevance:** The importance of the information for your needs.

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information at an appropriate level (i.e., not too elementary or advanced for your needs)?
- Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is one you will use?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

**A = Authority:** The source of the information.

- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic? Do you trust the author?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net

**A = Accuracy:** The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.

- Where does the information come from?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
- Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar or typographical errors?

**P = Purpose:** The reason the information exists.

- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?



## Summary

In this unit, you learned about the differences between scholarly and popular sources, how to evaluate them using the CRAAP test, and how this information can help you succeed in your career.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter (video & Text) is adapted from “Evaluate What You Find With the “CRAAP Test” (<https://pressbooks.library.torontomu.ca/writehere/chapter/evaluate-what-you-find-with-the-craap-test/>)” In *Write Here, Right Now: An Interactive Introduction to Academic Writing and Research* by Aaron Tucker, Paul Chafe, and Ryerson University, licensed under CC BY 4.0. Adapted for clarity of writing and punctuation.

# PERSUASION AND ARGUMENT

English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

The persuasive and argument techniques are not only used in academic essays. We see persuasive techniques in everything from newspaper articles to advertisements and even in oral communications like speeches or formal presentations.

In this module, you will look at how persuasive techniques are used in different mediums. To work through this module, you will need to refer back to the information you learned in the previous one.

## Learning Objectives

- Explore persuasive and argument techniques commonly used in writing.
- Identify the differences between Ethos, Pathos, and Logos.
- Identify persuasive techniques used in essays, advertisements, and oral communications.
- Identify persuasive techniques used in essays, advertisements and oral communications.

## To Do List

- Read the chapter on Persuasive and Argument Techniques and watch the 3 videos embedded in the reading.
- Complete the exercises and H5Ps to check your understanding.
- Review the persuasive essay, *Water Inequality*, from Module 1.
- Complete the Persuasive Essay Analysis Assignment in Blackboard.

- Watch the video, *The Art of Rhetoric: Persuasive Techniques in Advertising* in Blackboard.
- Complete the Advertising Techniques Assignment in Blackboard.
- Watch the Ted Talk, *Why school should start later for teens*.
- Complete the Persuasive Oral Assignment in Blackboard.

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# PERSUASION AND ARGUMENT TECHNIQUES

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## The Purpose of Persuasive Writing

The purpose of persuasion in writing is to convince, motivate or move readers toward a certain point of view or opinion. The act of trying to persuade automatically implies more than one opinion on the subject can be argued.

The idea of an argument often conjures up images of two people yelling and screaming in anger. In writing, however, an argument is very different. An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue in writing is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way. Written arguments often fail when they employ ranting rather than reasoning.

### Tip

Most of us feel inclined to try to win the arguments we engage in. On some level, we all want to be right, and we want others to see the error of their ways. More times than not, however, arguments in which both sides try to win end up producing losers all around. The more productive approach is to persuade your audience to consider your opinion as a valid one, not simply the right one.



Image by [mohamed\\_hassan](#), used under [Pixabay license](#) Tip

## The Structure of a Persuasive Essay

The following five features make up the structure of a persuasive essay:

1. Introduction and thesis
2. Opposing and qualifying ideas
3. Strong evidence in support of claim

4. Style and tone of language
5. A compelling conclusion

## Creating an Introduction and Thesis

The persuasive essay begins with an engaging introduction that presents the general topic. The thesis typically appears somewhere in the introduction and states the writer's point of view.

### Tip

Avoid forming a thesis based on a negative claim. For example, "The hourly minimum wage is not high enough for the average worker to live on." This is probably a true statement, but persuasive arguments should make a positive case. For example, "A higher minimum wage is required for the average worker to meet basic costs of living."

## Acknowledging Opposing Ideas and Limits to Your Argument

Because an argument implies differing points of view on the subject, you must be sure to acknowledge those opposing ideas. Avoiding ideas that conflict with your own gives the reader the impression that you may be uncertain, fearful or unaware of opposing ideas. Thus, it is essential that you not only address counterarguments but also do so respectfully.

Try to address opposing arguments earlier rather than later in your essay. Rhetorically speaking, ordering your positive arguments last allows you to better address ideas that conflict with your own, so you can spend the rest of the essay countering those arguments. This way, you leave your reader thinking about your argument rather than someone else's. You have the last word.

Acknowledging points of view different from your own also has the effect of fostering more credibility between you and the audience. They know from the outset that you are aware of opposing ideas and that you are not afraid to give them space.

It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish. In effect, you are conceding early on that your argument is not the ultimate authority on a given topic. Such humility can go a long way toward earning credibility and trust with an audience. Audience members will know from the beginning that you are a reasonable writer, and audience members will trust your argument as a result. For

example, in the following concessionary statement, the writer advocates for stricter gun control laws, but she admits it will not solve all of our problems with crime:

### Sample concessionary statement

Although tougher gun control laws are a powerful first step in decreasing violence in our streets, such legislation alone cannot end these problems since guns are not the only problem we face.

Such a concession will be welcome by those who might disagree with this writer's argument in the first place. To effectively persuade their readers, writers need to be modest in their goals and humble in their approach to get readers to listen to the ideas.

### Sample phrases of concession

- although
- of course
- though
- granted that
- still
- yet

## Check Your Understanding: Forming a Thesis

Try to form a thesis for each of the following topics. Remember: the more specific your thesis, the better.

1. Truth and Reconciliation Commission
2. Television and advertising
3. Stereotypes and prejudice

4. Gender roles and the workplace
5. Driving and cell phone

## Bias in Writing

Everyone has various biases on any number of topics. For example, you might have a bias toward wearing black instead of brightly colored clothes or wearing jeans rather than formal wear. You might have a bias toward working at night rather than in the morning, or working by deadlines rather than getting tasks done in advance. These examples identify minor biases, of course, but they still indicate preferences and opinions.

Handling bias in writing and in daily life can be a useful skill. It will allow you to articulate your own points of view while also defending yourself against unreasonable points of view. The ideal in persuasive writing is to let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence and a respectful and reasonable address of opposing sides.

The strength of a personal bias is that it can motivate you to construct a strong argument. If you are invested in the topic, you are more likely to care about the piece of writing. Similarly, the more you care, the more time and effort you are likely to put forth and the better the final product will be.

The weakness of bias is when the bias begins to take over the essay—when, for example, you neglect opposing ideas, exaggerate your points or repeatedly insert yourself ahead of the subject by using *I* too often. Being aware of all three of these pitfalls will help you avoid them.

## The Use of “I” in Writing

The use of *I* in writing is often a topic of debate, and the acceptance of its usage varies from instructor to instructor. It is difficult to predict the preferences for all your present and future instructors, but consider the effects it can potentially have on your writing.

Be mindful of the use of *I* in your writing because it can make your argument sound overly biased. There are two primary reasons:

1. Excessive repetition of any word will eventually catch the reader’s attention—and usually not in a good way. The use of *I* is no different.
2. The insertion of *I* into a sentence alters not only the way a sentence might sound but also the composition of the sentence itself. *I* is often the subject of a sentence. If the subject of the essay is supposed to be, say, smoking, then by inserting yourself into the sentence, you are effectively displacing

the subject of the essay into a secondary position. In the following example, the subject of the sentences is bolded:

1. **Smoking** is bad.
2. **I think** smoking is bad.

\*Subjects: 1) Smoking 2) I think

In the first sentence, the rightful subject, *smoking*, is in the subject position in the sentence. In the second sentence, the insertion of *I think* replaces *smoking* as the subject, which draws attention to *I* and away from the topic that is supposed to be discussed. Remember to keep the message (the subject) and the messenger (the writer) separate.

## Check Your Understanding: Developing Sound Arguments

Does my essay contain the following elements?

- An engaging introduction
- A reasonable, specific thesis that is able to be supported by evidence
- A varied range of evidence from credible sources
- Respectful acknowledgement and explanation of opposing ideas
- A style and tone of language that is appropriate for the subject and audience
- Acknowledgement of the argument's limits
- A conclusion that will adequately summarize the essay and reinforce the thesis

## Fact and Opinion

Facts are statements that can be definitively proven using objective data. The statement that is a fact is



absolutely valid. In other words, the statement can be pronounced as true or false. For example,  $2 + 2 = 4$ . This expression identifies a true statement, or a fact, because it can be proved with objective data.

Opinions are personal views or judgments. An opinion is what an individual believes about a particular subject. However, an opinion in argumentation must have legitimate backing; adequate evidence and credibility should support the opinion. Consider the credibility of expert opinions. Experts in a given field have the knowledge and credentials to make their opinion meaningful to a larger audience.

For example, you seek the opinion of your dentist when it comes to the health of your gums, and you seek the opinion of your mechanic when it comes to the maintenance of your car. Both have knowledge and credentials in those respective fields, which is why their opinions matter to you. But the authority of your dentist may be greatly diminished should he or she offer an opinion about your car, and vice versa.

In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions. Relying on one or the other will likely lose more of your audience than it gains.

### Tip

The word *prove* is frequently used in the discussion of persuasive writing. Writers may claim that one piece of evidence or another proves the argument, but proving an argument is often not possible. No evidence proves a debatable topic one way or the other; that is why the topic is debatable. Facts can be proved, but opinions can only be supported, explained, and persuaded.

## Check Your Understanding: Types of Evidence

Take three of the theses you formed in “Check Your Understanding: Forming a Thesis” earlier in this section and list the types of evidence you might use in support of those theses.

## Check Your Understanding: Counterarguments

Using the evidence you provided in support of the three theses in the “Types of Evidence” exercise above, come up with at least one counterargument to each. Then write a concession statement expressing the limits to each of your three arguments.

## Using Visual Elements to Strengthen Arguments

Adding visual elements to a persuasive argument can often strengthen its persuasive effect. There are two main types of visual elements: quantitative visuals and qualitative visuals.

Quantitative visuals present data graphically. They allow the audience to see statistics spatially. The purpose of using quantitative visuals is to make logical appeals to the audience. For example, sometimes it is easier to understand the disparity in certain statistics if you can see how the disparity looks graphically. Bar graphs, pie charts, Venn diagrams, histograms, and line graphs are all ways of presenting quantitative data in spatial dimensions.

Qualitative visuals present images that appeal to the audience’s emotions. Photographs and pictorial images are examples of qualitative visuals. Such images often try to convey a story, and seeing an actual example can carry more power than hearing or reading about the example. For example, one image of a child suffering from malnutrition will likely have more of an emotional impact than pages dedicated to describing that same condition in writing.

### Writing at Work

When making a business presentation, you typically have limited time to get across your idea. Providing visual elements for your audience can be an effective timesaving tool. Quantitative visuals in business presentations serve the same purpose as they do in persuasive writing. They

should make logical appeals by showing numerical data in a spatial design. Quantitative visuals should be pictures that might appeal to your audience's emotions. You will find that many of the rhetorical devices used in writing are the same ones used in the workplace.

## Writing a Persuasive Essay

Below, you can read a sample persuasive essay.

### Water Inequity: Sample Essay

#### Read Water Inequity in plain text format

**Note:** HTML/plain text & Pressbooks do not always display page layout or APA formatting such as page numbers, spacing, margins or indentation accurately. Please review [APA formatting](#) rules to ensure you meet APA guidelines with your own work. The text version is included here in HTML format for ease of reading/use. You may also want to view [Water Inequity: Sample essay in PDF format](#) (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/app/uploads/sites/2885/2023/05/COMMESS-5-3-WaterInequityEssay-1.pdf>).

#### **Water Inequity**

Emily Cramer

Clean drinking water is not a luxury and access to it is not a privilege for most people living in the developed world. But for one group of Canadians, it is an elusive resource. Many people living on First Nations reserves across the country are unable to drink or bathe in water from the taps in their homes, and that is where piped water even exists. Lengthy boil advisories have been in place in some cases for more than twenty years. This problem is not merely the result of inadequate water systems but of the ongoing exclusion of Indigenous peoples and the failure to view their rights as equal, and related, to those of other Canadians. The government of Canada has a responsibility to provide clean drinking water to Indigenous reserves not only because access to water is a human right, but also because the lack of

water is a direct result of racial marginalization and a failure to recognize that the well-being of one group of Canadians affects the well-being of all.

In 2010, the United Nations acknowledged that access to clean drinking water is a human right, and many other institutions support this definition: “According to both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, clean drinking water is a fundamental human right” (Erin, 2021, para. 1). In 2015, aware of a vast rights inequity to Indigenous Canadians, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed to ending all long-term drinking water advisories in Indigenous communities by March 2021. However, as of February 2022, there were still 38 advisories in place, and the government delayed the deadline to 2026 (Government of Canada, 2022). Canada has 20% of the world’s freshwater reserves, yet many Indigenous communities have gone without access to clean, potable water for decades. This obvious human rights violation should not be occurring in a developed nation, particularly one as committed to equity as Canada.

Why does this water shortage exist? The problem of water access on reserves has many causes, but it stems, at least in part, from the racial marginalization of First Nations people. “Indigenous exclusion... is the bedrock factor in maintaining Indigenous water insecurity” (Hanrahan, 2017, para. 4). Most Canadians benefit from strict government regulations over water supplies, but the Canadian government has been reluctant to extend those benefits to its Indigenous people. Often, reserves are in remote locations, and water treatment plants are required to service those areas. Where they exist, these plants have not been regulated to ensure safety. The resulting systems are not only faulty, they have been inadequately maintained due to a lack of funding. These problems have persisted for so long, minor maintenance is no longer possible; in some cases, total system overhauls are required to finally end boil advisories. To make matters worse, traditional water sources are not an alternative as they are often affected by pollution from high-population areas. “[Waterways have been] degraded by activities that occur far from reserves and traditional lands” (Assembly of First Nations, n.d., para. 7). The resulting potable water shortage on reserves points to the government’s racial marginalization of its First Nations people.

Yet in today’s global community, it is increasingly clear that marginalizing one group has an impact on everyone because of human interconnectedness. The struggles and successes of one affect all. Apart from obvious outcomes such as the impact on Canada’s health care system when people are exposed to unsafe drinking water, the health of Canada’s First Nations communities is important to the country in other ways. Indigenous contributions to environmental protection are significant: “Around the world, where Indigenous rights to their lands are strong, biodiversity, and climate-critical carbon stores are better protected” (Skene, 2020, para. 3). First Nations’ entrepreneurship has a profound impact on the Canadian economy: “Indigenous people represent the fastest growth segment of the population [and are] a driving force of Canada’s long-term economic stability” (Amanto, 2020, para. 1). Moreover, Indigenous culture plays a vital role in the diversity, history, and richness of Canadian culture. The interconnection between living things is emphasized in Indigenous teaching, and it provides a lesson that Western governments need to learn.

The scarcity of clean drinking water on many First Nations reserves in Canada is a stark reminder of ongoing racism and inequity within the country. No one should struggle to access water in a water-rich nation like Canada. This human rights breach points directly to the failure of the government to extend the same protections and funding to First Nations people that it does to the rest of Canada. And although this failure is the product of racial marginalization aimed at one group, its outcome affects all Canadians.

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## Online Persuasive Essay Examples

- Martin Luther King Jr. writes persuasively about civil disobedience in [Letter from Birmingham Jail \[PDF\]](https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/_assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf) ([https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/\\_assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf](https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/_assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf))
- Michael Levin argues [The Case for Torture \[New Tab\]](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/torture.html) (<http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/torture.html>)
- Alan Dershowitz argues [The Case for Torture Warrants \[New Tab\]](https://www.reuters.com/article/idUS1631336720110907) (<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUS1631336720110907>)
- Alisa Solomon argues [The Case against Torture \[New Tab\]](http://www.villagevoice.com/2001-11-27/news/the-case-against-torture/1) (<http://www.villagevoice.com/2001-11-27/news/the-case-against-torture/1>)

## Watch It: Persuasive Essay Writing

### Watch It: Persuasive Essay Writing (Text version)

- **Watch Persuasive essay writing (7 minutes) on Youtube** (<https://youtu.be/lb4fcEVMYj4>) to learn more about writing a persuasive essay.
- **Watch Ethos, pathos & logos (3 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/aUpiy67\\_nt4](https://youtu.be/aUpiy67_nt4)) to learn more about these persuasive elements.
- **Watch Opinion Essay or Persuasive Essay (6 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/DqwzYoThUpq>)

**Source:** “Persuasive Essay Writing” H5P created by oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

## Check Your Understanding: Ethos, Pathos, Logos Practice

### Ethos, Pathos, Logos Practice (Text Version)

Put the characteristics in the correct category listed below.

#### Characteristics of Ethos, Pathos and Logos

Ethos	Pathos	Logos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emotions</li> <li>• professional</li> <li>• trustworthy</li> <li>• vivid imagery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• credible</li> <li>• facts and figures</li> <li>• emotional adverbs and adjectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logic</li> <li>• rational</li> <li>• using good sources</li> </ul>

**Check your answer** <sup>1</sup>

**Activity source:** “Ethos, Pathos, Logos Practice” by Linda Thomason is licensed under [CC BY 4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) Converted to text version.

Watch It: Counterarguments

**Watch Arguments & Counterarguments (2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/QGHihCm4xPQ>) for more information about this persuasive technique.

Check Your Understanding : Counterarguments

**Counterarguments (Text Version)**

Complete each thesis by matching the beginning and counterargument.

1. Although there may be many advantages to face and finger ID on smart devices, \_\_\_\_\_.

---

1.

Characteristics of Ethos, Pathos and Logos		
Ethos	Pathos	Logos
professional	emotions	rational
using good sources	emotional adverbs and adjectives	facts and figures
credible	vivid imagery	logic
trustworthy		

---

2. Even though many experts say that staying up all night is unhealthy, \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Even though many people find working from home more convenient, \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. Although many students wish to study abroad, \_\_\_\_\_.
  5. Even though many students believe that working part-time is a good idea, \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. There are several advantages to electric cars, \_\_\_\_\_.
- it can be excessively expensive, mentally and physically unhealthy, and socially disadvantageous.
  - but overall they are expensive, unreliable, and unsustainable.
  - it can negatively affect people's work-life balance, personal relationships, and overall health.
  - working and studying at the same time can negatively affect health, finances, and grades.
  - it can increase people's productivity, health and freedom.
  - they are not a good idea because they are intrusive, insecure and unreliable.

### Check your answer <sup>2</sup>

**Activity source:** Persuasive Writing: Counterargument + Thesis Matching by Stephanie Kinzie is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

- 
2. **1)** Although there may be many advantages to face and finger ID on smart devices, they are not a good idea because they are intrusive, insecure and unreliable. **2)** Even though many experts say that staying up all night is unhealthy, it can increase people's productivity, health and freedom. **3)** Even though many people find working from home more convenient, it can negatively affect people's work-life balance, personal relationships, and overall health. **4)** Although many students wish to study abroad, it can be excessively expensive, mentally and physically unhealthy, and socially disadvantageous. **5)** Even though many students believe that working part-time is a good idea, working and studying at the same time can negatively affect health, finances, and grades. **6)** There are several advantages to electric cars, but overall they are expensive, unreliable, and unsustainable.



## Summary

- The purpose of persuasion in writing is to convince or move readers toward a certain point of view or opinion.
- An argument is a reasoned opinion supported and explained by evidence. To argue, in writing, is to advance knowledge and ideas in a positive way.
- A thesis that expresses the opinion of the writer in more specific terms is better than one that is vague.
- It is essential that you not only address counterarguments but also do so respectfully.
- It is also helpful to establish the limits of your argument and what you are trying to accomplish through a concession statement.
- To persuade a skeptical audience, you will need to use a wide range of evidence. Scientific studies, opinions from experts, historical precedent, statistics, personal anecdotes, and current events are all types of evidence that you might use in explaining your point.
- Make sure that your word choice and writing style is appropriate for both your subject and your audience.
- You should let your reader know your bias, but do not let that bias blind you to the primary components of good argumentation: sound, thoughtful evidence and respectfully and reasonably addressing opposing ideas.
- You should be mindful of the use of / in your writing because it can make your argument sound more biased than it needs to.
- Facts are statements that can be proven using objective data.
- Opinions are personal views, or judgments, that cannot be proven.
- In writing, you want to strike a balance between credible facts and authoritative opinions.
- Quantitative visuals present data graphically. The purpose of using quantitative visuals is to make logical appeals to the audience.
- Qualitative visuals present images that appeal to the audience's emotions..

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[5.3 – Persuasion](#)”

(<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/persuasion/>)” In *Communication Essentials for College* by Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). /Adapted to remove exercise 4, alter exercise 1, remove essay assignment, and insert Persuasive Essay Writing, Ethos, Pathos, and Logos, and Counterarguments videos.

- An adaptation from “[10.9 Persuasion](#)” In *Writing for Success* by University of Minnesota licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).



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# PERSUASIVE ESSAY: WATER INEQUALITY

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Read and analyze this essay for the Argumentative Essay Analysis Assignment

## Read Water Inequity in plain text format

**Note:** HTML/plain text & Pressbooks do not always display page layout or APA formatting such as page numbers, spacing, margins or indentation accurately. Please review [APA formatting](#) rules to ensure you meet APA guidelines with your own work. The text version is included here in HTML format for ease of reading/use. You may also want to [View Water Inequity: Sample essay in PDF format](#) (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/app/uploads/sites/2885/2023/05/COMMESS-5-3-WaterInequityEssay-1.pdf>).

### Water Inequity

Emily Cramer

Clean drinking water is not a luxury and access to it is not a privilege for most people living in the developed world. But for one group of Canadians, it is an elusive resource. Many people living on First Nations reserves across the country are unable to drink or bathe in water from the taps in their homes, and that is where piped water even exists. Lengthy boil advisories have been in place in some cases for more than twenty years. This problem is not merely the result of inadequate water systems but of the ongoing exclusion of Indigenous peoples and the failure to view their rights as equal, and related, to those of other Canadians. The government of Canada has a responsibility to provide clean drinking water to Indigenous reserves not only because access to water is a human right, but also because the lack of water is a direct result of racial marginalization and a failure to recognize that the well-being of one group of Canadians affects the well-being of all.

In 2010, the United Nations acknowledged that access to clean drinking water is a human right, and

many other institutions support this definition: “According to both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, clean drinking water is a fundamental human right” (Erin, 2021, para. 1). In 2015, aware of a vast rights inequity to Indigenous Canadians, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed to ending all long-term drinking water advisories in Indigenous communities by March 2021. However, as of February 2022, there were still 38 advisories in place, and the government delayed the deadline to 2026 (Government of Canada, 2022). Canada has 20% of the world’s freshwater reserves, yet many Indigenous communities have gone without access to clean, potable water for decades. This obvious human rights violation should not be occurring in a developed nation, particularly one as committed to equity as Canada.

Why does this water shortage exist? The problem of water access on reserves has many causes, but it stems, at least in part, from the racial marginalization of First Nations people. “Indigenous exclusion... is the bedrock factor in maintaining Indigenous water insecurity” (Hanrahan, 2017, para. 4). Most Canadians benefit from strict government regulations over water supplies, but the Canadian government has been reluctant to extend those benefits to its Indigenous people. Often, reserves are in remote locations, and water treatment plants are required to service those areas. Where they exist, these plants have not been regulated to ensure safety. The resulting systems are not only faulty, they have been inadequately maintained due to a lack of funding. These problems have persisted for so long, minor maintenance is no longer possible; in some cases, total system overhauls are required to finally end boil advisories. To make matters worse, traditional water sources are not an alternative as they are often affected by pollution from high-population areas. “[Waterways have been] degraded by activities that occur far from reserves and traditional lands” (Assembly of First Nations, n.d., para. 7). The resulting potable water shortage on reserves points to the government’s racial marginalization of its First Nations people.

Yet in today’s global community, it is increasingly clear that marginalizing one group has an impact on everyone because of human interconnectedness. The struggles and successes of one affect all. Apart from obvious outcomes such as the impact on Canada’s health care system when people are exposed to unsafe drinking water, the health of Canada’s First Nations communities is important to the country in other ways. Indigenous contributions to environmental protection are significant: “Around the world, where Indigenous rights to their lands are strong, biodiversity, and climate-critical carbon stores are better protected” (Skene, 2020, para. 3). First Nations’ entrepreneurship has a profound impact on the Canadian economy: “Indigenous people represent the fastest growth segment of the population [and are] a driving force of Canada’s long-term economic stability” (Amanto, 2020, para. 1). Moreover, Indigenous culture plays a vital role in the diversity, history, and richness of Canadian culture. The interconnection between living things is emphasized in Indigenous teaching, and it provides a lesson that Western governments need to learn.

The scarcity of clean drinking water on many First Nations reserves in Canada is a stark reminder of ongoing racism and inequity within the country. No one should struggle to access water in a water-rich nation like Canada. This human rights breach points directly to the failure of the government to extend

the same protections and funding to First Nations people that it does to the rest of Canada. And although this failure is the product of racial marginalization aimed at one group, its outcome affects all Canadians.

### References

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## Attribution & References

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Adaptations include removal of content related to persuasive writing, structuring a persuasive essay, creating an introduction and thesis, opposing ideas and limits to arguments, bias in writing, using “I”, and using visual elements to strengthen arguments.

- “Water Inequity: Evidence of Racial Marginalization in Canada” (sample persuasive essay) by Emily Cramer is licensed under [CC-BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)



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# WHY SCHOOLS SHOULD START LATER

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After watching the TED talk, *Why school should start later for teens*, complete the worksheet found in Blackboard.

## Watch It: Why School Should Start Later for Teens

**Watch Why school should start later for teens (10 minutes) on TED** (<http://tiny.cc/siq8vz>) to learn about oral persuasive techniques.

## Summary

In this module, you studied persuasive and argument techniques commonly used in writing. You should now have a good understanding of the following topics: structure of a persuasive / argument essay, rhetorical appeals such as Ethos, Pathos, and Logos, and how to write counterarguments.

You looked at how persuasive techniques are used in different mediums such as academic essays, advertisements, and oral communications. Now that you have identified how persuasive techniques can be used, it is time for you to apply that knowledge in the next module.

## Attribution & References

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# NOVEL STUDY INTRODUCTION

## English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

*Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice is a fictional novel that looks at how an Anishinaabe First Nation in northern Ontario deals with an unknown event that leaves the community isolated, without power or phone service and with limited food sources as winter sets in. You will complete several assignments as part of your novel study.

## Learning Objectives

- Learn about various aspects of Indigenous culture.
- Consider how the physical environment affects the community and culture of the people living there.
- Use reading strategies to build an understanding of society.

## To Do List

- Read information about the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*
- Watch *The Last Fisherman*.
- Watch *Learning About Smudging*.
- Watch *Traditional Medicine*.
- Read the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*.
- Consider the importance of environment on community and culture. Complete the reflection questions and save them for the last unit in the novel study.

- *There is no assignment in this module.*

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# ABOUT MOON OF THE CRUSTED SNOW

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## About the Novel

*Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice is a fictional novel that looks at how an Anishinaabe First Nation in northern Ontario deals with an unknown event that leaves the community isolated, without power or phone service and with limited food sources as winter sets in.

In 2018, Dr. Anna Rodrigues approached author Waubgeshig Rice with the idea of collaborating on an open educational guide for his novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, when she discovered that OERs for books written by Indigenous authors were lacking. That collaboration resulted in an online educational guide launching in 2019 that was well received by educators across Canada. In early 2021, Waubgeshig and Anna decided to update the guide and, at that time, Dr. Kaitlyn Watson, from the Teaching and Learning Centre at Ontario Tech University, joined the project. As part of this update, themes from the original resource have been expanded and a new theme, which explores connections between the novel and the global pandemic, has been added.

In December 2018, Waubgeshig Rice sat down with [Shelagh Rogers from The Next Chapter \[New Tab\]](https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-67-the-next-chapter/clip/15642419-waubgeshig-rice-moon-crusted-snow) (<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-67-the-next-chapter/clip/15642419-waubgeshig-rice-moon-crusted-snow>) to discuss his recently published book, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. [The Next Chapter \[New Tab\]](https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thenextchapter) (<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thenextchapter>) is a Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC) radio program focused on Canadian writers and songwriters.

## Author's Bio



[Waubgeshig Rice](#) by Waubgeshig Rice, licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Waubgeshig Rice is an author and journalist from Wasauksing First Nation on Georgian Bay. His first short story collection, *Midnight Sweatlodge*, was inspired by his experiences growing up in an Anishinaabe community and won an Independent Publishers Book Award in 2012. His debut novel, *Legacy*, followed in 2014, with a French translation published in 2017. His latest novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, became a national bestseller and received widespread critical acclaim, including the Evergreen Award in 2019. His short stories and essays have been published in numerous anthologies.

His journalism experience began in 1996 as an exchange student in northern Germany, writing articles about being an Indigenous youth in a foreign country for newspapers back in Canada. He graduated from

Ryerson University's journalism program in 2002. He spent most of his journalism career with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as a video journalist, web writer, producer and radio host. In 2014, he received the Anishinabek Nation's Debwewin Citation for excellence in First Nation Storytelling. His final role with CBC was host of *Up North*, the afternoon radio program for northern Ontario. He left daily journalism in 2020 to focus on his literary career.

He currently lives in Sudbury, Ontario with his wife and two sons, where he's working on the sequel to *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. Please visit [Waubgeshig Rice's website](#) [New Tab] to learn more about him.

## Watch It: Learn More About Indigenous Cultures

Use the interactive slides below to watch the videos on Indigenous Cultures.

### **Learn More About Indigenous Culture Videos (Text Version)**

**Watch The last fishermen: ‘You can’t quit if the weather gets bad or cold or if there’s no fish’ (22 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/U7zdeMPARlQ>)

**Watch The power of a tree: Why birch and its bark are so important (22 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/mQE4g35nRRk>)

**Watch Traditional Indigenous smudging (2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/Z4UoIyHKExk>)

**Watch Traditional medicines with Joseph Pitawanakwat (2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/ch8IjdqsWTO>)

**Activity Source:** “Learn More About Indigenous Culture” H5P activity created by oeratgc, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, except where otherwise noted.

## Read the *Moon of the Crusted Snow*:

Georgian Students can access the full novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* [New Tab] ([https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?inst=georgian&url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1835948&site=ehost-live&scope=site&ebv=EB&ppid=pp\\_i](https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?inst=georgian&url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1835948&site=ehost-live&scope=site&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_i)), via the Library database.

If you are prompted to login, use the same Georgian credentials as you do for Blackboard or your student email.

## Reflection Questions

1. Before reading the book, reflect on what land-based knowledge means to you. Ask this question again after reading the book. How has your understanding of land-based knowledge changed?
2. How do you feel connected to the land around you? How does the environment sustain you (mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually)?

3. In your current context, how is your daily life shaped by the land and/or your environment, in big ways and small?
4. How do you think the physical environment affects the community and the culture of the people living there? Consider Canada and its varied landscape in comparison to other countries.

**Save your answers. You will revisit and revise them after you have read the novel and hand your answers in at the end of the novel study.**

## Summary

Narration is a style of writing that tells a story. The novel that you will read in this unit, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, reflects the experience and culture of its writer, Waubgeshig Rice. As you read the novel, consider how the environment in which a person lives affects culture and community. You are now ready to move on to the next folder.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “[Moon of the crusted snow: Reading guide](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/moonofthecrustedsnow/front-matter/introduction/)” (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/moonofthecrustedsnow/front-matter/introduction/>) and “[Land](#)” In *Moon of the crusted snow: Reading guide* by Anna Rodrigues and Kaitlyn Watson, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)/Adaptations include changing the photo of the author Waubgeshig Rice, addition of YouTube videos and reflection questions.

- Content from “Reflection Questions” section is from “Discussion Questions” section in “[Land](#)” In *Moon of the crusted snow: Reading guide* by Anna Rodrigues and Kaitlyn Watson, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)/ Adaptations include addition of fourth question.

## References

CBC Docs. (2021, March 19). *The power of a tree: why birch and its bark are so important to Anishinaabe culture* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/mQE4g35nRRk>

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# NOVEL RESPONSE

## Introduction

Read each of the sections on narrative elements: character, plot, setting, theme, point of view and dialogue. You will need to understand these elements in order to complete the reading response assignment. Consider and reflect on the questions in the exercise for each section as they relate to the novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. You do not have to hand these answers in. Use them as a study guide for when you read the novel. You will upload your answers to the Reading Response Assignment for marking.

## Learning Objectives

- Learn how elements, features and form of literary texts communicate meaning by reading and analyzing the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*.
- Use reading strategies to build an understanding of society.

## To Do List

- Read “Elements of Fiction: Character.”
- Learning Activity 1 – Elements of Fiction: Character
- Read “Elements of Fiction: Plot.”
- Learning Activity 2 – Elements of Fiction: Plot
- Read “Elements of Literature: Setting, Theme.”
- Learning Activity 3 – Elements of Fiction: Setting, Theme.
- Read “Point of View, Narrative, and Dialogue.”
- Learning Activity 4 – Elements of Fiction: Point of View, Narrative, Dialogue.”
- Read the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. Use the exercise questions in the Narrative Elements sections to take notes on the novel.
- Complete the Reading Response Questions using your notes as a guide and upload into Blackboard.

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# ELEMENTS OF FICTION: CHARACTER

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We can use several ways to think of character:

1. **Importance:** who are the main/important characters?
2. **Roles:** what is their purpose in the story?
3. **Characteristics:** what are the characters like? How are they acting?
4. **Development:** how do the characters change and grow throughout the story? How does what they go through affect them?

A story can have many characters, but you may not find all of these character types in a story.

## Characters by Importance

### Protagonist (a.k.a. Main Character)

- The **protagonist** is the character who is most written about in the story.
- A story will always have at least one main character, but it can have several (in movies or television, this is called an ensemble cast—when each character is as important as another). Main characters are the most important to the action in the story.

### Secondary Characters

- These characters may be written about often in the story and are important but not as much as the main character.

### Minor Characters

- These characters fill in the story but are not as important as the protagonist or secondary characters.
- They may have small roles and stories of their own, but don't drive the action of the protagonist's main story.
- They might act as what we'd call "extras" in a movie. They can be as little important as background.

## Characters by Role

### Antagonist

- This character is generally in opposition to the main character. This is someone with whom the protagonist has a conflict.
- An **antagonist** can be any character who acts against any other.
- This does not necessarily make them “bad” characters. They are simply opposed to another.

### Villain

- This is a character who is negative, bad or evil.
- It might be the antagonist, but it might just be another bad character.

### Sidekick

- This character goes along with another character in the story—usually the protagonist, but their relationship can be with any character.
- This character’s purpose is to support another character.

## Five Methods of Characterization (how we know what the characters are like)

1. Describing the character’s physical appearance
2. Showing the character’s actions
3. Revealing the character’s thoughts and words
4. Showing what other characters think and say about the character
5. Telling the reader directly what the writer thinks of the character

## Check Your Understanding: Identify Elements of a Short Story

Choose your own short story, or use a story your instructor has assigned. Use examples from the story where applicable.

1. Who is the protagonist in the story?
2. Describe the character—what they look like, act like, talk like, think like, etc.
3. Are there any secondary characters? Yes / No
4. Who are they?
5. Are there any minor characters? Yes / No
6. Who are they?
7. Is there an antagonist? Yes / No
8. Who is it?
9. Is there a villain? Yes / No
10. Who is it?
11. Is there a sidekick? Yes / No
12. Who is it?

## Check Your Understanding: Elements of Character Review

### Elements of Fiction: Character (Text Version)

1. There are multiple ways to think of character. \_\_\_\_\_ asks who the main or important characters are in the story and \_\_\_\_\_ looks at what their purpose is in the story. When looking at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the character you are asking what the character is like and how they are acting. Finally, \_\_\_\_\_ looks at how the character has changed and grown as the story progresses and asks how what they go through has affected them.

- Importance
  - role
  - development
  - characteristics
2. The person who is in opposition to the main character is called the?
- Antagonist
  - Sidekick
  - Secondary character
  - Protagonist
  - Villain
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the main character of the story and is the most written about. There is always one main character who is the most important in the action of the story; however, there can be multiple main characters. \_\_\_\_\_ are often written about in the story but are not as important as the main character, while \_\_\_\_\_ fill in the story, have small roles and stories, and don't drive the action of the main story.
- protagonist
  - Secondary characters
  - minor characters
4. There are five methods of characterization, which is how we know what the characters are like in the story. Select the five methods that are correct:
1. The character's physical appearance is described.
  2. The character's actions are shown and described.
  3. The plot tells you what you need to know about the character.
  4. The character's thoughts and words are revealed as the story progresses.
  5. Other character's perspectives, thoughts, and what they say about the character are shown.
  6. The reader is told directly by the author what they think of the character.

### Check your Answers: <sup>1</sup>

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1. **1)** There are multiple ways to think of character. **Importance** asks who the main or important characters are in the story and **role** looks at what their purpose is in the story. When looking at the **characteristics** of the character you are asking what the character is like and how they are acting.

**Activity Source:** “Elements of Character Review” by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). based on content from “Elements of Fiction: Character (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/elements-of-fiction/>)” In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).

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Finally, **development** looks at how the character has changed and grown as the story progresses and asks how what they go through has affected them. **2) Antagonist.** The antagonist is the character who is generally in opposition with the main character (protagonist) and is in conflict with them. An antagonist is a character who is acting against another, but this does not mean that they are always “bad characters”. **3) The protagonist** is the main character of the story and is the most written about. There is always one main character who is the most important in the action of the story; however, there can be multiple main characters. **Secondary characters** are often written about in the story but are not as important as the main character, while **minor characters** fill in the story, have small roles and stories, and don’t drive action of the main story. **4) 1.** The character’s physical appearance is described. **2.** The character’s actions are shown and described. **4.** The character’s thoughts and words are revealed as the story progresses. **5.** Other character’s perspectives, thoughts, and what they say about the character is shown. **6.** The reader is told directly by the author what they think of the character.

# ELEMENTS OF FICTION: PLOT

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Plot (a.k.a. narrative arc) is what happens in the story. The classic plot structure has a beginning, a middle and an end. The way the pages unfold from the first page to last can be out of order chronologically relative to what happens in the story.

It is useful to understand the elements of the classic plot, but know that many different storytelling cultures use different plot structures. We start by examining the basics of the classic plot so that we may become accustomed to how it feels to work with stories, not because we believe that this is the only or best way of representing stories. We will continue to refer to this element of fiction as “plot” for simplicity.

## Beginning—Three Types of Beginnings

Plots can have different types of beginnings, but they often have just one type of middle and end.

1. The story can start at the very beginning of the action.
  - “Once upon a time...” a fairy tale beginning
  - Example: “Clarissa woke up in the morning, looking forward to a nice, relaxing day at the park.” Nothing is happening yet, and we don’t know what is going to happen
2. The story can start in the middle of the action.
  - *In medias res* (in the middle of things)
  - Example: “Clarissa was cramped up in the trunk of the speeding car, terrified that the kidnappers would hurt her.” We are right in the middle of the action, but we don’t know how it started or how it will end.
3. The story can start at the end of the action.
  - Ending first
  - Example: “The police officers finished their questioning and left Clarissa alone in her hospital

room, but she couldn't stop replaying the horrible day over in her mind." We know how it all turned out, but we don't know how it started or what happened.

## Middle

In the middle of the story, we are at the **climax** of the action. We know what the character wants and what the character has done up until this point. The action is at its most exciting, but we don't know what will happen to get us to the ending.

- The climax is where the conflict in the story reaches its peak.
- Conflict is a struggle between characters and other forces. The conflict defines what the characters need and want.
- The point where everything is at its height of excitement; everything builds to that point.

## End

At the end of the story, we have the **resolution** to the action.

- The climax is over and we know how the conflict has been resolved.
- We know how it all turns out.
- Almost always a happy ending—usually resolved in a satisfactory way for the characters and the reader.

## Conflict

"Man vs." is the classic terminology to think of conflict. It originates from classic Greek literature. We understand now that much of the old use of the word "man" referred to all human beings; however, there were many instances where "man" or even "person" was considered to only refer to males who represented the gender known as "man" and excluded women and other people. It is acceptable to use "person vs." to denote conflict. I am comfortable with using "man vs." as I am aware I am studying conflict in the traditional sense—and not gender identity in our current time—when I use those terms.

- Man vs. man
  - Character is in a struggle with another character directly
- Man vs. self
  - Character is in a struggle with him/herself

- Man vs. fate
- Man vs. society
  - Character is in a struggle with society
- Man vs. higher power
  - Character is in a struggle with a God or another divine being
- Man vs. machine
  - May be an actual machine, such as a vehicle, factory machine or robot
  - May be a usable item
  - May be known as people or groups working together to accomplish something, an organization or institution (e.g. war, marriage, church)
- Man vs. nature

## Other Plot Points

- **Flashback**—look back in time to get more information about present
- **Foreshadowing**—hints at what will happen later in the story
- **Prologue**—a chapter before the story even begins—usually giving background
- **Epilogue**—a chapter after the story ends—probably tells what happened after

### Check Your Understanding: Identify Plot Features

Choose your own short story, or use a story your instructor has assigned. Use examples from the story where applicable.

1. What happens at the beginning of the story?
2. Where does this story start? (beginning / middle / end)
3. What problems do the characters have? What is the conflict in the story? (type and example)
4. What happens because of these problems?
5. When do things change because of the problem?
6. What happens in the middle of the story—the climax?
7. How do they deal with this?



## Check Your Understanding: Elements of Fiction: Plot

### Elements of Fiction: Character (Text Version)

1. Fill in the blanks using the words listed below.

- narrative arc
- at the beginning of the action
- plot structure
- in the middle of the action
- climax
- Conflict
- resolution

Plot, also known as \_\_\_\_\_, is what happens in a story. The classic \_\_\_\_\_ is beginning, middle, and end, but the story can appear out of chronological order in the book. There are three types of beginnings:

1. The story starts \_\_\_\_\_ and this is typically seen with fairy tales.
2. Also known as medias res, the story starts \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The story begins with the ending.

The \_\_\_\_\_ happens in the middle story where the conflict in the story reaches its peak. \_\_\_\_\_ is the struggle between characters and another force. At the end of the story there is a \_\_\_\_\_ which is the part of the story where the conflict is worked out.

2. What is the plot point where the story looks back in time to get more information about what is happening in the present?

- Flashback
- Foreshadowing
- Prologue
- Epilogue

3. Fill in the missing words: \_\_\_\_\_ is when a character is struggling directly with another character. A character struggling with themselves/himself/herself is known as \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is when a character is struggling with society. \_\_\_\_\_ is when a character is struggling with a vehicle, a robot, usable item. It may also be known as people or groups (organizations, institutions) that are working together to accomplish something (church, war, etc.).

**Check your Answers:**<sup>1</sup>

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Watch it: The Elements of a Story

**Watch The elements of a story| Reading| Khan Academy (5 minutes) on YouTube**  
(<https://youtu.be/Zr1xLtSMMLo>)

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[58 Elements of Fiction: Plot](#) (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/elements-of-fiction-plot/>)” In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). Adapted by adding H5P.

- 
1. **1)** Plot, also known as narrative arc, is what happens in a story. The classic plot structure is beginning, middle, and end, but the story can appear out of chronological order in the book. There are three types of beginnings: 1. The story starts at the beginning of the action and this is typically seen with fairy tales. 2. Also known as *medias res*, the story starts in the middle of the action. 3. The story begins with the ending. The climax happens in the middle story where the conflict in the story reaches its peak. Conflict is the struggle between characters and another force. At the end of the story there is a resolution which is the part of the story where the conflict is worked out. **2)** Flashback **3)** Man vs. man is when a character is struggling directly with another character. A character struggling with themselves/himself/herself is known as Man vs. self. Man vs. society is when a character is struggling with society. Man vs. machine is when a character is struggling with a vehicle, a robot, usable item. It may also be known as people or groups (organizations, institutions) that are working together to accomplish something (church, war, etc.).

# ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE: SETTING & THEME

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## Setting

Setting is where the action in the story takes place. There are two main kinds of settings:

1. **General Setting:** the less specific and larger time and place in which a story takes place—the overall time and area.
  - e.g., A story may be set in the early twenty-first century in a small town in the interior of British Columbia
  - e.g., Europe in between the two World Wars
  
2. **Specific Setting:** the exact time and place in which a specific part of the story happens.
  - e.g., In a scene in a story, the sisters are in their parents' car driving home after school.
  - e.g., At the corner between two buildings at dusk on New Year's Eve



Movie Scenes Film Backdrop Free Photo by [McRonny](#), licensed under a [Pixabay License](#).

## Theme

Theme is the meaning that *you* get out of a story. The theme is not given to readers directly—it is something that readers must figure out on their own.

- Example: unrequited love (love for someone who doesn't return that love).
- Example: overcoming great obstacles to succeed in life.
- Examples: “love,” “family loyalty,” “human behaviour in wartime.”

Theme is a major concept the writer wants to explore with their work. It is usually a universal, abstract idea that any person could understand.

## Problems with Theme

- Have you ever had a hard time finding “the theme” in a story?
- Have you ever received a poor grade on an answer or assignment about theme?

I pose this vote to my students, and I get a lot of hands up over these questions. I have noticed that there are three main reasons why students have trouble with theme:

1. Students will believe that there is “one” theme in a story.
  - This is a problem with the wording of a question. There can, and will, be many possible themes in a story. The question may be asking what is “the most significant theme”—a much different possibility.
2. Students may feel that they are wrong about a theme.
  - As long as it is a reasonable possibility that most people could recognize, you are not “wrong.”
  - Unless you think that a major theme in “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” is “interracial marriages,” you are probably not wrong.
    - But who would think that about “Goldilocks”? If you are thinking it, you are probably fine to explore it.
3. Students may not focus appropriately on only one theme (that they have selected as significant through their own understanding); instead, they may throw many different ideas into their assignment about the theme in a given story.
  - As with any assignment, a discussion of theme needs to be unified around a central idea and cohesive in that it proves only that main idea.
    - A theme about childhood poverty that might come out of “The Little Match Girl” should not include dangers of roads for children, the effects of cold upon the mind or parent-child relationships (unless you will use each of those to prove that childhood poverty).

## Check Your Understanding: Elements of Literary Setting

Choose your own short story, or use a story your instructor has assigned. Use examples from the story where applicable.

1. What is the general setting of the story?
2. Choose two scenes and describe the specific setting for each scene. (2 marks)
3. How much dialogue is there in this story?
4. Give two examples of the most frequent dialogue in the story. (2 marks)
5. Is there internal dialogue? Yes / No
6. What theme do you see in this story? Give a few examples of how the theme revealed itself to you. (3 marks)

## Check Your Understanding: Narration—Elements of Fiction: Setting and Theme

### **Narration—Elements of Fiction: Setting and Theme (Text Version)**

1. The place where the action happens in the story is called the ....?
2. What is the term for the kind of setting where the overall time and area of story takes place?
3. The major concept the writer wants to explore and meaning you get from the story is called a...?
4. The exact time and location where the story occurs is referred to as a...?

### **Check your Answers:** <sup>1</sup>

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1. **1)** Setting **2)** General Setting **3)** Theme **4)** Specific setting

**Activity source:** “Narration – Elements of Fiction: Setting and Theme” by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). based on content from “62 Elements of Literature: Setting, Theme (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/setting-theme-and-other-elements-of-literature/>)” In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). / Converted to Text Version.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “62 Elements of Literature: Setting, Theme (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/setting-theme-and-other-elements-of-literature/>)” In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).

# POINT OF VIEW, NARRATIVE AND DIALOGUE

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Prose fiction is a story written in the narrative. The narrator may or may not be a character in the story. There are three main **points of view (PoV)**; we describe writing as being in the first, second, or third person.

## First Person Point of View

First person PoV uses pronouns like **I, me, us, our** and **we**.

- When you read a passage written in first person, it's as if you're inside that person's head, seeing through their eyes. You think what they think, see what they see, and know what they know.
- The **strength** of first person is in the way it shares emotional intensity. *We feel* what the narrator feels. *We* respond to events along with them.
- The **weakness** of first person is its lack of significant information. *We* only know what the narrator knows; we can't get into the heads of other characters who are nearby. *We* also only see what that narrator sees; we can't see what else is going on around them or even around the next bend in the road. The first person narrator's knowledge of all the story's events is limited.
- Writers tend to use first person when they want to convey emotional intensity, as in a personal narrative, or when they want us to know the narrator intimately.



[Water drop in a dandelion seed by photophilde, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.](#)

## Example

“I could picture it. I have a rotten habit of picturing the bedroom scenes of my friends. We went out to the Café Napolitain to have an apéritif and watch the evening crowd on the Boulevard” (Hemingway, 2015, Chapter 2).

## Second Person Point of View

Second person PoV uses pronouns like **you**, **your** and **yourself**.

When you read a passage written in second person, it's as if the writer is talking directly to you.

- The **strength** of second person is in a direct connection with narrator and reader; when reading second person, you feel as if you're having a conversation with the narrator. This is especially effective when they are giving instructions.
- The **weakness** of second person is that it limits the audience by making it seem the narrator is talking to only one person. It can create a strange "dreamy" tone that may make the text feel strange. It can also feel aggressive or accusatory.
- Writers may use second person when they want to talk directly to one reader, give instructions, or create a dreamy or meditative passage.

### Examples

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know." (Dr. Seuss, 1990, p.2).

"You are walking through a forest.... It is peaceful.... You breathe deeply and slowly as you listen to the forest sounds around you.... You hear the sounds of leaves underfoot as you follow the path.... You find a fallen log.... You sit down." (meditation sequence).

"When you fill out the form, use a #2 pencil." (instructions).

## Third Person Point of View

Third person PoV uses pronouns like **she**, **he**, **it**, **them** and **their** and omits **I**.

- Can be **omniscient** or **limited omniscient**.
- When you read a passage written in third person, you experience a perspective that is all-seeing and all-knowing. A third person narrator can see past, present, and future; they can also know whatever any character knows as well as how that character feels and thinks. They have a full view of whatever is in front of, behind, beside, above or below them. In short, they can see the entire scene. Third person is all about facts.
- The **strength** of third person is its ability to be informative. It sees all, knows all, and shares this with the reader. Because it does not use the "I" voice, it feels objective and smart.
- The **weakness** of third person is its lack of intimacy. It's focused on information and thus tells us



little about emotion and feelings. We end up knowing a lot about the setting and events and not much about the human nature of the characters, what they're thinking, or what they plan to do next.

- Writers tend to use third person when they want to write objectively without sounding emotional or biased. Much college, research, and professional writing is done in third person. And note that there are a number of sub-forms of third person; you may hear more about these if you study creative writing.

## Example

“The seller of lightning-rods arrived just ahead of the storm. He came along the street of Green Town, Illinois, in the late cloudy October day, sneaking glances over his shoulder. Somewhere not so far back, vast lightnings stomped the earth. Somewhere, a storm like a great beast with terrible teeth could not be denied” (Bradbury, 2013, Chapter 1).

### Check Your Understanding: Identify Elements of Narration

Choose your own short story, or use a story your instructor has assigned. Use examples from the story where applicable.

1. What type of narrator does this story have? 1st person / 2nd person / 3rd person
2. Give two examples that show the point of view of the narrator. (2 marks)
3. Is the narrator a character in the story? Yes / No
4. If the narrator is 3rd person, is it omniscient or limited omniscient? Explain.
5. Who is/are the main character/s?
6. What other characters are in the story?
7. Write a brief plot summary of what happens in the beginning, the middle and the end of the story. (3 marks)

## Dialogue

Dialogue is the talking characters do. Narrative is everything other than dialogue.

Dialogue can also be one character talking to themselves or thinking—this is internal dialogue.

- Example of spoken dialogue: Nathan walked right up to Mr. Pearson and said, “I quit this stupid basketball team.”
  - This type of dialogue almost always has quotation marks around the spoken words.
- Example of internal dialogue: Cynthia wondered, *Will I ever fulfill my dreams?*
  - This type of dialogue is often in italics.

## Check Your Understanding: Point of View, Narrative and Dialogue

### Point of View, Narrative and Dialogue (Text Version)

1. What is the term for a narrator’s perspective as they are explaining what is happening in the story?
  1. Point of view
  2. Plot summary
  3. Character perspective
  4. Characterization
2. Fill in the blanks using the words provided below
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Second person</li> <li>◦ providing instruction</li> <li>◦ direct connection</li> <li>◦ limits the audience</li> <li>◦ First person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ inside the character’s head</li> <li>◦ emotional intensity</li> <li>◦ significant information</li> <li>◦ narrator has limited knowledge</li> </ul>
--	---

\_\_\_\_\_ point of view makes it seem like writer is talking directly to you. The strength is that \_\_\_\_\_ with the reader and narrator: it is as it is as if the reader is having a conversation with the narrator and is effective for \_\_\_\_\_. The weakness is that it \_\_\_\_\_ because it makes it seem as if the narrator is only talking to one person; it can make the text feel strange because of its dream-like tone, and can come across as aggressive or accusatory.

\_\_\_\_\_ point of view makes it seem as if you are \_\_\_\_\_ and seeing what is happening through their eyes.

The strength of this PoV is that it shares \_\_\_\_\_ and you feel what the narrator is feeling.

The weakness of this PoV is that it lacks \_\_\_\_\_ such as: the reader only knows what the narrator knows and sees, the reader is unable to gain access to what other characters are thinking, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of all events occurring in the story.

3. Fill in the blanks using the words provided below

- Third person
- limited omniscient
- omniscient
- informative
- objective
- intimacy
- emotion and feelings

\_\_\_\_\_ point of view makes the reader experience an all-seeing and all-knowing perspective that can see the past, present and future, and is all about the facts.

It can be \_\_\_\_\_ which means that the narrator shows everything for a limited number of characters.

The narration could also be \_\_\_\_\_ which is when the narrator knows everything about the character and will provide their own thoughts and feelings.

The strength of this point of view is the ability to be \_\_\_\_\_ and because there is no "I" voice it feels more \_\_\_\_\_. The weakness is that it lacks \_\_\_\_\_ and is focused on information (setting, events et cetera) so there is little \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Characters talking/speaking is referred to as?

1. Dialogue
2. Narrative
3. Catalogue
4. Monologue

**Check your answers:** <sup>1</sup>

- 
1. **1)** Point of view **2)** Second person point of view makes it seem like writer is talking directly to you. The strength is that direct connection with the reader and narrator: it is as if the reader is having a conversation with the narrator and is effective for providing instruction. The weakness is that it limits the audience because it makes it seem as if the narrator is only talking to one person; it can make the text feel strange because of its dream-like tone, and can come across as aggressive or accusatory. First person point of view makes it seem as if you are inside the character's head and seeing what is happening through their eyes. The strength of this PoV is that it shares emotional intensity and you feel what the narrator is feeling. The weakness of this PoV is that it lacks significant information such as: the reader only knows what the narrator knows and sees, the reader is unable to gain access to what other characters are thinking, and the narrator has limited knowledge of all events occurring in the story. **3)**

**Activity source:** “Narration—Point of View, Narrative, and Dialogue” by Jessica Jones and oeratgc , licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#) content obtained from “59 Point of View, Narrative, and Dialogue” (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/point-of-view-narrative-dialogue/>) In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#)./Converted to H5P to Text version.

## Summary

When writing a story, authors use narrative elements to produce specific effects in a novel. These effects can help the reader to better understand the author’s purpose as well as the themes and ideas represented by the story. Storytelling is an effective way to describe our world, reflect on society and relate to the environment in which we live.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “59 Point of View, Narrative, and Dialogue” (<https://opentextbc.ca/advancedenglish/chapter/point-of-view-narrative-dialogue/>) In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#). /An adaptation from “Point of View” in *The Word on College Reading and Writing* by Carol Burnell, Jaime Wood, Monique Babin, Susan Pesznecker, and Nicole Rosevear, which is licensed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).

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Third person point of view makes the reader experience an all-seeing and all-knowing perspective that can see the past, present and future, and is all about the facts. It can be limited omniscient which means that the narrator shows everything for a limited number of characters. The narration could also be omniscient which is when the narrator knows everything about the character and will provide their own thoughts and feelings. The strength of this point of view is the ability to be informative and because there is no “I” voice it feels more objective. The weakness is that it lacks intimacy and is focused on information (setting, events et cetera) so there is little emotion and feelings. 4) Dialogue

## Reference

Bradbury, R. (2013). *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. HarperCollins.

Dr. Seuss. (1990). *Oh, the places you'll go!* Random House.

Hemingway, E. (2015). *The sun also rises*. Project Gutenberg. <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/67138/pg67138-images.html> (Original publication date 1926).

# NOVEL REPRESENTATION

## Introduction

For this module, you will create an infographic for the novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. An infographic uses both visual elements and text to convey an overall impression or message. You may choose to focus on any of the following elements of the novel or a combination: setting, characters, conflict, themes, symbols, environment, culture. You will create your infographic using Canva (or Pictochart) after you create a free account and share the final product with your instructor's email.

## Learning Objectives

- Show your understanding of the novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by creating an infographic to represent one or more elements of the novel.
- Create media using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques for a specific purpose and audience.

## To Do List:

- Watch the video *What is an Infographic?*
- Create a free login on Canva or Pictochart using the instructions found in the assignment on Blackboard. Complete the infographic assignment using Canva or Pictochart that represents the important elements in the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*.

## Attribution

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# TYPES OF GRAPHICS

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## Watch It: What is an Infographic?

**Watch What is an infographic? (2 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/zvmDi82xEMc>)

Before getting into details on creating, formatting and incorporating graphics, consider the types and their functions. You can use graphics to represent the following elements in your writing:

- **Objects**—If you're describing a fuel-injection system, you'll probably need a drawing or diagram of the thing. If you are explaining how to graft a fruit tree, you'll need some illustrations of how that task is done. Photographs, drawings, diagrams, maps, and schematics are the types of graphics that show objects.
- **Numbers**—If you're discussing the rising cost of housing in Vancouver, you could use a table with the columns being for five-year periods since 1970; the rows could be for different types of housing. You could show the same data in the form of bar charts, pie charts, or line graphs. Tables, bar charts, pie charts, and line graphs are some of the principal ways to show numerical data.
- **Concepts**—If you want to show how your company is organized, such as the relationships of the different departments and officials, you could set up an organization chart, which is boxes and circles connected with lines showing how everything is hierarchically arranged and related. This would be an example of a graphic for a concept; this type depicts nonphysical, conceptual things and their relationships.
- **Words**—Graphics can be used to depict words. You've probably noticed how some textbooks may put key definitions in a box, maybe with different colour in the background. The same can be done with key points or extended examples.

## Creating Accessible Graphics

Graphics are a key way to persuade and inform your audience, so you'll want to make sure that everyone can benefit from them. If you haven't written alt text for your photos, for example, someone using a screen reader couldn't understand them. Choosing the wrong colour palette would make it hard for someone who's colourblind (or who's viewing the material in black and white) to understand your graphics. Choosing a colour that has a negative association in another culture might also give readers a negative impression of your graphics.

Karwai Pun, who works for the U.K. Home Office, has created a series of posters to show how to design accessible graphics. You'll notice that a lot of the advice works for all users. Take a moment to scroll through these graphics and see how you can apply what you've learned when creating charts and graphs in the rest of the chapter.

### Dos and Don'ts on Designing Accessible Graphics

This [Do's and don'ts on designing for accessibility \[New Tab\]](https://accessibility.blog.gov.uk/2016/09/02/dos-and-donts-on-designing-for-accessibility/) (<https://accessibility.blog.gov.uk/2016/09/02/dos-and-donts-on-designing-for-accessibility/>) page also contains plain text versions of the posters.

#### **Dos and Don'ts on Designing Accessible Graphics (Text Version)**

##### Designing for users with dyslexia

###### Do

- use images and diagrams to support text
- align text to the left and keep a consistent layout
- consider producing materials in other formats (for example, audio and video)
- keep content short, clear and simple
- let users change the contrast between background and text

###### Don't

- use large blocks of heavy text



- underline words, use italics or write capitals
- force users to remember things from previous pages – give reminders and prompts
- rely on accurate spelling – use autocorrect or provide suggestions
- put too much information in one place

## Designing for users who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

### Do

- write in plain English
- use subtitles or provide transcripts for video
- use a linear, logical layout
- break up content with sub-headings, images and videos
- let users ask for their preferred communication support when booking appointments

### Don't

- use complicated words or figures of speech
- put content in audio or video only
- make complex layouts and menus
- make users read long blocks of content
- don't make telephone the only means of contact for users

## Designing for users with physical or motor disabilities

### Do

- make large clickable actions
- give form fields space
- design for keyboard or speech only use
- design with mobile and touch screen in mind
- provide shortcuts

### Don't

- demand precision
- bunch interactions together
- make dynamic content that requires a lot of mouse movement
- have short time out windows

- tire users with lots of typing and scrolling

## Designing for users with low vision

### Do

- use good colour contrasts and a readable font size
- publish all information on web pages (HTML)
- use a combination of colour, shapes and text
- follow a linear, logical layout -and ensure text flows and is visible when text is magnified to 200%
- put buttons and notifications in context

### Don't

- use low colour contrasts and small font size
- bury information in downloads
- only use colour to convey meaning
- spread content all over a page -and force user to scroll horizontally when text is magnified to 200%
- separate actions from their context

## Designing for users of screen readers

### Do

- describe images (alt text) and provide transcripts for video
- follow a linear, logical layout
- structure content using HTML5
- build for keyboard use only
- write descriptive links and headings – for example, Contact us

### Don't

- only show information in an image or video
- spread content all over a page
- rely on text size and placement for structure
- force mouse or screen use
- write uninformative links and heading – for example, Click here

## Designing for users on the autistic spectrum

### Do

- use simple colours
- write in plain English
- use simple sentences and bullets
- make buttons descriptive – for example, Attach files
- build simple and consistent layouts

### Don't

- use bright contrasting colours
- use figures of speech and idioms
- create a wall of text
- make buttons vague and unpredictable – for example, Click here
- build complex and cluttered layouts

**Textual version activity source:** [“Textual version of H5P activity”](#) by Karwai Pun, licensed under [Open Government Licence v3.0 / CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

**Activity source:** “Dos and Don’ts on Designing Accessibility” posters by Karwai Pun, compiled by Arley Cruthers In *Business Writing For Everyone*, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#). [“Textual version of H5P activity”](#) by Karwai Pun, licensed under [Open Government Licence v3.0 / CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

## Summary

Infographics are a great way to concisely represent concepts using text and visuals. Familiarity with this medium can effectively demonstrate your understanding of the important concepts in many different disciplines and subjects.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter was adapted from “Types of Graphics (<https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/businesswriting/chapter/types-of-graphics/>)” In *Business Writing For Everyone* licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/). /Adaptations include the addition of the YouTube video and summary.

# NOVEL REVIEW

## Introduction

You will write a book review of the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. Your review should be an APA formatted, five-paragraph essay. Follow the recommended outline in the assignment below and described in the chapter “How to Write a Book Review”. The focus is to summarize and evaluate the novel based on the narrative elements you have learned.

## Learning Objectives

- Learn about how to write an effective book review.
- Write a book review of the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*.
- Write and revise drafts using stylistic elements appropriate for purpose.
- Gather and organize information using an informational form.
- Apply structures, mechanics, and language conventions to present work effectively.

## To Do List

- Read the section on “How to Write a Book Review.”
- Watch the video *Writing a Book Review*.
- Complete the book review assignment for the novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow* in Blackboard.

## Attribution

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# HOW TO WRITE A BOOK REVIEW

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Book reviews are a way to think more deeply about a book you've read and to show your understanding of the author's main theme(s) or purpose. A book review should be both informative (what the book is about) and persuasive (why a reader should or shouldn't read this book). It should include both an objective summary and your personal comments and observations.



You can use these instructions for reviewing any kind of literature or texts. You can also use these instructions as a starting point to create a review that is presented in a different delivery model: a presentation, group presentation, or others.

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The following is an outline to help you prepare for and write your review. The review will include five paragraphs.

## Introduction

The introduction paragraph provides basic information about the book and gives a sense of what your report will be about. Along with a standard essay introduction, include:

1. Title and Author
2. Publication information: publisher, year, number of pages
3. Genre
4. Brief description of characters
5. Brief plot summary (1–3 sentences)

## Body Paragraphs

There are two main sections for this part. The first is an explanation of what the book is about (summary). The second contains your opinions about the book and how successful it is (evaluation).

## Summary

For fiction or other creative writing:

1. Provide brief descriptions of the setting, the point of view (who tells the story), the main character(s) and other major characters. If there is a distinct mood or tone, mention that as well—for example gloom and doom, joyful, calm, tense, mysterious, etc.
2. Give a short, objective plot summary. Provide the major events and the book's climax and resolution.

## Evaluation

In this section you explore and question the book in two paragraphs. Write your own opinions, but be sure to explain and support them with examples from the book.

### Illustration/Expository paragraph

Define or explain the main literary element/s in the book. Some questions you might want to consider:

- Were you most struck by character, such as development or use of character types?
- Was the use of setting most memorable to you?
- Do you feel that conflict drove the plot?
- Which of the elements of literature you have studied was most pivotal in this book?

### Persuasive paragraph

Express whether a reader should or shouldn't read this book. Some questions you might want to consider:

- Did the author achieve his or her purpose? For example, if this is a mystery story, did you feel the mystery and tension?
- Is the writing effective, powerful, difficult, beautiful?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book?
- What is your overall response to the book? Did you find it interesting, moving, dull?
- Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?

## Conclusion

Conclude by pulling your thoughts together into a standard conclusion paragraph. You may also want to say what impression the book left you with or highlight what you want your reader to know about it.

## Watch It: How to Write a Book Review

**Watch How to write a book review (35 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/c57wrOFjwbM>)

## Summary

A book review combines a summary and evaluation in order to make a recommendation to the reader. Learning to write an effective review by sharing your opinion and evaluation of the purpose and effect of a medium is an important transferable skill.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “[61 How to Write a Book Review](https://openstax.org/r/how-to-write-a-book-review)” ([https://openstax.org/r/how-to-write-a-book-review/](https://openstax.org/r/how-to-write-a-book-review)) In *Advanced English* by Allison Kilgannon, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/). / Adaptations include addition of How to Write a Book Review YouTube video.



# LITERATURE CRITICISM

## English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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## Introduction

The word “literature” often evokes a picture of old, outdated plays and dusty tomes referencing long-dead authors, but in reality, literature encompasses many different elements, features and forms, both classical and modern. Authors communicate feelings, ideas and themes using the art form of literature, which may involve poetry, drama, songs, plays, videos and stories told in different formats. Literary authors, influenced by their environments, the time and age they lived and personal circumstances, convey a vast range of messages about the human condition. As readers and consumers of literature, you will bring your own experiences and “lens” when reading, listening or viewing literature. It is important to understand the way in which people communicate through this art form in order to be a more effective communicator in all aspects of life including the college and work environment.

## Learning Objectives

- Learn how elements, features and form of literary texts communicate meaning.
- Examine a variety of literary works using reading and listening strategies to build and understanding of society.

## To Do List

- Read the content on Literature and Literary Criticism.
- Watch the video on Literary Lenses.

- Read the information on analyzing stories.
- Read the short story, “The Story of an Hour.”
- Complete the literary analysis assignment for the short story “A Story in an Hour” in Blackboard.

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# LITERATURE

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When is the last time you read a book for fun? If you were to classify that book, would you call it fiction or literature? This is an interesting separation, with many possible reasons for it. One is that “fiction” and “literature” are regarded as quite different things. “Fiction,” for example, is what people read for enjoyment. “Literature” is what they read for school. Or “fiction” is what living people write and is about the present. “Literature” was written by people (often white males) who have since died and is about times and places that have nothing to do with us. Or “fiction” offers everyday pleasures, but “literature” is to be honored and respected, even though it is boring. Of course, when we put anything on a pedestal, we remove it from everyday life, so the corollary is that literature is to be honored and respected, but it is not to be read, certainly not by any normal person with normal interests.

Sadly, it is the guardians of literature, that is, of the classics, who have done so much to take the life out of literature, to put it on a pedestal and thereby to make it an irrelevant aspect of North American life. People study literature because they love literature. They certainly don’t do it for the money. But what happens too often, especially in colleges, is that teachers forget what it was that first interested them in the study of literature. They forget the joy that they first felt (and perhaps still feel) as they read a new novel or a poem or as they reread a work and saw something new in it. Instead, they erect formidable walls around these literary works, giving the impression that the only access to a work is through deep learning and years of study. Such study is clearly important for scholars, but this kind of scholarship is not the only way, or even necessarily the best way, for most people to approach literature. Instead it makes the literature seem inaccessible. It makes the literature seem like the province of scholars. “Oh, you have to be smart to read that,” as though Shakespeare or Dickens or Woolf wrote only for English teachers, not for general readers.

## What is Literature?

In short, literature evokes imaginative worlds through the conscious arrangement of words that tell a story. These stories are told through different genres, or types of literature, like novels, short stories, poetry, drama and the essay. Each genre is associated with certain conventions. In this text, we will study poetry, short fiction, drama and even personal narratives.

## Some Misconceptions About Literature

Of course, there are a number of misconceptions about literature that have to be gotten out of the way before

anyone can enjoy it. One misconception is that literature is full of **hidden meanings**. There are certainly occasional works that contain hidden meanings. The biblical book of *Revelation*, for example, was written in a kind of code, using images that had specific meanings for its early audience but that we can only recover with a great deal of difficulty. Most literary works, however, are not at all like that. Perhaps an analogy will illustrate this point. When I take my car to my mechanic because something is not working properly, he opens the hood and we both stand there looking at the engine. But after we have looked for a few minutes, he is likely to have seen what the problem is, while I could look for hours and never see it. We are looking at the same thing. The problem is not hidden, nor is it in some secret code. It is right there in the open, accessible to anyone who knows how to “read” it, which my mechanic does and I do not. He has been taught how to “read” automobile engines and he has practiced “reading” them. He is a good “close reader,” which is why I continue to take my car to him.

The same thing is true for readers of literature. Generally authors want to communicate with their readers, so they are not likely to hide or disguise what they are saying, but reading literature also requires some training and some practice. Good writers use language very carefully, and readers must learn how to be sensitive to that language, just as the mechanic must learn to be sensitive to the appearances and sounds of the engine. Everything that the writer wants to say, and much that the writer may not be aware of, is there in the words. We simply have to learn how to read them.

Another popular misconception is that a literary work has a **single “meaning”** (and that only English teachers know how to find that meaning). There is an easy way to dispel this misconception. Just go to a college library and find the section that holds books on Shakespeare. Choose one play, *Hamlet*, for example, and see how many books there are about it, all by scholars who are educated, perceptive readers. Can it be the case that one of these books is correct and all the others are mistaken? And if the correct one has already been written, why would anyone need to write another book about the play? The answer is that there is no single correct way to read a good piece of literature.

Again, let me use an analogy to illustrate this point. Suppose that everyone at a meeting were asked to describe a person who was standing in the middle of the room. Imagine how many different descriptions there would be, depending on where the viewer sat in relation to the person. Furthermore, an optometrist in the crowd might focus on the person’s glasses; a hair stylist might focus on the person’s haircut; someone who sells clothing might focus on the style of dress; a podiatrist might focus on the person’s feet. Would any of these descriptions be incorrect? Not necessarily, but they would be determined by the viewers’ perspectives. They might also be determined by such factors as the viewers’ ages, genders or ability to move around the person being viewed, or by their previous acquaintance with the subject. So whose descriptions would be correct? Conceivably all of them, and if we put all of these correct descriptions together, we would be closer to having a full description of the person.

This is most emphatically not to say, however, that all descriptions are correct simply because each person is entitled to his or her opinion. If the podiatrist is of the opinion that the person is five feet, nine inches tall, the podiatrist could be mistaken. And even if the podiatrist actually measures the person, the measurement could

be mistaken. Everyone who describes this person, therefore, must offer not only an opinion but also a basis for that opinion. “My feeling is that this person is a teacher” is not enough. “My feeling is that this person is a teacher because the person’s clothing is covered with chalk dust and because the person is carrying a stack of papers that look like they need grading” is far better, though even that statement might be mistaken.

So it is with literature. As we read, as we try to understand and interpret, we must deal with the text that is in front of us; but we must also recognize both that language is slippery and that each of us individually deals with it from a different set of perspectives. Not all of these perspectives are necessarily legitimate, and we are always liable to be misreading or misinterpreting what we see. Furthermore, it is possible that contradictory readings of a single work will both be legitimate, because literary works can be as complex and multi-faceted as human beings. It is vital, therefore, that in reading literature we abandon both the idea that any individual’s reading of a work is the “correct” one and the idea that there is one simple way to read any work. Our interpretations may, and probably should, change according to the way we approach the work. If we read *War and Peace* as teenagers, then in middle age, and then in old age, we might be said to have read three different books. Thus, multiple interpretations, even contradictory interpretations, can work together to give us a better understanding of a work.

## Why Reading Literature is Important

Reading literature can teach us new ways to read, think, imagine, feel, and make sense of our own experiences. Literature forces readers to confront the complexities of the world, to confront what it means to be a human being in this difficult and uncertain world, to confront other people who may be unlike them, and ultimately to confront themselves.

The relationship between the reader and the world of a work of literature is complex and fascinating. Frequently when we read a work, we become so involved in it that we may feel that we have become part of it. “I was really into that novel,” we might say, and in one sense that statement can be accurate. But in another sense it is clearly inaccurate, for actually we do not enter the book so much as the book enters us; the words enter our eyes in the form of squiggles on a page which are transformed into words, sentences, paragraphs, and meaningful concepts in our brains, in our imaginations, where scenes and characters are given “a local habitation and a name.” Thus, when we “get into” a book, we are actually “getting into” our own mental conceptions that have been produced by the book, which, incidentally, explains why so often readers are dissatisfied with cinematic or television adaptations of literary works.

In fact, though it may seem a trite thing to say, writers are close observers of the world who are capable of communicating their visions, and the more perspectives we have to draw on, the better able we should be to make sense of our lives. In these terms, it makes no difference whether we are reading a Homeric poem, a twelfth-century Japanese novel like *The Tale of Genji*, or a novel by Dickens. The more different perspectives we get, the better. And it must be emphasized that we read such works not only to be well-rounded (whatever that means) or to be “educated” or for antiquarian interest. We read them because they have something to do

with us, with our lives. Whatever culture produced them, whatever the gender or race or religion of their authors, they relate to us as human beings; and all of us can use as many insights into being human as we can get. Reading is itself a kind of experience, and while we may not have the time or the opportunity or it may be physically impossible for us to experience certain things in the world, we can experience them through sensitive reading. So literature allows us to broaden our experiences.

Reading also forces us to focus our thoughts. The world around us is so full of stimuli that we are easily distracted. Unless we are involved in a crisis that demands our full attention, we flit from subject to subject. But when we read a book, even a book that has a large number of characters and covers many years, the story and the writing help us to focus, to think about what they show us in a concentrated manner. When I hold a book, I often feel that I have in my hand another world that I can enter and that will help me to understand the everyday world that I inhabit. Though it may sound funny, some of my best friends live in books, and no matter how frequently I visit them, each time I learn more about them and about myself.

Literature invites us to meet interesting characters and to visit interesting places, to use our imagination and to think about things that might otherwise escape our notice, to see the world from perspectives that we would otherwise not have.

Watch this video for a lively overview of how and why we read literature. (*Please note that we will not be reading the texts the speaker mentions in the video in this course.*)

Watch it: How and Why we Read

**Watch How and why we read: Crash Course English literature #1 (7 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/MSYw502dJNY>)

## How to Read Literature

1. Read with a pen in hand! Jot down questions, highlight things you find significant, mark confusing passages, look up unfamiliar words/references, and record first impressions.
2. Think critically to form a response.
  - The more you know about a story, the more pleasure your reading will provide as you uncover the hidden elements that create the theme of the piece.

- Address your own biases and compare your own experiences with those expressed in the piece.
- Test your positions and thoughts about the piece with what others think by doing research.

While you will have your own individual connection to a piece based on your life experiences, interpreting literature is not a willy nilly process. Each piece has an author who had a purpose in writing the piece—you want to uncover that purpose. As the speaker in the video you watched about how to read literature notes, you, as a reader, also have a role to play. Sometimes you may see something in the text that speaks to you—whether or not the author intended that piece to be there, it still matters to you. However, when writing about literature, it’s important that our observations can be supported by the text itself. Make sure you aren’t reading into the text something that isn’t there. Value the author for who they are and appreciate their experiences, while attempting to create a connection with yourself and your experiences.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[41 Introduction to Literature](https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-literature/) (<https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-literature/>)” In *The Worry Free Writer* by Dr. Karen Palmer, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). An adaption from *Literature, the Humanities, and Humanity* by Theodore L. Steinberg and licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

# APPROACHES TO LITERARY CRITICISM

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One useful way to think about the different approaches or schools of literary criticism is to regard them as different methodologies. We defined a methodology as a “a system of methods that an academic discipline uses to carry out its research and pursue the answers to its questions, combined with an overarching philosophical attitude and interpretive framework for applying those methods.” That’s a good guide to understanding the nature of the different literary critical theories/methodologies. There’s a whole host of different interpretive methodologies for approaching works of literature. You’ll learn more about these in the next section. Collectively, these individual methodologies or theories add up, more or less, to the larger realm of literary theory as a whole.

## Schools of Literary Criticism

To put meat on these bones, here are brief descriptions of some of the most prominent schools of literary criticism. (Bear in mind that this is hardly a comprehensive list!) When you research the available scholarly writings on a given work of literature, you may come across essays and articles that use one or more of these approaches. We’ve grouped them into four categories—author-focused, text-focused, reader-focused and context-focused—each with its own central approach and central question about literary works and effective ways to understand them.

### Author-Focused: How can we understand literary works by understanding their authors?

**Biographical** criticism focuses on the author’s life. It tries to gain a better understanding of the literary work by understanding the person who wrote it. Typical questions involved in this approach include the following:

- What aspects of the author’s life are relevant to understanding the work?
- How are the author’s personal beliefs encoded into the work?
- Does the work reflect the writer’s personal experiences and concerns? How or how not?

### Reader-Focused: How can we understand literary works by understanding the subjective experience of reading them?

**Reader-response** criticism emphasizes the reader as much as the text. It seeks to understand how a given



reader comes together with a given literary work to produce a unique reading. This school of criticism rests on the assumption that literary works don't contain or embody a stable, fixed meaning but can have many meanings—in fact, as many meanings as there are readers, since each reader will engage with the text differently. In the words of literature scholar Tyson (2006), “reader-response theorists share two beliefs: (1) that the role of the reader cannot be omitted from our understanding of literature and (2) that readers do not passively consume the meaning presented to them by an objective literary text; rather they actively make the meaning they find in literature” (p. 170). Typical questions involved in this approach include the following:

- Who is the reader? Also, who is the implied reader (the one “posited” by the text)?
- What kinds of memories, knowledge, and thoughts does the text evoke from the reader?
- How exactly does the interaction between the reader and the text create meaning on both the text side and the reader side? How does this meaning change from person to person, or if the same person rereads it?

**Context-Focused:** How can we understand literary works by understanding the contextual circumstances—historical, societal, cultural, political, economic—out of which they emerged?

**Historical** criticism focuses on the historical and social circumstances that surrounded the writing of a text. It may examine biographical facts about the author's life (which can therefore connect this approach with biographical criticism) as well as the influence of social, political, national, and international events. It may also consider the influence of other literary works. New Historicism, a particular type of historical criticism, focuses not so much on the role of historical facts and events as on the ways these things are remembered and interpreted, and the way this interpreted historical memory contributes to the interpretation of literature. Typical questions involved in historical criticism include the following:

- How (and how accurately) does the work reflect the historical period in which it was written?
- What specific historical events influenced the author?
- How important is the work's historical context to understanding it?
- How does the work represent an interpretation of its time and culture? (New Historicism)

## Useful Metaphors: Literary Critical Methods as Toolboxes and Lenses

Two useful metaphors for understanding what literary critical theories do and how they're intended to work are the metaphor of the **toolbox** and the metaphor of the **lens**.

The **toolbox** is the older metaphor. It was more popular before the turn of the twenty-first century, and it says that each critical/theoretical approach provides a set of tools, in the form of specialized concepts and vocabulary, for thinking and talking meaningfully about literature. As this metaphor would have it, once you've learned the right concepts and terminology, you're better equipped with the tools to think and talk about literature in a rich and deep way.

Beginning roughly around the turn of the century, the **lens** began to supplant the toolbox as the preferred metaphor. Tyson (2006) explains it well: "Think of each theory as a new pair of eyeglasses through which certain elements of our world are brought into focus while others . . . fade into the background" (p. 170). In other words, the lens metaphor characterizes each critical/theoretical approach as a different way of seeing the text, with the different lenses rendering different aspects of the text more prominent or less prominent, more visible or less visible, resulting in the possibility of substantially and even fundamentally different overall readings of the same text depending on which lens is used.

For example, consider the case of Homer's *Iliad* as it might appear through several of the different lenses described above.

- Biographical criticism would highlight the influence of Homer himself—his biographical facts and major life experiences—on the text.
- Reader-response criticism would consider the relationship between the individual reader and the text. Since the *Iliad* is more than two thousand years old, one possible reader-response approach (but only one among any) might be to consider how the modern reader's experience and understanding of this work harmonizes or clashes with the implied/intended reader of a poem that was written down in vastly different cultural circumstances some 2,800 years ago, and that was composed even earlier than that.
- Historical criticism would try to understand the *Iliad* by understanding the historical, cultural, and literary contexts out of which it emerged in ancient Greece, and of which it is at least partly a reflection.

It's also important to recognize that not all literary works are equally amenable to being examined through all critical/theoretical lenses. When it comes to the *Iliad*, for example, post-colonial critics have found relatively little to "work with" and respond to. However, it's a different story with Homer's *Odyssey*, where the post-colonial lens has produced readings of the text that highlight Odysseus' role as a colonizer, even as the same lens has also produced readings that highlight Odysseus' role as a wretched refugee (Greenwood, 2020, pp. 532-535).

Watch it: An Introduction to Literary Theory

**Watch Methodology: An introduction to literary theory (17 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/hXLm3zZYhc0>)

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[Approaches to Literary Criticism](https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-englishcomp2/chapter/approaches-to-literary-criticism/)” (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-englishcomp2/chapter/approaches-to-literary-criticism/>) In *English Composition II* (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-englishcomp2/>) by Lumen Learning, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). / Adaptations include removal of feminist and Marxism critical theory sections.

## References

- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203479698>
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# INTRODUCTION TO SHORT FICTION

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A short story is a work of short, narrative prose that is usually centered around one single event. It is limited in scope and has an introduction, body and conclusion. Although a short story has much in common with a novel, it is written with much greater precision.

In this unit, you will work toward writing an analysis of a short story using a critical lens. You will be analyzing “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin which appears in the next chapter. You’ll want to read the story carefully.

## How to Read and Analyze Short Fiction

It is impossible to be a good writer without being a good reader first. But what do we mean by ‘good’? Writers go to books for various reasons, whether for guidance and inspiration, or to understand something better about writing, life or both. Perhaps the key to ‘reading as a writer’—in other words, reading with a writerly eye—is being able to understand a text as its constituent parts while still appreciating it as a whole.

Reading the work of a variety of different authors is invaluable for expanding your awareness of what a text can be and do. Reading provides not only inspiration and useful examples of methods, subjects and styles, but also a context within which to develop your own voice and individuality as a writer. The more you learn about how texts operate, the better equipped you’ll be as a writer.

Reading as a writer, also known as ‘critical reading’ or ‘close reading’, involves analyzing how a piece works and how an author achieves particular effects. When reading a short story, readers should consider how the writer uses elements like point of view, tone and structure to generate tension or create a compelling ending.

Think about why the author made certain choices in their piece, and what the outcomes of those choices are. Remember: texts are not simply given. They are the result of countless decisions on the writer’s part. Some of them might be instinctual and might not seem like conscious decision-making to the writer, but a great deal of them will also be the result of painstaking deliberation. We might not be able to know an author’s personal intention, but we can analyze what effect their choices have on us.

## Tips for Reading

1. As in poetry, read the short story for enjoyment first. Make sure you understand what is happening in the story. If you have questions about the basic story line, you can read the story again, find a *YouTube* video of someone reading the story out loud, watch a movie of the story or use an online source like *SparkNotes* to give you a summary and basic background about the story.

2. Next, read the story with a pen in hand, annotating as you read. Underline lines you find important, take notes. Circle words you don't know and look up definitions. In this step, you are trying to uncover more meaning.
3. Finally, think about the theme of the story. What lesson does the main character learn? What can we learn about life from reading the story?

After reading a work carefully, annotating it and reacting to it, the next step is to determine how it fits into your perspective on the world. Forming your own conclusions about a literary work, or a topic of any kind, is the first step to shaping an argument and, ultimately, making a case for your perspective through a persuasive essay.

## Elements of Fiction

Once you feel you understand the basic story, it's time to think about the elements of fiction. Just as understanding the elements of poetry helps readers better appreciate the artistry of the poet, understanding the elements of fiction helps readers better appreciate and understand the authors of short fiction and their work. Remember that, while the elements are important, they are used by an author to support the theme or main idea of the text—to highlight certain things they want the reader to understand about the characters and the theme.

## Theme

One thing you should remember about theme is that it must be expressed in a complete sentence. For instance, “discrimination” is not a theme; however, “genetic modification in humans is dangerous because it can result in discrimination” is a complete theme.

A story can have more than one theme, and it is often useful to question and analyze how the themes interact. For instance, does the story have conflicting themes? Or do a number of slightly different themes point the reader toward one conclusion? Sometimes the themes don't have to connect—many stories use multiple themes in order to bring multiple ideas to the readers' attention.

So how do we find theme in a work? One way is to examine motifs, or recurring elements in a story. If something appears a number of times within a story, it is likely of significance. A motif can be a statement, a place, an object or even a sound. Motifs often lead us to discern a theme by drawing attention to it through repetition. In addition, motifs are often symbolic. They can represent any number of things, from a character's childhood to the loss of a loved one. By examining what a motif symbolizes, you can extrapolate a story's possible themes. For instance, a story might use a park to represent a character's childhood. If the author makes constant references to the park, but we later see it replaced by a housing complex, we might draw conclusions about what the story is saying about childhood and the transition to adulthood.

Though theme is similar to message or argument, it is not necessarily an assertion like the other two terms are. In connecting to a work's meaning, a theme can refer to key topics of a work. Thus, while we might say "Ode on a Grecian Urn" argues that the state of desire should be appreciated beyond the moment of satisfaction, we might state that the themes of the poem are *becoming* versus *being*, the role of timeless art in a time-dependent world, and the relationship between beauty and truth. The theme of a story is the universal lesson about life that readers can draw from the story. Theme might incorporate broad ideas, such as life/death, madness/sanity, love/hate, society/individual, known/unknown. Theme might also be focused more on the individual, for example the theme could be midlife crisis or growing up.

This video focuses on theme from a film perspective, but it is an interesting discussion that is also applicable to the short story.

Watch It: How to Find a Theme

**Watch How to find a theme (6 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/rLuKNVny9cM>)

## Characterization

The characters are the people in a story. The narrator is the voice telling the story, but the narrator may or may not be a character in the story. The *protagonist* is the central character. The *antagonist* is the force or character that opposes the main character. Characters might be *static* (remain the same) or *dynamic* (change through the course of the story). The way an author creates a character is called characterization.

Characterization includes the physical traits of characters, their personalities and the way they speak. Authors might make judgments, either explicit (stated plainly) or implicit (allowing the reader to judge), about the characters in a story.

In addition to the protagonist and antagonist, most stories have secondary or minor characters. These are the other characters in the story. They sometimes support the protagonist or antagonist in their struggles, and they sometimes never come into contact with the main characters. Authors use minor characters for a variety of reasons. For instance, they can illustrate a different side of the main conflict, or they can highlight the traits of the main characters. One important type of minor character is called a *foil*. This character emphasizes the traits of a main character (usually the protagonist) through contrast. Thus, a foil will often be the polar opposite of the main character he or she highlights. Sometimes, the foil can take the form of a sidekick or friend. Other times, he or she might be someone who contends against the protagonist. For example, an

author might use a decisive and determined foil to draw attention to a protagonist's lack of resolve and motivation.

Finally, any character in a story can be an *archetype*. We can define archetype as an original model for a type of character, but that doesn't fully explain the term. One way to think of an archetype is to think of how a bronze statue is made. First, the sculptor creates his design out of wax or clay. Next, he creates a fireproof mold around the original. After this is done, the sculptor can make as many of the same sculpture as he pleases. The original model is the equivalent to the archetype. Some popular archetypes are the trickster figure, such as Coyote in Native American myth or Brer Rabbit in African American folklore, and the femme fatale, like Pandora in Greek myth. Keep in mind that archetype simply means original pattern and does not always apply to characters. It can come in the form of an object, a narrative, etc. For instance, the apple in the Garden of Eden provides the object-based forbidden fruit archetype, and Odysseus's voyage gives us the narrative-based journey home archetype.

Here are some questions to consider about characterization:

- Who is the main character?
- Are the main character and other characters described through dialogue—by the way they speak (dialect or slang, for instance)?
- Has the author described the characters by physical appearance, thoughts and feelings, and interaction (the way they act towards others)?
- Are they static/flat characters who do not change?
- Are they dynamic/round characters who DO change?
- What type of characters are they? What qualities stand out? Are they stereotypes?
- Are the characters believable?

Watch It: Characterization and Archetypes in Literature

**Watch Power in literature, short stories part 5: Characterization and archetype (3 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/j\\_mdG6azrMA](https://youtu.be/j_mdG6azrMA))

## Plot & Structure

Before you can write an in-depth explanation of the themes, motives or diction of a book, you need to be able to discuss one of its most basic elements: the story. If you can't identify what has happened in a story, your writing will lack context. Writing your paper will be like trying to put together a complex puzzle without looking at the picture you're supposed to create. Each piece is important, but without the bigger picture for reference, you and anyone watching will have a hard time understanding what is being assembled. Thus, you should look for "the bigger picture" in a book, poem or play by reading for plot.

Rather than tell everything that might possibly happen to a character in certain circumstances, the writer carefully selects the details that will develop the plot, the characters and the story's themes and messages. The writer engages in character development in order to develop the plot and the meaning of the story, paying special attention to the protagonist, or main character. In a conventional story, the protagonist grows and/or changes as a result of having to negotiate the story's central conflict. A character might be developed through exposition, in which the narrator simply tells us about this person. But more often, the character is developed through dialogue, point of view and description of this person's expressions and actions.

In essence, the plot is the action of the story. Most short fiction follows the traditional pattern of Greek drama, with an introduction, rising action involving a conflict, the climax in which a crisis occurs (the turning point) and a resolution (how the conflict is resolved).

Here are some questions to consider about plot:

- What is the most important event?
- How is the plot structured? Is it linear, chronological or does it move around?
- Is the plot believable?

Here's another great video from Shmoop describing plot.

Watch It: Plot in Literature

**Watch Power in literature, short stories part 4: Plot (4 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/SvFB6XVbSAY>)



The structure is the design or form of the story. The structure can provide clues to character and action and can mirror the author's intentions. Look for repeated elements in action, gestures, dialogue, description and shifts.

## Setting

If a story has characters and a plot, these elements must exist within some context. The frame of reference in which the story occurs is known as setting. The most basic definition of setting is one of place and time.

Setting doesn't have to just include the physical elements of time and place. Setting can also refer to a story's social and cultural context. There are two questions to consider when dealing with this kind of setting: "What is the cultural and social setting of the story?" and "What was the author's cultural and social setting when the story was written?" The first question will help you analyze why characters make certain choices and act in certain manners. The second question will allow you to analyze why the author chose to have the characters act in this way.

Setting is created with elements such as geography, weather, time of day, social conditions etc. Think about what role setting plays in the story. Is it an important part of the plot or theme? Or is it just a backdrop against which the action takes place?

The time period of the story is also a part of setting. Think about the following questions:

- When was the story written?
- Does it take place in the present, the past or the future?
- How does the time period affect the language, atmosphere or social circumstances of the short story?

Watch It: Setting in Literature

**Watch Power in literature, short stories part 2: Setting (5 minutes) on YouTube**

([https://youtu.be/rYQOql\\_Gm88](https://youtu.be/rYQOql_Gm88))

## Point of View

By point of view, we mean from whose eyes the story is being told. Short stories tend to be told through one character’s point of view. Sometimes a short story is told by a narrator who might be a character in the story or a person completely outside of the events of the story. A text can be written from first person (I/me), second person (you), or third person (he/she/it) point of view.

Here are some questions to consider about point of view:

- Who is the narrator or speaker in the story?
- Does the author speak through the main character?
- Is the story written in the first person “I” point of view?
- Is the story written in a detached third person “he/she” point of view?
- Is there an “all-knowing” third person who can reveal what all the characters are thinking and doing at all times and in all places?

Watch It: What is Point of View?

**Watch “What is point of view?”: A literary guide for English students and teachers (6 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/acURL\\_KBiRI](https://youtu.be/acURL_KBiRI))

## Language & Style

Language and style are how the author presents the story to the reader. These elements are used to create the mood and tone of the story. In particular, look for diction, symbols and irony.

- **Diction:** As in poetry, fiction often utilizes diction and figurative language to convey important ideas. In the short story, “The Story of an Hour,” the words “aquiver,” “spring,” “delicious breath” and “twittering” suggest a kind of rebirth occurring for Mrs. Mallard.
- **Symbolism:** As in poetry, authors of short stories often use symbols to add depth to the story. A symbol represents something larger than itself. Common examples of symbols include a country’s flag, which represents the country, and a heart, which represents love. Each symbol has suggestive meaning—the

flag, for example, brings up thoughts of patriotism, a unified country. What is the value of using symbols in a literary text? Symbols in literature allow a writer to express more in a condensed manner. The meaning of a symbol is connotative or suggestive, rather than definitive, which allows for multiple interpretations.

- **Irony:** Irony is the contrast between appearance/expectation and reality. Irony can be verbal (spoken), situational (something is supposed to happen but doesn't), or dramatic (difference between what the characters know and what the audience knows).

### Watch It: Irony

**Watch Alanis Morissette updates 'ironic' lyrics (3 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/6GVJpOmaDyU>) to learn more about irony.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[45 Introduction to Short Fiction](https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-short-fiction/) (<https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-short-fiction/>)” In *The Worry Free Writer* by Dr. Karen Palmer, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). /Adaptations include removal of writing activities and H5Ps, Kurt Vonnegut and Point of View Youtube videos and the addition of Point of View YouTube video.

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# KATE CHOPIN

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Read the biography of the author Kate Chopin below. She wrote the following story, “The Story of an Hour,” which you will analyze as your assignment in this module. Try to consider the time and circumstances of the author when you read and think about the story.

## Biography

Katherine O’Flaherty was born in 1850 in St. Louis, Missouri, to an affluent family. She was formally educated in a Catholic school for girls. At age twenty, she married Oscar Chopin and moved with him to New Orleans. In 1879, the couple relocated to Cloutierville, an area where many members of the Creole community lived. The Chopins lived, worked and raised their six children together until Oscar died unexpectedly in 1882, leaving his wife in serious debt. Chopin worked and sold the family business to pay off the debt, eventually moving back to St. Louis to be near her mother, who died soon after Chopin returned.

After experiencing these losses, Chopin turned to reading and writing to deal with her grief. Her experiences in New Orleans and Cloutierville provided rich writing material, and during the 1890s, she enjoyed success as a writer, publishing a number of stories in the local colour tradition. By 1899, her style had evolved, and her important work *The Awakening*, published that year, shocked the Victorian audience of the time in its frank depiction of a woman’s sexuality. Unprepared for the negative critical reception that ensued, Chopin retreated from the publishing world.

She died unexpectedly a few years later in 1904 from a brain hemorrhage.

In her lifetime, Chopin was known primarily as a regional writer who produced a number of important short stories, many of which were collected in *Bayou Folk* in 1894. Her groundbreaking novel *The Awakening* (1899) was ahead of its time in the examination of the rigid cultural and legal boundaries placed on women, which limited or prevented them from living authentic, fully self-directed lives.

## The Story of an Hour

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

Published 1894

It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.

She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the colour that filled the air.

Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little, whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: "free, free, free!" The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind,

tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

“Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for admission. “Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door—you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven’s sake open the door.”

“Go away. I am not making myself ill.” No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister’s importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister’s waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom.

Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine’s piercing cry; at Richards’ quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.

When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease—of the joy that kills.

## Summary

In this module, you read about the importance and significance of literature as well as the concept

of reading and listening with a “literary lens.” In the following folders, you will focus on the reader’s response and historical or biographical lens when experiencing and analyzing different forms of literature.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[28 Kate Chopin \(1850–1904\)](https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/kate-chopin/) (<https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/kate-chopin/>)” In *Composition and Literature* (<https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/>) by James Sexton and Derek Soles, licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). / Adaptations include the removal the short story “Desiree’s Baby” and corresponding assignments.

# READER'S RESPONSE

## English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreeentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

In discussing literature, poetry cannot be ignored. Poetry is a form of communication that uses language to create images, feeling, impressions, and themes for the audience. While poets are affected by personal experience and era, most audiences can relate to the feelings evoke by this form. This unit will discuss how poems and songs create effects and focus on the reader's response lens.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine and apply a reader's response lens to poetry and song to build an understanding of society.
- Explore how elements, features, and form communicate meaning in poems and songs.
- Use speaking skills and strategies to present a poem or song.

## To Do List

- Review the content on the Introduction to Poetry.
- Read the biographies and poems of Walt Whitman and [Maya Angelou](#).
- Listen to the song "Indigenize."
- Complete the learning activities associated with the poems and song.
- Read "Reading Poems to an Audience."
- Complete the reader's response lens assignment in Blackboard.



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# INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

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## Why Write About Poetry?

There are many reasons an instructor might ask you to write about literature. For one, learning to write about literature is an engaging way to learn to make a text-based argument. Secondly, writing about literature can help you better understand what you are reading. Learning to read literature critically requires the same steps as learning to read academic texts, like looking up words you don't understand, researching context, asking questions, and taking notes. Last, but certainly not least, writing about literature can help you to enjoy it more!

Generally, English teachers begin introducing this process to students with the genre of poetry. Poetry tends to be shorter than other genres, like short fiction and drama. Because of this, it can be easier to digest and analyze.

## Steps to Writing About Poetry

### Step 1: Choose a Poem

The first step to writing about poetry might seem fairly obvious—you must choose a poem to write about. It's important to choose a poem that interests you. If you must spend a few weeks writing about a poem, at least choose one that you enjoy. It could be that you personally relate to the poem, or you might just like the rhythm of it.

For the purposes of illustration, I am going to share an example that I used for a class demonstration. Here is William Shakespeare's "Sonnet 66":

*Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,  
As to behold desert a beggar born,  
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,  
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,  
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,  
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,  
And strength by limping sway disabled  
And art made tongue-tied by authority,*

*And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,  
 And simple truth miscalled simplicity,  
 And captive good attending captain ill:  
 Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,  
 Save that, to die, I leave my love alone* (Shakespeare, as cited in Poetry Foundation, n.d.).

## Step 2: Read and Respond

The second step in writing about poetry is reading and responding to the poem. While many students might be apprehensive about reading poetry, reading poetry should be an enjoyable experience.

Poetry is written from the heart, and it speaks to the heart. Poetry allows us to hear another person’s voice in a beautiful way that can illuminate our own experiences, as well as create empathy for the different experiences of others.

Muriel Rukeyser says in *The Life of Poetry* that in order to successfully read a poem, we must give a poem “a total response.” This means giving it all of our attention, taking it in slowly, reading it several times. It means listening to the poem openly, without judgment, and without projecting our own assumed meanings onto it.

To come to emotional meanings at every moment means to adjust and react to the way a poem takes shape with every word, every line, every sentence, every stanza. Each poem creates its own universe as it moves from line to line.

Reading is one of the most intimate forms of connection we can have with someone. We take their words—their breath—into ourselves. We shape the words with our own bodies and, too, give them life with our own breath. Reading poetry, we breathe in what a poet breathes out. We share breath. The words and their meanings become part of our body as they move through our mind, triggering sensations in our bodies that lead to thoughts. And through this process, we have experiences that are new and that change us as much as any other experience can.

Poetry is a condensed art form that produces an experience in a reader through words. And though words may appear visually as symbols on the page, the experience that poems produce in us is much more physical and direct. This is why we must read poems with full concentration and focus more than once. It is why we must read them out loud. It is why we must be attentive to every aspect of the poem on both ends: as a writer, and as a reader.

Readers come to the page with different backgrounds and a range of different experiences with poetry, but it is how we read a poem that determines our experience of it. By “read” I do not mean understand or analyze, but rather, the actual process of coming to the poem, ingesting its lines, and responding emotionally.

## How to Read Poetry

Many a well-meaning English teacher has ruined poetry for students by making reading poetry a drawn out and difficult search for a hidden meaning. While some poetry does have some interesting hidden meaning, poets usually write a poem to express a feeling to an audience.

### Be a Good Listener

The first step in reading poetry is simply to listen. Being a **good listener** requires many of the same traits as being a good reader. When we listen to someone speak, we listen to their emotions and ideas through meaning and tone, body gestures, and emphasized words. We do not judge. We do not interrupt. We may touch the speaker's arm to express care. We certainly use facial expressions and gestures to let the speaker know we are listening and understanding, that we are advancing emotionally alongside them with each turn of the story. Before offering advice, condolences, or other reactions, we as listeners try to see their perspective and its complexities from their side. We take our identities out of the equation and place their concerns in the middle of our attention.

Every poem has a speaker that seeks connection with a listener. A poet seeks to create an emotional experience in the reader through the poem's process, just as if a friend—or stranger—were telling an intense story. Unlike a person speaking, who can use the entire body to gesture, poetry has only a voice to rely on to speak. Yet the poem seeks to speak to a reader as if it had a body. The poem uses rhythm, pauses, stresses, inflections, and different speeds to engage the listener's body. As readers, it is our role to listen to the speaker of the poem and to *embody* the words the speaker speaks with our own self as if we are the ones who've spoken. We as readers identify with the speaker, with the voice of the poem.

### Note the Title

Reading a poem, we start at the beginning—the title, which we allow to set up an expectation for the poem in us. A title can set a mood or tone, or ground us in a setting, persona or time. It is the doorway into the poem. It prepares us for what follows.

### The First Reading

*Read* the poem out loud. *Listen* for the general, larger qualities of the poem like tone, mood and style. *Look up* any words you cannot define. *Circle* any phrases that you don't understand and *mark* any that stand out to you. Some questions we may ask ourselves include:

1. What is my first emotional reaction to the poem?

2. Is this poem telling a story? Sharing thoughts? Playing with language experimentally? Is it exploring one's feelings or perceptions? Is it describing something?
3. Is the tone serious? Funny? Meditative? Inquisitive? Confessional?

These initial questions will emotionally prepare you to be a good listener. Remember, when you read a poem the first time, don't try to dissect it. Instead, enjoy it first. Think about how you enjoy music, for example. Listen to the song, the music of poetry first, and then take some time to figure out the meaning. You can use the elements of poetry to help you with this in your second read of the poem.

## The Second Read: Elements of Poetry

The **elements of poetry** permit a poet to control many aspects of language—tone, pace, rhythm, sound—as well as language's effects: images, ideas, sensations. These elements give power to the poet to shape a reader's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual experience of the poem. Because form and function are so closely intertwined, it is impossible to paraphrase a poem.

When reading poetry, it's important to keep in mind that every word counts. More so than in any other type of writing, it's important to pay attention to the author's use of words. Here are some general things to pay attention to when reading poetry.

### Speaker vs. Poet

Like individuals, each poem's speaker speaks from a place of perspective, a place which can be physical and/or psychological. As we as readers move word to word, line to line, we must allow the universe of the poem to take root in our imaginations as if it is the only universe that exists. When we are open to the words' music and meaning, the poem has the potential to envelop our entire being and body.

Remember that the speaker in the poem is not necessarily the author. The speaker is the voice of the poem. For example, a poet might write a poem about a historical figure speaking—the speaker in the poem is not the author, but the historical figure. Pay attention to clues in the text that tell you who is speaking in the poem.

### Diction and Tone

Tone is created by the word choices the author makes, which is called the author's diction. One example of how an author uses diction to create tone is denotative and connotative language. For example, the words "belly button," "navel" and "umbilicus" all refer to the same thing, but they all have different connotations that reflect the speaker's attitude toward it. You might also look for unusual words/phrases. Think about how the meaning of a word may have changed over time—especially important when reading poetry from before

your lifetime. Finally, consider how the words are meant to sound. Do they sound playful? Angry? Confidential? Ironic?

## Figurative Language

Figurative language is an author's creative use of language, often to create a memorable image for the reader. Here are four common types of figurative language:

- **Simile**—uses *like*, *as*, *than*, *appears* or *seems* to compare two different things (She sings *like* a bird.)
- **Metaphor**—compares two unrelated things without the use of *like* or *as* (She's a train wreck!)
- **Personification**—gives human characteristics to an inanimate object (Umbrellas clothe the beach.)
- **Allusion**—references to other works, historical events and figures, etc. (You're such a Scrooge!)

## Symbolism

Symbolism can be an important aspect of poetry. Symbols are images that are loaded with significance. In order for something to be symbolic in a piece, it must mean something else in addition to its literal meaning. For example, an author might place a sad scene in the midst of a gloomy day. In this case, the day is actually gloomy, but it also represents the overall tone of gloom in the story/poem.

Some images are almost universal symbols. For example, a rose can symbolize love. A skeleton symbolizes death. Darkness and light and colors often have symbolic meaning, as well.

While symbolism is often present in poetry, it's important to remember that just because something could be symbolic of something else, that doesn't mean it actually is! Remember, poets aren't typically trying to hide their meaning from their readers. They are simply using language in creative ways to share their feelings.

## Music of Poetry

Finally, it's important to pay attention to the structure and the patterns of sound in a poem. Note that each line of a poem is not necessarily a complete thought. The ways in which an author breaks the lines of a poem likely have a purpose. Likewise, stanzas, the "paragraphs" of a poem, often have strategic arrangements that can give the reader clues about the meaning of a poem. The way an author puts together each word, line and stanza creates the rhythm of a poem.

In addition to the structure of the poem, look at the patterns of sound. Reading a poem aloud is a good way to highlight for yourself the music of poetry. Keep an eye (or ear!) out for the following:

- **Rhyme**—when the ends of words sound the same (sand, band, hand)
- **Alliteration**—when words begin with the same sounds ("Bring me my bow of burning gold")

- **Assonance**—when words have the same internal vowel sounds, but they don't actually rhyme (tide and mine)
- **consonance**—when words begin and end with the same consonant sounds (fail & feel, rough & roof)
- **Onomatopoeia**—when a word sounds like what it is (hiss, buzz)

## Making Connections with the Poem

After moving through the poem and noting images, their effects and the tone or places where tone changes, the next question that is helpful to ask is: What does *x* remind me of? Or, what associations am I making? Usually, the connections I would suggest making would be within the poem itself and the patterns it creates—between lines, images, repetitive words or themes, and diction.

Making connections and asking questions about those connections can lead to insight into the poem's experience, as well as insight into the experience of being human. The idea is to come to an understanding of what the message of the poem is and how the author creates that message by using the elements of poetry.

I think you'll enjoy this fun video by Isabella Wallace. Aside from the crazy strand of hair in her eyes, she makes some great points about the correlation between songs and poetry that I think will help take some of the scariness out of analyzing poetry. Plus, her accent is pretty fun to listen to.

Watch It: How to Analyze a Poem

**Watch How to analyse a poem you have never seen before (9:30 minutes) on YouTube**  
 (<https://youtu.be/Ebd-ObjUjZk>)

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[42 Introduction to Poetry](https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-poetry/) (<https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/introduction-to-poetry/>)” In *The Worry Free Writer* by Dr. Karen Palmer, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). /Adaptations include removing the assignment section.

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- Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 66” in the Public Domain.

## Reference

Poetry Foundation (n.d.). *Sonnet 66: Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry* by William Shakespeare.  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45097/sonnet-66-tird-with-all-these-for-restful-death-i-cry>



# "BIRCHES" BY ROBERT FROST (BLANK VERSE)

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Consider the poem "Birches" by Robert Frost. Read the poet's biography, read the poem and then listen to it read by the author. Reflect on your personal response to the poem in the activity below.

## Biography

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco. His father, a teacher and a journalist, died in 1885 and his mother, also a teacher, moved the family to Lawrence, Massachusetts, where the extended Frost family had settled generations ago. Frost graduated from Lawrence High School in 1892 and attended Dartmouth College briefly before returning to Lawrence to teach at his mother's school and to answer his calling to become a poet. He married his high school sweetheart, Elinor White, in December of 1895.

Frost returned to university, this time to Harvard, where he was a student from 1897 to 1899. He left to work the farm his grandfather purchased for him in Derry, New Hampshire. From 1906 to 1911, he also taught high school and college English, mainly in Plymouth, New Hampshire. Throughout all of these years, he was writing poetry, but he was not having much success getting his work published.

In 1912, he took his family to England, hoping he would find more success there as a poet. His instincts proved to be exceptional. His first collection of poetry, *A Boy's Will*, was published in England in 1913; his second, *North of Boston*, in 1914. Including such iconic Frost poems as "Mending Wall" and "After Apple-Picking" and his famous narrative "The Death of the Hired Man," *North of Boston* established firmly Frost's reputation.

The Frosts returned to America in 1915, to Franconia, New Hampshire, where the growing family bought another farm. His reputation was now established, and over the years, he would become a public figure, America's best-known and most popular poet. He supplemented his income, in the manner typical of successful modern poets, by teaching and serving as poet-in-residence at a number of universities, including the University of Michigan and Amherst and Middlebury Colleges.

Frost's professional success is unmatched by any other American poet. He won four Pulitzer Prizes for outstanding poetry: for *New Hampshire*, in 1924; *Collected Poems*, in 1931; *A Further Range*, in 1937; and *A Witness Tree*, in 1943. The world's great universities—Harvard, Princeton, Oxford, Cambridge and Dartmouth—gave him honorary degrees. In 1960, he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his contribution to American culture.

This professional success was tempered by tragedy in his personal life. His wife died of cancer in 1938. Four

of his six children died before he did, his son Carol as a result of suicide. The contemplative and sorrowful voice of much of his poetry is the result, in part, of these events.

Frost was invited to read a poem at the inauguration of President Kennedy, on January 20, 1961. He was 87. He had written a poem especially for this occasion, but the glare from the sun on his paper obscured his vision. Instead, he recited from memory "The Gift Outright," his iconic poem about America's progress from a colony of Great Britain to an independent nation.

Frost died from complications of prostate surgery on January 29, 1963.

## Birches

Published 1915

**Read "Birches" by Robert Frost [New Tab]**

**(<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44260/birches>) online, available through the Poetry Foundation.**

**Watch the video "Birches" by Robert Frost (3 minutes) on Films on Demand [New Tab] (<https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?url=https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=103261&xtid=128291&loid=448880>).**

*Note:* this resource is only available to Georgian College students via single sign-on. If you are a student from another institution please reach out to your library for resources.

## Analysis

### Theme

The poem by Frost (1969, as cited in Poetry Foundation, n.d.,) is set in the wake of an ice storm that has bent the branches of the birch trees in the woods near the poet's farm. The poet notices the bent branches, knows they are the victims of the ice storms, but wishes they were bowed down because a young boy has been swinging on them. The poem suggests that, through the exercise of our imagination, we can turn an unpleasant experience into a pleasant one. He knows he is deceiving himself. He can't escape the "Truth," capitalized, in line 20. But he is grateful for the temporary escape from the harsh realities of life his play provides.

There is a religious dimension to the theme of the poem. In line 13, the poet imagines "the inner dome of heaven had fallen," as the ice crystals fall from the branches. In line 56, he climbs the birches "*Toward heaven.*" But Earth is better, "the right place for love" (line 52). Ultimately, the theme of the poem is that it is great to imagine, but it is better to be grounded. It is restorative to escape from harsh reality, but ultimately, we must confront reality.

## Form

"Birches" is written in blank verse. Blank verse is a genre of poetry consisting of a regular rhythm pattern—iambic pentameter—but no recurring rhyme scheme.

~ / / ~ / ~ / ~ /

When I see birches bend to left and right

~ / ~ / ~ / ~ / ~ /

Across the lines of straighter darker trees,

~ / ~ / ~ / ~ / ~ /

I like to think some boy's been swinging them (Frost, 1969, as cited in Poetry Foundation, n.d., Lines 1-4).

It is a common and widely used verse form, revered because it is the form Shakespeare chose for his thirty-seven plays, though he does break the form on occasion in the interest of certain dramatic effects. It was also the form John Milton chose to use for the great epic poem in the English language, *Paradise Lost*.

Blank verse poems are usually quite long; at 59 lines, "Birches" is about average. They are often narrative poems in that they tell a story. Blank verse is the poetry genre that most closely resembles human speech, and so it lends itself to the narrative form. Blank verse poems often have a serious, philosophical tone or voice.

## Figurative Language

"Birches" is an example of an extended metaphor, in that tree climbing is associated with a temporary, restorative escape from harsh reality throughout the poem.

In lines 10 and 11, Frost uses a series of words that begin with "s" and "sh": "Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells / Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—." This repetition of a consonant sound to achieve a particular effect is called alliteration. The repetition, especially of the "sh" sound, mimics the sound of the ice crumbling from the branches and falling to the ground. The effect is aided by the repetition of the vowel sound "e" in "shed" and "shells" and the "a" sound in "shattering" and "avalanching." This repetition of vowel sounds, a cousin to alliteration, is called assonance.

In line 19, Frost uses a simile, comparing the bowed branches to girls who dry their hair in the sun. The relationship between the human and the natural worlds is central to the theme of this poem, and this simile helps to augment this theme.

In line 21, Frost personifies Truth, breaking into his fantasy about the branches of the birch trees bowed down because boys have been swinging on them. Truth will triumph over fantasy by the end of the poem, and the personification highlights Truth's strength.

The simile in line 44 draws an interesting comparison between life and "a pathless wood." This is actually an example of an extended simile, since the comparison does not end until line 47. Those cobwebs that burn

and tickle the face and those twigs that slash across the eyes are symbols that represent all of the physical and emotional challenges life sends our way.

## Context

“Birches” was written while Frost was living in England, in 1913–14. It was first published in the August 1915 edition of *Atlantic Monthly*, and it was included in his collection of poetry, *Mountain Interval*, published in 1916. Frost biographies note that the action in the poem is based upon Frost’s own adventures, climbing birch trees when he was a boy.

## Learning Activities

1. In this poem, Frost suggests that it is good to use our imagination to escape from harsh realities, but only if we are prepared to face reality after the vacation our imagination can provide. In his poetry, Frost often recommends communing with nature as a way of coping with stress. Can you relate to his recommendation? Explain your answer.
2. Watch the video [Birches \[New Tab\]](https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?url=https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=103261&xtid=128291&luid=448880) (<https://ra.ocls.ca/ra/login.aspx?url=https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=103261&xtid=128291&luid=448880>) (3 minutes) by Robert Frost. *Note:* this resource is only available to Georgian College students via single sign-on. If you are a student from another institution please reach out to your library for resources.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “16 “Birches” by Robert Frost (Blank Verse) (<https://opentextbc.ca/provinciale/english/chapter/birches-by-robert-frost-blank-verse/#chapter-71-section-1>)” In *Composition and Literature* by James Sexton and Derek Soles, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Adaptations include link to Georgian College resource video reading Birches.

## Reference

Creative Arts Television DBA Aviva Films Ltd. (2017, February 17). *The poetry of Frost and Whitman performed* [Video]. Films on Demand [Georgian College Library access].

Poetry Foundation. (n.d.). *Birches by Robert Frost*. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44260/birches>

# MAYA ANGELOU: BIOGRAPHY AND POEM "STILL I RISE"

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Read the biography of Maya Angelou. Listen to the recital of the poem and reflect on how the poem and its structure affects you as a reader in the activity below.

Maya Angelou was an American poet, memoirist, actress and an important figure in the American Civil Rights Movement. Angelou is known for her series of six autobiographies, starting with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), which was nominated for a National Book Award and called her *magnum opus*.



Maya Angelou visits YCP! 2/4/13 by York College  
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Her volume of poetry, *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die* (1971) was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

Angelou recited her poem, “On the Pulse of Morning” at President Bill Clinton’s inauguration in 1993, the first poet to make an inaugural recitation since Robert Frost at John F. Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961. She was highly honored for her body of work, including being awarded over 30

honorary degrees.

Angelou’s first book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sing*, describes her early life and her experience of confronting racism, a central feature of her work. She used the caged bird as a metaphor for the imprisoning nature of racial bigotry on her life.

At the time of her death, tributes to Angelou and condolences were paid by artists, entertainers and world leaders, including President Barack Obama, whose sister had been named after Angelou, and former President Bill Clinton. Harold Augenbraum, from the National Book Foundation, said that Angelou’s “legacy is one that all writers and readers across the world can admire and aspire to.”

## Watch It: Still I Rise

### **Watch Still I rise (official lyric video) – Caged bird songs (4 minutes) on YouTube**

([https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_UFMB4i1AJo](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=_UFMB4i1AJo))

## Learning Activity

1. What emotions are evoked when reading this poem? What is the effect of the repetition of the phrase “still I rise”? How did Angelou’s experiences shape her writing? Can you personally relate to the theme/message of the poem?

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[43 Poetry Anthology](https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/poetry-anthology/#Browning) (<https://oer.pressbooks.pub/theworryfreewriter/chapter/poetry-anthology/#Browning>)” In *The Worry Free Writer* by Dr. Karen Palmer, licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). /Adaptations include changing the YouTube Still I Rise video and the removal of information on the following authors : Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Stephen Crane, Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, Joy Harjo, Langston Hughes, Marge Piercy, Sylvia Plath, Alberto Rios, Edna St. Vincent Millay, May Swenson, Dylan Thomas, and Walt Whitman.

## Original Attributions

- "*Maya Angelou*" from *New World Encyclopedia* licensed CC BY SA.



# LISTENING TO MUSIC AND ANALYZING LYRICS

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Please watch this music video from artist Jah'kota. As you watch, listen to the lyrics, then complete the following learning activity.

## Watch It: Indigenize

**Watch Indigenize (3 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/gCQ4\\_SGFlqU](https://youtu.be/gCQ4_SGFlqU))

## Learning Activity

1. What message is Jah'kota trying to convey, and what does this say about his identity? Does this message influence your worldview? Can you relate personally to the message?

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# READING POEMS TO AN AUDIENCE

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## Reading Your Poems to an Audience

In addition to publishing poems online or in print, another way to share your poems with the public is by reading them at an open mic event or at a more formal reading. Since poetry is an oral art, presenting your work this way is more natural to poetry's auditory nuances; as anyone who has listened to poetry read aloud knows, the impact can be more powerful than when poems are read silently in one's head. Some poets are very good at delivering their poems out loud to an audience. Other poets are not. I have attended readings where I was brought to tears by the power of beautiful language. And I have attended readings where I was nearly brought to tears for another reason. One reading by very well-published and respected poets was so intensely slow and monotonous that I thought I might never attend a reading ever again.

If you are writing poetry seriously, there is a good chance that you will be called upon or given the chance to read to an audience. At the very least you will be reading your poems in class to your workshop peers, a captive audience who, too, deserve to hear the poem delivered in an effective way. This chapter will provide you with tips and approaches to make sure your poems inspire listeners and to make the process enjoyable and rewarding for you, too.

### *Want to Read*

How many of you have attended a poetry reading or listened to poets read online? If you have attended readings before, think to what made the reading enjoyable or made you wish you were somewhere else—anywhere else.

#### Watch it: Poets Reading their Poems

Use the interactive slide show to listen to the following poets read their poems and identify the approaches they use to pull you into their worlds:

#### **Poets Reading their Poems (Text Version)**

**Watch Poetry everywhere: “Tornado child” by Kwame Dawes (2:30 minutes) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/r-guTTBeivg>)

**Watch Poetry everywhere: “Slow dance” by Matthew Dickman (3:30 minutes) on**

**YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/TG0F2a3sw14>)

**Watch Poetry everywhere: “Calling him back after layoff” by Bob Hicok (2:40 minutes) on YouTube**

([https://youtu.be/jd\\_GaJFTo3c](https://youtu.be/jd_GaJFTo3c))

**Watch Poetry everywhere: “One boy told me” by Naomi Shihab Nye (2:37 minutes) on**

**YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/bij3FP8aDjY>)

**Watch Li-Young Lee reads ‘the gift’(3:25 minutes) on Vimeo** (<https://vimeo.com/36988030>)

**Activity source:** “Poets Reading their Poems” H5P created by oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

If we look at the characteristics that mark good readers, we frequently find these traits:

1. Confidence
2. A voice loud enough to hear
3. A slow to moderate pace
4. Heightened inflection, cadence and intonation
5. Eyes lifted from the page

In contrast, readers who bore the audience show the following traits:

1. A clear state of not wanting to be there
2. Speaking too quietly
3. Rushing!
4. Monotone delivery
5. Not looking up from the page

The poets on the “Poetry Everywhere” [New Tab] (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/poetryeverywhere>) site all read differently. Some, like Kwame Dawes and Shara McCullum, are very animated and willing to perform—they sing, they create voices for dialogue. Others, like Bob Hicok, rarely lift their eyes from the page. Whereas Naomi Shihab Nye in a crowded room is intimate with the audience and even interrupts the poem to better explain herself, Sharon Olds alone in a room reads from the book intensely but with distance. All of these poets portray ways to read that can help you deliver your own poems effectively. You do not need to sing. A poetry audience is generally very forgiving, supportive, and possibly one of the most attentive

audiences anyone could stand in front of. We simply need to *want* to read.

Even if you are uncomfortable in front of an audience, the good news is that strong reading skills can be learned, practiced, and perfected. And the number one thing you need to do to be a successful reader is to *want* to be there. If you feel good about your poems, if you want to read your poems to an audience, you will take the time to read them in a way so the audience will understand. Listeners will most likely not have the poems in front of them, so it will be up to you to hand them the words at a pace that permits them to follow along.

## Tips for Reading

Generally speaking, poets tend to be shy and often introverted. Writers work in solitude, and being in a room of poets is nothing like being in a room of actors or theater people who spend most of their time around people. Yet, when poets read, they often channel some of the skills used by performers, even if it's just speaking up and slowing down. It helps to lend the reading a little bit of drama, breathing life into the poem's speaker, so that the poem read aloud has a beating heart, breathing lungs, and a glowing soul.

## General Rules for Readings

Being asked to read poetry somewhere is an honor, and an opportunity to which you should always agree. The more you practice, the better and more relaxed you will become in front of an audience; besides, the skill of public speaking is one that is beneficial to you not only as a poet, but also as a future professional in your field of study. I encourage you to participate in open mic nights on campus or in your communities, and to take pleasure in being part of the poetry community.

The following rules of etiquette will help you when reading:

1. Once you know you are going to read, know what it is you are going to read (or at least have it narrowed down) and **practice reading it out loud** before delivering it to the audience. You may even practice reading it in front of someone and asking for feedback. While you practice, it might even be helpful to make notes in the margins for cues as to when to slow down, pause, look up, etc.
2. When asked to read or signing up to read, be sure to **stick to your time limit** or read a little under. What's that rule? Always keep them wanting more? A reading that drags on becomes boring and the audience loses interest in the work.
3. **Be gracious.** Thank your audience for their attention and attendance. Thank the hosts for the opportunity to read.
4. **Smile.** Smiling will relax your body, focus your mind, and gather the audience's attention.
5. **Stay.** If reading at an open mic or with several other poets, don't walk out after your reading. Stay and support the other readers.

## Summary

In this module, you read different poems in order to learn about and experience the reader's response lens. Learning how literature or other forms of writing can affect an audience is an important skill in communication. Realizing that words, images, and content choices in our creations can be perceived differently and personally. You should always strive to consider the audience when communicating a message to be effective.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “[10: Reading Your Poems to an Audience](#)” In *Naming the Unnameable – An Approach to Poetry for New Generations (Evory)* by Michelle Bonczek Evory (OpenSUNY), licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#). /Adaptations include the removal of accompanying activity.

# ANALYTICAL RESEARCH PAPER

## English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreeentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

Research paper creation and writing is an opportunity for you to investigate a topic in depth related to your chosen career path and academic journey in post-secondary programs or other learning institutes. The research paper is the culmination of various skills and knowledge you have acquired through your life experiences and education, and it showcases your writing skills. All essays have a beginning, a middle and an end. In the beginning, you introduce that topic and say what you are going to prove; in the middle, you will provide the evidence to prove what you said you would prove; then, in the end you say what you said. The overall structure is very easy to follow, but it is recommended you create an outline for yourself to make sure you stay on track. Just as you would not jump in your car and turn on the engine and drive without first having an idea of where you want to go and how to get there. Outlines give you a map to your beginning, your middle and your end.

## Learning Objectives

- Research a topic related to the course themes and explain its significance to society.
- Apply research to support an argument.
- Demonstrate proper essay structure.

## Tasks

- Review the resources from this course as necessary.

- Use essay writing information to review the steps of the research writing process.
- Watch videos related to writing an analytical research paper.
- Use APA formatting to ensure your paper meets acceptable standards of consistency.
- Complete the Analytical Research Paper Assignment in Blackboard.

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# RESEARCH WRITING

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Why was the Great Wall of China built? What have scientists learned about the possibility of life on Mars? How does the human brain create, store and retrieve memories? Who invented the game of hockey, and how has it changed over the years?

You may know the answers to these questions off the top of your head. If you are like most people, however, you find answers to tough questions like these by searching the Internet, visiting the library or asking others for information. To put it simply, you perform research.

You probably perform research in your everyday life. When your boss, your instructor or a family member asks you a question that you do not know the answer to, you locate relevant information, analyze your findings and share your results. Locating, analyzing and sharing information are key steps in the research process, and in this chapter, you will learn more about each step. By developing your research writing skills, you will prepare yourself to answer any question no matter how challenging.

## Reasons for Research

When you perform research, you are essentially trying to solve a mystery—you want to know how something works or why something happened. In other words, you want to answer a question that you (and other people) have about the world. This is one of the most basic reasons for performing research.

But the research process does not end when you have solved your mystery. Imagine what would happen if a detective collected enough evidence to solve a criminal case, but she never shared her solution with the authorities. Presenting what you have learned from research can be just as important as performing the research. Research results can be presented in a variety of ways, but one of the most popular—and effective—presentation forms is the research paper. A research paper presents an original thesis, or purpose statement, about a topic and develops that thesis with information gathered from a variety of sources.

If you are curious about the possibility of life on Mars, for example, you might choose to research the topic. What will you do, though, when your research is complete? You will need a way to put your thoughts together in a logical, coherent manner. You may want to use the facts you have learned to create a narrative or to support an argument. And you may want to show the results of your research to your friends, your teachers or even the editors of magazines and journals. Writing a research paper is an ideal way to organize thoughts, craft narratives or make arguments based on research, and share your newfound knowledge with the world.



## Check Your Understanding: Research in Your Everyday Life

Write a paragraph about a time when you used research in your everyday life. Did you look for the cheapest way to travel from Toronto to Vancouver? Did you search for a way to remove gum from the bottom of your shoe? In your paragraph, explain what you wanted to research, how you performed the research and what you learned as a result.

## Research Writing and the Academic Paper

Researching and writing a long paper requires a lot of time, effort and organization. However, writing a research paper can also be a great opportunity to explore a topic that is particularly interesting to you. The research process allows you to gain expertise on a topic of your choice, and the writing process helps you remember what you have learned and understand it on a deeper level.

## Research Writing at Work

Knowing how to write a good research paper is a valuable skill that will serve you well throughout your career. Whether you are developing a new product, studying the best way to perform a procedure or learning about challenges and opportunities in your field of employment, you will use research techniques to guide your exploration. You may even need to create a written report of your findings. And because effective communication is essential to any company, employers seek to hire people who can write clearly and professionally.

## Writing at Work

Take a few minutes to think about each of the following careers. How might each of these professionals use researching and research writing skills on the job?

- Medical laboratory technician
- Small business owner

- Information technology professional
- Freelance magazine writer

A medical laboratory technician or information technology professional might do research to learn about the latest technological developments in either of these fields. A small business owner might conduct research to learn about the latest trends in his or her industry. A freelance magazine writer may need to research a given topic to write an informed, up-to-date article.

### Check Your Understanding: Using Research Writing Skills in Your Dream Job

Think about the job of your dreams. How might you use research writing skills to perform that job? Create a list of ways in which strong researching, organizing, writing, and critical thinking skills could help you succeed at your dream job. How might these skills help you obtain that job?

## Steps of the Research Writing Process

How does a research paper grow from a folder of brainstormed notes to a polished final draft? No two projects are identical, but most projects follow a series of six basic steps.

These are the steps in the research writing process:

1. Choose a topic.
2. Plan and schedule time to research and write.
3. Conduct research.
4. Organize research and ideas.
5. Draft your paper.
6. Revise and edit your paper.

Each of these steps will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. For now, though, we will take a brief look at what each step involves.

## Step 1: Choosing a Topic

To narrow the focus of your topic, you may try freewriting exercises, such as brainstorming. You may also need to ask a specific research question—a broad, open-ended question that will guide your research—as well as propose a possible answer, or a working thesis. You may use your research question and your working thesis to create a research proposal. In a research proposal, you present your main research question, any related sub-questions you plan to explore, and your working thesis.

## Step 2: Planning and Scheduling

Before you start researching your topic, take time to plan your researching and writing schedule. Research projects can take days, weeks, or even months to complete. Creating a schedule is a good way to ensure that you do not end up being overwhelmed by all the work you have to do as the deadline approaches. During this step of the process, it is also a good idea to plan the resources and organizational tools you will use to keep yourself on track throughout the project. Flowcharts, calendars and checklists can all help you stick to your schedule.

## Step 3: Conducting Research

When going about your research, you will likely use a variety of sources—anything from books and periodicals to video presentations and in-person interviews.

Your sources will include both primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources provide firsthand information or raw data. For example, surveys, in-person interviews and historical documents are primary sources. Secondary sources, such as biographies, literary reviews or magazine articles, include some analysis or interpretation of the information presented. As you conduct research, you will take detailed, careful notes about your discoveries. You will also evaluate the reliability of each source you find.

## Step 4: Organizing Research and the Writer's Ideas

When your research is complete, you will organize your findings and decide which sources to cite in your paper. You will also have an opportunity to evaluate the evidence you have collected and determine whether it supports your thesis, or the focus of your paper. You may decide to adjust your thesis or conduct additional research to ensure that your thesis is well supported.

## Tip

Remember, your working thesis is not set in stone. You can and should change your working thesis throughout the research writing process if the evidence you find does not support your original thesis. Never try to force evidence to fit your argument. For example, your working thesis is “Mars cannot support life-forms.” Yet, a week into researching your topic, you find an article in the *New York Times* detailing new findings of bacteria under the Martian surface. Instead of trying to argue that bacteria are not life forms, you might instead alter your thesis to “Mars cannot support complex life-forms.”

## Step 5: Drafting Your Paper

Now you are ready to combine your research findings with your critical analysis of the results in a rough draft. You will incorporate source materials into your paper and discuss each source thoughtfully in relation to your thesis or purpose statement.

When you cite your reference sources, it is important to pay close attention to standard conventions for citing sources in order to avoid plagiarism, or the practice of using someone else’s words without acknowledging the source. Later in this chapter, you will learn how to incorporate sources in your paper and avoid some of the most common pitfalls of attributing information.

## Step 6: Revising and Editing Your Paper

In the final step of the research writing process, you will revise and polish your paper. You might reorganize your paper’s structure or revise for unity and cohesion, ensuring that each element in your paper flows into the next logically and naturally. You will also make sure that your paper uses an appropriate and consistent tone.

Once you feel confident in the strength of your writing, you will edit your paper for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, mechanics and formatting. When you complete this final step, you will have transformed a simple idea or question into a thoroughly researched and well-written paper you can be proud of!

## Check Your Understanding: Reviewing the Research Writing Process

Review the steps of the research writing process. Then answer the questions on your own sheet of paper.

1. In which steps of the research writing process are you allowed to change your thesis?
2. In step 2, which types of information should you include in your project schedule?
3. What might happen if you eliminated step 4 from the research writing process?

## Summary

People undertake research projects throughout their academic and professional careers in order to answer specific questions, share their findings with others, increase their understanding of challenging topics and strengthen their researching, writing and analytical skills.

The research writing process generally comprises six steps: choosing a topic, scheduling and planning time for research and writing, conducting research, organizing research and ideas, drafting a paper, and revising and editing the paper.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[6.1 – Introduction To Research Writing](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/researchwriting/) (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/researchwriting/>)” In *Communication Essentials for College* by Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell, licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/). An adaptation from “[11.1 The Purpose of Research Writing](#)” In *Writing For Success* by University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

# TYPES OF ESSAYS

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## Introduction

Assignments are a common method of assessment in post-secondary education. You may encounter many assignments over your years of study, yet some will look quite different from others. By recognizing different types of assignments and understanding the purpose of the task, you can direct your writing skills effectively to meet task requirements.

The chapter explores the popular *essay* assignment, with its two common categories, analytical and argumentative essays; we will concentrate our efforts on the analytical essay.



By recognizing different types of assignments and understanding the purpose of the task, you can direct your writing skills effectively to meet task requirements. [Image by Armin Rimoldi used under Pexels License.](#)

## Types of Written Essays

An essay is a common form of assessment in degree programs. It is important that you consider aspects of structure, tone and language when writing an essay.

### Components of an essay

Essays should use formal but reader friendly language and have a clear and logical structure. They must include research from credible academic sources such as peer reviewed journal articles and textbooks. This research should be referenced throughout your essay to support your ideas.

If you have never written an essay before, you may feel unsure about how to start. Breaking your essay into sections and allocating words accordingly will make this process more manageable and will make planning the overall essay structure much easier.

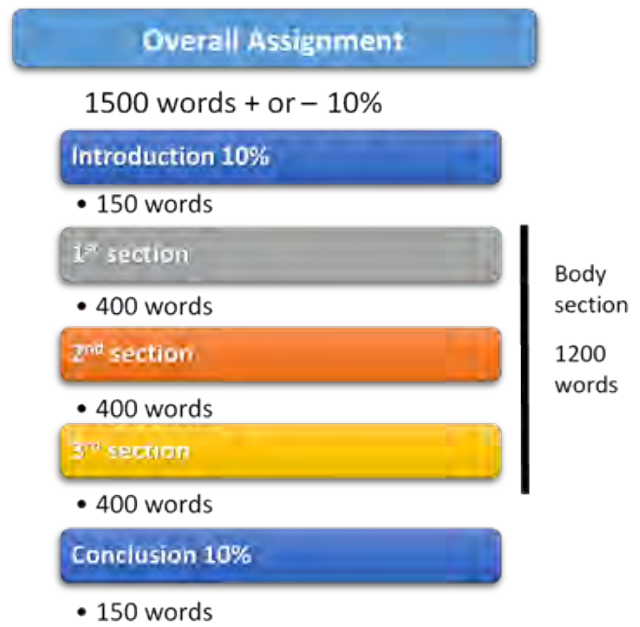
- An essay requires an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion.
- Generally, an introduction and conclusion are approximately 10% each of the total word count.
- The remaining words can then be divided into sections and a paragraph allowed for each area of content you need to cover.
- Use your task and criteria sheet to decide what content needs to be in your plan.

### An effective essay introduction needs to inform your reader by doing four basic things:

1. Engage their interest and provide a brief background of the topic.
2. Provide a thesis statement. This is the position or argument you will adopt. (Note: a thesis statement is not always required. Check with your instructor if you're unsure).
3. Outline the structure of the essay.
4. Indicate any parameters or scope that will/will not be covered.

### An effective essay body paragraph needs to:

1. State the topic sentence or main point of the paragraph. If you have a thesis statement, the topic sentence should relate to this.
2. Expand this main idea, define any terminology and explain concepts in more depth.
3. This information should be paraphrased and referenced from credible sources according to the appropriate referencing style of your course.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking by showing the relationship of the point you are making and the evidence you have included. This is where you introduce your “student voice”. Ask yourself the “So what?” question (as outlined in the critical thinking section) to add a discussion or interpretation of the how evidence you have included in your paragraph is relevant to your topic.

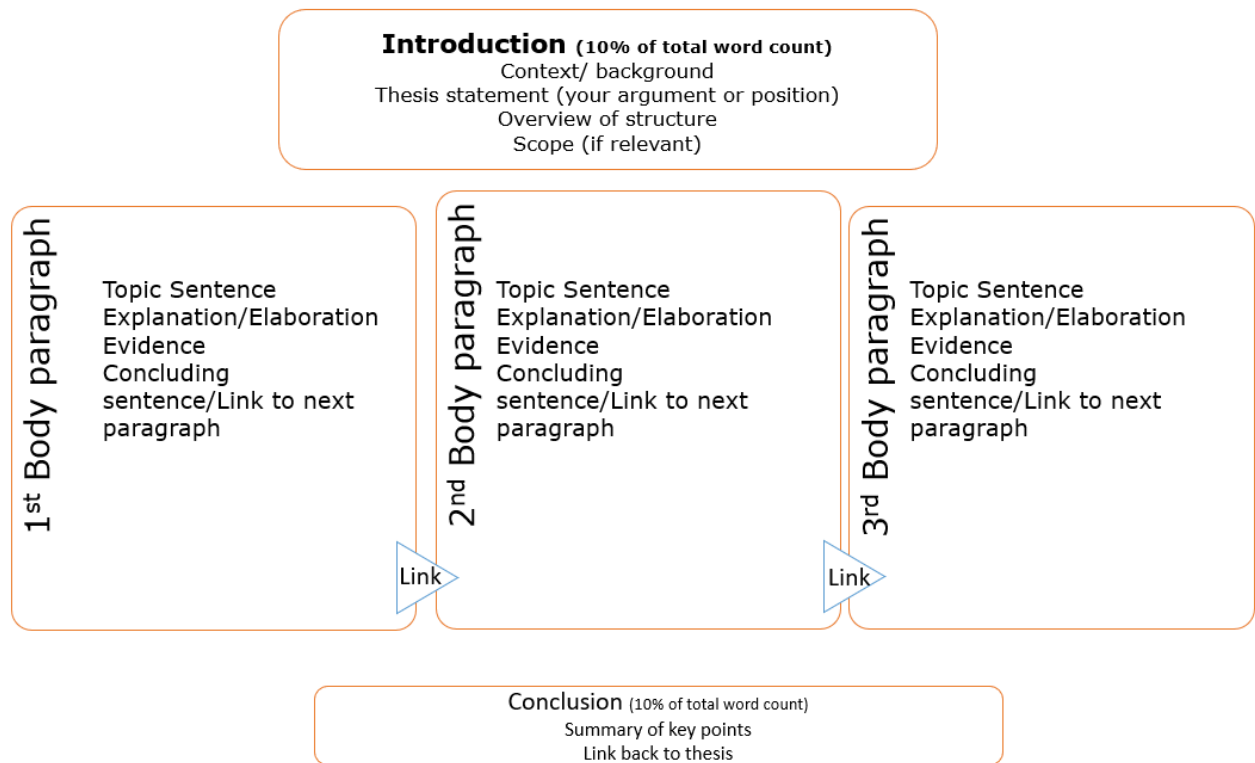


Demonstrating how to plan and allocate words for an assignment task. Image by University of Southern Queensland, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

5. Conclude your idea and link to your next point.

### An effective essay conclusion needs to:

1. Summarize or state the main points covered, using past tense.
2. Provide an overall conclusion that relates to the thesis statement or position you raised in your introduction.
3. Not add any new information.



Elements of essay in diagram. Image by University of Southern Queensland, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

### Elements of essay in diagram (Text Version)

#### Introduction

- 10% of total word count
- Context/background
- Thesis statement (your argument or position)



- Overview of structure
- Scope (if relevant)

### First Body Paragraph

- Topic sentence
- Explanation/Elaboration
- Evidence
- Concluding sentence/Link to the next paragraph.

### Second Body Paragraph

- Topic sentence
- Explanation/Elaboration
- Evidence
- Concluding sentence/Link to the next paragraph.

### Third Body Paragraph

- Topic sentence
- Explanation/Elaboration
- Evidence
- Concluding sentence/Link to the next paragraph.

### Conclusion

- 10% of total word count
- Summary of key points
- Link back to thesis

## Common types of essays

You may be required to write different types of essays, depending on your study area and topic. Two of the most commonly used essays are **analytical** and **argumentative**. Determine the type of essay required. For example, if your assignment question uses task words such as analyze, examine, discuss, determine or explore, you would be writing an **analytical essay**. If your assignment question has task words such as argue, evaluate, justify or assess, you would be writing an **argumentative essay**. Despite the type of essay, your ability to analyze and think critically is important and common across genres.

## Analytical essays



The purpose of the analytical essay is to demonstrate your ability to examine the topic thoroughly. Image by Anete Lusina used under Pexels License

We will focus on writing analytical essays. These essays usually provide some background description of the relevant theory, situation, problem, case, image etc. that is your topic. Being analytical requires you to look carefully at various components or sections of your topic in a methodical and logical way to create understanding.

The purpose of the analytical essay is to demonstrate your ability to examine the topic thoroughly. This requires you to go deeper than the description by considering different sides of the situation, comparing and contrasting a variety of theories and the positives and negatives of the topic. Although in an analytical essay your position on the topic may be clear, it is not necessarily a requirement that you explicitly identify this with a thesis statement, as is the case with an argumentative essay. If you are unsure whether you are required to take a position, and provide a thesis statement, it is best to check with your instructor.

### Review APA Style

When writing your paper, you will have to use APA Style to cite and reference sources. Take a look at the videos listed below to review APA

Style formatting, citing and referencing.

## Check Your Understanding: APA Videos

Use the interactive slides below to watch the 5 YouTube videos and learn more about APA Style:

**Georgian College APA Videos (Text Version)**

**Watch What is APA? (2:30 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/1oj3ngPYBRU>)

**Watch APA title page and paper format (2:45 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/Ed09\\_TC5CcA](https://youtu.be/Ed09_TC5CcA))

**Watch APA references (10 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/blgCu104UE0>)

**Watch APA in-text citations (9 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/BNv44tAt9PA>)

**Watch Introduction to APA citation style workshop (24 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/z7O5-5gpGss>)

**Activity source:** “Georgian College APA Videos” H5P activity created by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC-BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “[Types of Assignments](https://usq.pressbooks.pub/academicsuccess/chapter/types-of-assignments/) (<https://usq.pressbooks.pub/academicsuccess/chapter/types-of-assignments/>)” In *Academic Success* by Cristy Bartlett and Kate Derrington, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). / A derivative of *College Success* by Amy Baldwin, University of Central Arkansas used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) and available from [OpenStax](https://openstax.org/). / Adaptations include:

- Removal of argumentative essays, case study responses, report, reflective writing, annotated biography, key points.
- Addition of Georgian College APA Style videos

## Original References

Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Further Education Unit, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford.

Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., Jasper, M. (2001). *Critical reflection in nursing and the helping professions: a user's guide*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ryan, M. & Ryan, M. (2013). Theorising a model for teaching and assessing reflective learning in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 32(2), 244-257. doi: [10.1080/07294360.2012.661704](https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.661704)

# REVIEWING AND CRITIQUING OUR WORK

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Revision doesn't have to happen by yourself. You can (and should!) call upon your peers to help you develop and clarify your draft.

Writers, particularly new writers, often find that letting other writers review their work is tremendously helpful. Most universities have writing centres where students can have their essays reviewed for free by experienced student writers or tutors. These tutors can work with you one-on-one to help you improve your writing and earn better grades.

You should realize that reviewing your work, like planning, drafting or revising, is a recursive process. It is not something a writer does just at the end of their work. For instance, you may want to write an introduction to an essay and have it reviewed by a teacher or classmate before trudging forward. If you're on the wrong track, you'd be better off knowing about it sooner rather than later—especially if a deadline or due date is looming.

## Talk it Out

Even if it is optional, it's a good idea to have a conversation about your piece of writing with someone else. First, you could ask a friend to read through your draft and mark places where difficult or complicated ideas don't seem to be coming through clearly. Then, look at each passage and explain to your friend what you meant to say in that passage. Sometimes verbally articulating an idea helps to clarify it. What did you say more clearly in the conversation than you wrote in the draft? What did you say that needs to be included in your draft? What kinds of questions or points did your peers make that could be included in your draft? The insights you can glean from having someone else read your paper can make you aware of any shortcomings or weaknesses in your paper.

## Watch I: Peer Writing Review Process

Some classes may require a peer review as part of an essay project. Even when not strictly required, though, peer review can be valuable for many reasons, as the video below explains.

**Watch Peer writing review process: Otis College of Art and Design (5 mins) on YouTube**

(<https://youtu.be/24apK7i32xg>)

You can view the transcript for “Otis College: Peer writing review process” here [RTF file].

(<https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/course-building/English+Comp/Transcripts/Otis+College-+Peer+Writing+Review+Process+.rtf>)

Who better to ask if your essay is meeting its goals than someone else working on the same task? Consider reaching out to a classmate to offer to exchange insights on drafts before the due date.

## The Need for Specific Feedback

*“There are two kinds of editors, those who correct your copy and those who say it’s wonderful.”* — Theodore H. White

Let’s suppose that you just gave your paper to your roommate and asked her to look it over. You explain that you’ve been working on the paper for three days and that you really want to earn an A. “I want your honest opinion,” you say. “Don’t worry about hurting my feelings. What do you think?” You watch your roommate’s face as she reads your paper. She grimaces. Laughs. Yawns.

Finally, she hands you the paper back and says, “This sucks.”

This may be the type of “review” you are accustomed to receiving—overly critical and not very helpful. Perhaps you agree that your paper is in trouble and needs help, but without a better understanding of what’s wrong, you aren’t likely to be able to do much about it. Furthermore, how can you trust your roommate’s judgment of your paper? What if it just so happens that your roommate strongly dislikes sentences that start with “However,” and, seeing such sentences in your paper, decided right there that the paper was terrible?

Ultimately, what makes an evaluation worthwhile is the soundness of its criteria. As a writer, you want to know not just whether someone likes your paper, but also what factors they are taking into consideration when they review your paper. Both the reviewer and the person being reviewed need to be as clear as possible

about the criteria that will be used to evaluate the work. Are your reviewers only looking at your grammar, or are they also determining the rationality of your arguments? Does a comma splice make a bigger difference than a rough transition between paragraphs?

All of these matters should be spelled out clearly beforehand, either by the writer or the reviewer. As a writer, what are you personally working on? It's not a bad idea to think about your strengths and challenges as a writer before handing over your paper to a reviewer, or to use work that has been returned to you in the past with feedback.

For example, if you're writing a paper for a professor you've had before, and who has made comments on your past work, use those comments to provide your reviewer with a focus. If you are the reviewer in this situation, ask to see the assignment and rubric, if possible. You can also ask the writer for specific guidelines, areas of greatest need, or even anything they might know about the grader.

## Being a Good Peer-Reviewer

Sooner or later, someone is going to hand you a piece of writing and ask for your opinion. You may be asked to review another student's essay as part of your classwork. Perhaps a friend or a younger brother or sister has come to you for help. If you develop a reputation for being a good writer, then the chances are good that even your boss might ask you to look over letters or policy statements and offer your professional opinion.

In any case, if you really want to do a good job in these situations, you're going to need reviewing skills. You're going to need to be able to identify problems, suggest alternatives, and, more importantly, support everything you say with reasonable claims. Furthermore, you must do all this in a convincing way that makes the writer want to make the changes you suggest. You must know what's wrong with a document, why it's wrong, and how to fix it. One way you can get better at self-reviewing is to spend time reviewing other people's work. Eventually, you'll develop a knack for spotting errors that will serve you well as you edit and revise your own work.

## Reviewing Criteria

In the example above, you were not able to gain any insights or knowledge from your roommate letting you know that your paper "sucks." What you wanted was some kind of feedback that would help you improve your paper, so you could get a good grade. You don't know if your paper "sucks" because it lacked a strong thesis, because your writing strayed from the assignment, or because of grammatical errors. You can be a better self- and peer-reviewer than your roommate was. When you're reviewing your own paper or the paper of a friend or classmate, ask yourself a few questions:

## Organization

1. What are your initial thoughts? What strengths and weaknesses does the paper have? What parts confused you, or might be confusing to other readers? What's the most important thing that the writer is trying to say?
2. How is the paper you're reviewing organized? Again, does it start with the broad and move to specifics? Do all sentences support the paragraph's topic sentence, and do all paragraphs support the thesis? Is there an introduction that draws in the reader, or does it restate the assignment and become redundant? Is the paper organized in a way that will make sense to readers? Does the writer employ transitions effectively? Does the paper flow from beginning to end?

## Focus

1. Is the paper focused on the assignment? Does it follow the same thought throughout the paper, or does it jump from subject to subject? Do I feel like I'm still learning about/thinking about the same subject at the end of the paper that I was at the beginning of the paper?
2. Try to paraphrase the thesis of the paper as a promise: "In this paper, the writer will..." Does the writer fulfill the obligation stated in the thesis?
3. What's the writer's position on the issue? What words does the writer use to indicate their position?

## Style

1. In what style is the paper written? Does it work for the subject matter and assignment? Will the paper appeal to its intended audience? Is the writing at an appropriate level for the target audience?

## Development

1. Does the title indicate what the paper is about? Does it catch your interest? Does the opening paragraph draw you in? If not, can you suggest a different approach to catch the readers' attention?
2. How is the development of the paper carried out? Does it start with a broad subject and then move to something more specific?
3. Does the concluding sentence draw the argument of the paper to a close by bringing together the main points provided in the paper, or does it just end? Does the writer conclude in a memorable way, or does he/she simply trail off? If the ending is too abrupt or too vague, can you suggest some other way to conclude the paper? Does the ending introduce any new topics?

## Conventions

1. Are common or appropriate writing conventions followed? Are grammar, spelling, punctuation and other mechanics observed?

While reviewing the paper, make notes in the margins of any problems you find. If you believe that developing a paragraph a little bit more would be helpful to the argument, write <more>. If you are unclear of something, write <? not sure>. If you notice a missing comma, insert it in the correct spot, but be sure to set it off somehow so that you or your friend will notice the correction. If another word might work better, write <WC> to indicate inappropriate word choice.

Please note: It is important not to overwhelm your writer with comments. As much as possible, try to avoid repeating similar comments (e.g. don't correct every single comma error you find). Also, although it can be tempting to make some of the changes you suggest yourself, you never want to rewrite the work you are reviewing.

### CARES Peer Review

The least helpful comment to receive from a peer reviewer is, "It looks good to me." The CARES method helps you to articulate useful things that can benefit the author when they revisit their draft. Keep in mind that as a reviewer or reviewee, you want to make and take comments in the spirit of helpfulness.

- **C: Congratulate.** What does the writer do well in this assignment? (List one or more aspects.) Also, please write the writer's main claim or focus (thesis) according to what you have read. (It may not be the last sentence of the first paragraph—the traditional place for the thesis.)
- **A: Ask clarifying questions.** What part(s) of the essay was/were a bit confusing? Why? What specific suggestions (3 or fewer) do you have for revising the unclear parts of this writing?
- **R: Request** more. What would you like to know more about the topic that can enhance the essay and that supports the thesis?
- **E: Evaluate** its value. What specific detail(s) do not work with the essay (e.g., doesn't support the thesis) or can be moved within the essay?



- **S: Summarize.** Overall, what new information have you learned or how are you thinking differently after this reading?

Visit the Excelsior Online Writing Lab to watch a video [New Tab] (<https://owl.excelsior.edu/writing-process/revising-and-editing/revising-and-editing-peer-review/>) of students using the CARES method.

## Check Your Understanding: Peer Review Feedback

### Peer Review Feedback (Text version)

In a peer workshop, Asher is reluctant to provide feedback on your paper. He writes “Good job” at the top and hands it back. What could you say to encourage more helpful feedback from him?

- Don't waste your time saying anything, you should go straight to the writing lab to get feedback.
- Thanks for looking at my paper. Do you think I'll get an A?
- Thanks for taking the time to look over my paper! Can I read this paragraph out loud to you, and you tell me what you think? I'm worried it doesn't make much sense.
- I think your paper was really good too. See you later!

### Check your answer: <sup>1</sup>

**Activity Source:** “7.4 – Peer Review Feedback” from “*Working with Peers*” (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1/chapter/strategies-for-development-iv/>)” In *English Composition 1*, by Karen Forgette, University of Mississippi (Lumen Learning) licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). Small adjustments made for citation/referencing. Converted activity to H5P to enable editing.

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1. c. Engaging in conversation might be a more comfortable and helpful way for some people to provide feedback.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter (text, images & H5P activities) is adapted from “Peer Reviews (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/peerreview/>)” In *Communication Essentials for College* by Amanda Quibell & Emily Cramer, licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0./ Adapted from “Working with Peers (<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1/chapter/strategies-for-development-iv/>)” In *English Composition 1*, By Karen Forgette, University of Mississippi (Lumen Learning) licensed under CC BY 4.0 . Small adjustments made for citation/referencing.

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- Reviewing, Establishing Criteria, and Writing Helpful Comments (<https://pb.openlcc.net/expressionandinquiry/chapter/8-1-overview-of-reviewing/>). **Authored by:** Chris Manning, Sally Pierce, and Melissa Lucken . **Project:** Expression and Inquiry. **License:** *CC BY: Attribution*

# STUDENT SAMPLE RESEARCH ESSAY

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In a college research and writing course, George-Anne was given a research assignment that asked her to write a 5 paragraph essay that integrated reliable research sources.

## The Writing Process

### Research:

George-Anne took the time to do an internet search, where she found links to radio podcasts and news articles. Then, she used her college library's database to find some scholarly articles.

### Outline Ideas:

After researching her topic and learning what experts on the subject had to say, George-Anne created a sentence outline for her paper.

## George-Anne's Sentence Outline

- I. **Introduction**—Land acknowledgements are for showing respect towards Indigenous communities, but they fall short when they only seem insincere and include no action.
- II. **Land acknowledgements are meant to show respect for Indigenous communities and are becoming standard practice:**  
Information from (Friesen, 2019), (Maga, 2019), (Wilkes et al, 2019)
  - a. Schools and government institutions do them before gathering.
  - b. They increase awareness of Indigenous communities and their land rights.

- c. They are intended to honour Truth & Reconciliation.

III. **While land acknowledgements are becoming more common, they are sometimes flawed and even disrespectful:**

Information from (Friesen, 2019), (Maga, 2019), (Blenkinsop & Fettes, 2019)

- a. First Nations names are mispronounced or incorrect names are given.
- b. They can be a barrier to learning and give a false sense of something being accomplished, which can actually cause harm to the people they are supposed to honour.
- c. They lack meaning because they don't require any action.

IV. **To ensure that land acknowledgements help rather than harm, Indigenous scholars demand changes to the current approach:**

Information from (Friesen, 2019), (Maga, 2019), (Blenkinsop & Fettes, 2019)

- a. These land acknowledgements should avoid the colonial way of viewing land and strive to reflect an Indigenous way of understanding.
- b. Scripts shouldn't be simply read; personal connections should also be made.
- c. Land acknowledgements should reflect on the harms of colonialism and express ways to disrupt the system to stop these harms.

- V. **Conclusion:** Land acknowledgements must go beyond a scripted list of Indigenous communities and treaties.

### References

- Blenkinsop, S., & Fettes, M. (2020). Land, language and listening: The transformations that can flow from acknowledging Indigenous land. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 54(4), 1033-1046. <https://doi-org.georgian.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12470>
- Friesen, J. (2019, June 27). As Indigenous land acknowledgements become the norm, critics question whether the gesture has lost its meaning. *Globe & Mail* (Toronto, Canada), A1.
- Maga, C. (2019, April 10). Land acknowledgements capture the mood of an awkward stage; Anishinaabe writer Hayden King says statements concerning Indigenous recognition don't negate "ongoing disposition" of people. *The Toronto Star* (Toronto, Ontario), E1
- Wilkes, R., Duong, A., Kesler, L., & Ramos, H. (2017). Canadian University Acknowledgment of Indigenous Lands, Treaties, and Peoples. *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 54(1), 89-120. <https://doi-org.georgian.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/cars.12140>

## Drafting Ideas & Integrating Sources

Once her outline was completed, George-Anne expanded on the sentences in her outline, taking care to integrate sources using APA in-text citations, and set up her Reference list following APA conventions for references.

## Revising

George-Anne developed a final draft, but also decided to book a session with her college Writing Centre. During her appointment, her tutor encouraged her to read her work aloud; this helped her identify and edit some problems with her sentence structure. Her tutor drew her attention to the fact that she needed stronger transitions between her paragraphs. Adding the transitions helped improve the cohesion of her essay. She also learned about some small errors with her reference list. Finally, her essay was ready to submit.

Read George-Anne's Final Essay: Land Acknowledgements

**Read George-Anne's Final essay on Land Acknowledgements in Plain text**

**Note:** HTML/plain text & Pressbooks do not always display page layout or APA formatting such as page numbers, spacing, margins or indentation accurately. Please review [APA formatting rules](#) to ensure you meet APA guidelines with your own work. The text version is included here in HTML format for ease of reading/use. You may also want to [View George-Anne's paper in PDF format \(https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/app/uploads/sites/1984/2023/02/COMMESS-7-5-LandAcknowledgementsEssay.pdf\)](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/app/uploads/sites/1984/2023/02/COMMESS-7-5-LandAcknowledgementsEssay.pdf).

### **Land Acknowledgements**

George-Anne Lerner

The remains of thousands of murdered Indigenous children are being discovered on the grounds of former Residential Schools. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission called for the Canadian government to recognize the tragic history of residential schools and the ongoing problems faced by Indigenous people. One response to this call to action is the land acknowledgement. Announcements that name the territories, communities, and treaties are now heard at the beginning of many events and gatherings. Even though these statements are made to show respect and to raise awareness about Indigenous communities, mistakes are sometimes made, and the reading of a script can seem like an empty gesture. Indigenous scholars and leaders are asking that institutions go beyond just reading a land acknowledgement; they hope for a stronger focus on taking action. Land acknowledgements are intended to show respect towards Indigenous communities and their land rights, but these announcements can feel like empty words to the people they are meant to honour; to truly show respect, land acknowledgements need to take action beyond reciting a script.

Land acknowledgements show respect for Indigenous communities and they are becoming standard. Colleges, Universities, school boards, governments and other institutions across Canada now make public acknowledgements of Indigenous peoples, lands, and treaties. Many public gatherings, events, and even email signatures include a land acknowledgement (Friesen, 2019). For example, as Maga (2019) reports, the City of Toronto's statement reads: "We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples" (para. 1). Land acknowledgements are intended to increase awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights, and to improve the experience of Indigenous students and communities. They are done in an effort to honour the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report (Wilkes et al., 2019), which calls for significant changes in order to reconcile Canada's unjust treatment of Indigenous people.

While land acknowledgements are becoming more common, some concerns are being raised; they are sometimes flawed and even disrespectful. Friesen (2019) shows that land acknowledgements are criticized as empty gestures as First Nations names are

often mispronounced and incorrect nations are named. Anishinaabe scholar Hayden King regrets helping Ryerson write its land acknowledgement; he fears that these acknowledgements actually prevent learning about Indigenous people and treaty relationships (Friesen, 2019). King points out that the current style of land acknowledgement can sound “detached, shallow and give a false sense of progressive accomplishment” (Maga, 2019, para. 2). They may “cause harm to the people they’re supposed to celebrate” (Maga, 2019, para. 3). Blenkinsop & Fettes (2019) state that the problem with these acknowledgements is that “they stop with a notion of land as something one lives on, rather than continuing on into an understanding of land as something we are part of” (p. 1036). The acknowledgements lack meaning because they do not demand any action from the speakers or listeners. Indigenous leaders argue that these land acknowledgements do not acknowledge the privileges that settlers have due to the legacy of colonialism, or recognize the trauma that continues as a result of colonialist societal structures, which actually can harm the same people these acknowledgements are meant to respect.

In order to ensure that land acknowledgements help rather than harm, Indigenous scholars demand a change to the current approach. Land acknowledgements “have a vital function when done correctly” (Maga, 2019, para. 7), but must do more than naming Indigenous territories, languages and treaties. These land acknowledgements should not express the colonial way of viewing land as a resource or commodity, a thing that is owned. Instead, they should emphasize an Indigenous way of understanding. Blenkinsop & Fettes (2019) explain that the Land is more than an object; it is a teacher, offering a dialogue:

The land is there, outside our windows, under our feet, all around us, thinking, feeling, conversing and offering its teachings. When we start to really listen, to the land and to the people whose identities and traditions are fundamentally shaped through long dialogue with the land, transformation follows (p. 1043).

Scripts should not be simply read without any reflection. Instead, an effort should be made to include Indigenous ways of thinking and people should expand on them to include personal information. People delivering land acknowledgements should speak about “their own connections to the land and communities they are attempting to honour” (Friesen, 2019, para. 20). A speaker who expands on their own family history

will give deeper insights and connections, which leads to a more meaningful acknowledgement. Additionally, speakers should acknowledge both the impact of colonialism and express an intention to disrupt the current injustices that are part of society.

As land acknowledgements become more routine across institutions, Indigenous leaders ask that these statements be approached with respect. Land acknowledgements must go beyond a scripted list of Indigenous communities and treaties. For reconciliation to begin, land acknowledgements must become part of a conversation that calls attention to our responsibilities as caretakers of the land, and sets intentions for action in ending the systematic harms on Indigenous peoples.

### References

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## Summary

In this module, you learned that being able to support your opinion with reliable sources and develop a convincing argument is an important tool in school and beyond. You used the skills that you have learned in the course to create, develop and produce an effective analytical research paper as requested in your Blackboard shell.

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is from “[Student sample research essay](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/student-sample-research-essay/) (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/chapter/student-sample-research-essay/>)” by Amanda Quibell, licensed under [CC-BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) In *Communication Essentials for College* by Amanda Quibell & Emily Cramer, Georgian College, licensed under [CC-BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)./ Adaptations include removing of links to other *Communication Essentials for College* chapters.

# HISTORICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL

## English for Degree Entrance (EDE) compiled by Carrie Molinski & Sue Slessor.

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Please visit the web version of *English for Degree Entrance (EDE)* (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/englishdegreentrance/>) to access the complete book, interactive activities and videos.

## Introduction

Literature is an art form often expressing the ideas, influences and historical times of the authors who produce it. The environment and experiences of an author inform and affect the images, themes and form of the messages and images. In this chapter, you will review various forms of literature, poems, songs and plays in order to understand how an author's work reflects a unique perspectives, culture and history.

## Learning Objectives

- Examine a variety of literary works to build an understanding of society.
- Explain how elements, features, and form of literary texts convey meaning.
- Analyze literature using a historical or biographical literary lens.

## To Do List

- Read the content on historical/biographical lens.
- Read the biographies and poems by Shakespeare, Etheridge Knight, and A Tribe Called Red.
- Complete the learning activities for the authors.
- Complete the historical/biographical lens assignment in Blackboard.

## Attribution

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# HISTORICAL OR BIOGRAPHICAL CRITICAL LENS

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## Author-Based/Historical Criticism

Though generally author-based and historical criticism are seen as two different categories, for the purpose of simplicity, we are going to combine them together in this text. An author-based/historical critical lens is focused on uncovering the person of the author in a text. Since this text focuses on discovering the voices of women through history, this approach can be very useful in helping us to get to know the women behind the texts we read.

When looking through this ‘lens,’ our goal is to find out as much as possible about the author and their life and context. We might read a biography on the author or read about the time in history in which they lived. Learning about the author’s life and where and when they lived can tell us a lot about a text, and vice versa.

For example, many students have trouble with Emily Dickinson’s poems. They don’t seem to make sense with their strange punctuation and fixation on death. But, as we investigate her life, we find that she didn’t intend for her poetry to ever be read. In fact, her poems are like a journal that she kept of her thoughts and experiences. Further, discovering that she lived close to the front lines of the Civil War helps us to make sense of her preoccupation with death.

Here’s a video on Historical Criticism. The speaker in this video takes a similar approach to what’s described here:

Watch It: What is Historical Criticism

**Watch What is historical criticism (4:30 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/SMxkN81OhKw>)

## What to look for:

When studying a text through an author-based or historical lens, think of the journalistic questions:

1. **Who?** Who is/was the author? Who is their family? What are the author's core values/beliefs?
2. **What?** What is the text about? How does that topic connect with the author's experiences or the author's historical context?
3. **When?** When did the author live? What significant events happened? What was life like? How is the time period significant?
4. **Where?** Where did the author live? How is that location significant?
5. **Why?** Why did the author write? Do we know? Was the work in response to something that happened in the author's life or in history?

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “Reading Through a Critical Lens (<https://sayhername.pressbooks.com/chapter/reading-through-a-critical-lens/>)” In *Say Her Name: Discovering Women's Voices in History* (<https://pressbooks.pub/sayhername>) by Dr. Karen Palmer, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. /Adaptations include removal of content referring to Feminist theory including text and videos.

# THE SONNETS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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## Introduction

William Shakespeare began to write his famous collection of sonnets in the early 1590's, when he was in his late 20's.

He was mainly a playwright, of course, but outbreaks of a horrific and highly contagious disease, known as the bubonic plague, occasionally forced the theatres to close, and it may have been one such epidemic which forced Shakespeare to take a reprieve from playwriting and turn to poetry instead. There was also a vogue for sonnet writing in the latter half of the sixteenth century, another reason which likely motivated him. And he had found the love interest upon which his sonnet collection would focus.

The sonnets tell a story of a young writer who forms a deep friendship with a young man, apparently of noble birth. The poet praises his dear friend's beauty and intelligence and urges him, possibly at instigation of his friend's mother, to marry and raise a family. Such rare beauty and intelligence must be passed along; you owe it to the world, the poet argues.

As time goes by, the poet seems to realize that his advice is misplaced because a wife and family would threaten the amount of time his friend could spend with him. He turns his attention away from recommending his friend marry and raise a family and more toward expressions of praise for his friend's beauty, grace, intelligence, generosity and charm. He resolves to immortalize his friends' many virtues, a resolution he certainly fulfilled.

But paradise always has its troubles, and trouble comes in the form of a rival poet who turns the friend's head and secures the patronage Shakespeare now must share. Suddenly Shakespeare is worried about his place in his friend's universe, and he pours out his anguish and insecurity, convinced of his own inferiority in this new chapter in the story.

The influence of the rival poet fades and passes, but another crisis arises. The poet has fallen for a beautiful dark-haired woman and expresses his love and, more so, his desire for her. He is insecure in this relationship. The Dark Lady is something of a free spirit. He suspects that his dear friend and his Dark Lady are cheating on him. He is devastated.

The crisis is not resolved. The story ends inconclusively, the poet unable to resist the Dark Lady's charms, even while he suspects her of infidelity.

The real-life identities of the characters in the Sonnets are the great mystery of English literary history. Who is the handsome noble friend? There are intriguing clues. When the Sonnets were published in 1609, possibly without the poet's permission, the title page announced "the only begetter" of the sonnets as one W.H. Scholars who define "begetter" as "author" ("beget" meaning "to bring about/to bring into existence")

believe the printer simply mistook the H for an S or omitted the S before the H, which would have established the “begetter” clearly as W. SH. (i.e., **W**illiam **S**hakespeare).

Scholars who define “begetter” as “muse” (a person who serves as inspiration for an artist) suggest W.H. refers to the handsome young nobleman who inspired the poems. Shakespeare knew well two such men. Both were generous patrons of poets and playwrights. One was Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton; the other was William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke. Southampton’s age and physical appearance match the contents of some of the sonnets, but his initials are reversed on the title page, possibly by error, possibly as an attempt to conceal his true identity. Pembroke’s initials are correct, but he was only twelve when the sonnets were written, inappropriately young to be the muse of a thirty-year-old man. The debate continues, with other even less likely identities suggested, but it will probably never be resolved.

Nor can the identity of the other major characters in the story be established with any certainty. The rival poet may be one of Shakespeare’s contemporaries: Christopher Marlow, George Chapman or Samuel Daniel. The Dark Lady may be Amelia Lanier, the daughter of Queen Elizabeth’s musical director, though this recent [essay on Lanier \[New Tab\]](https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/an-introduction-to-the-poetry-of-amelia-lanier) (<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/an-introduction-to-the-poetry-of-amelia-lanier>) leads away from the thesis that she was the origin of Shakespeare’s Dark Lady.

All of the main characters may be fictitious, products of Shakespeare’s magnificent imagination. In the end, it makes little difference to the integrity of Shakespeare’s sonnet sequence, one of the crowning achievements of English literature.

## Sonnets

### Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?  
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
 And summer’s lease hath all too short a date:  
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
 And often is his gold complexion dimm’d;  
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,<sup>1</sup>  
 By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimm’d;  
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade  
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Everything that is beautiful—“fair”—declines with time.

2. That beauty you own.

Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
 When in eternal lines<sup>3</sup> to time thou grow'st;  
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee (Shakespeare, n.d. as cited in Poetry Foundation n.d.a).

## Sonnet 97

How like a winter hath my absence been  
 From thee,<sup>4</sup> the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
 What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
 What old December's bareness every where!  
 And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,  
 The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
 Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,  
 Like widow'd wombs after their lord's decease:<sup>5</sup>  
 Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
 But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;<sup>6</sup>  
 For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
 And, thou away, the very birds are mute;  
 Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer  
 That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near (Shakespeare, n.d. as cited in Poetry Foundation n.d.b).

## Sonnet 130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
 Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
 If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
 If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
 I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
 But no such roses see I in her cheeks;

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3. The wrinkles on your face; also the lines of this sonnet

4. The Earl of Southampton was imprisoned in 1601 for his support of the Essex Rebellion against Queen Elizabeth I. Some Shakespeare biographers cite this fact as evidence that the special friend is Henry Wriothesley.

5. As if a widow had become pregnant after her husband had died. The poet stresses his point that richness of autumn is muted because his friend is away.

6. He reiterates the point of lines 7–8. Autumn is the season of abundance but it is diminished for the poet because his friend is not around.



And in some perfumes is there more delight  
 Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
 I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
 That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
 I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
 My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.  
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
 As any she belied with false compare (Shakespeare, n.d. as cited in Poetry Foundation n.d.c).

## Sonnet 144

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,  
 Which like two spirits do suggest<sup>7</sup> me still:  
 The better angel is a man right fair,  
 The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.  
 To win me soon to hell, my female evil  
 Tempteth my better angel from my side,  
 And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,  
 Wooing his purity with her foul pride.  
 And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend  
 Suspect I may, but not directly tell;  
 But being both from me<sup>8</sup>, both to each friend,  
 I guess one angel in another's hell:  
 Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,  
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out (Shakespeare, n.d. as cited in Poetry Foundation n.d.d).

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7. Sonnet 144. Seek to influence. "Still" Always.

8. Away from me.

2.

## Learning Activity

1. Shakespeare was influenced by the time in which he lived, the people in his life and the specific environment of London in the 1590s. Based on the sonnets and your knowledge of other works of Shakespeare, is this literature still relevant to today's society? Do the messages and themes depicted here about unrequited and young love still resonate with a modern audience or are there better forms available?

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “[25 An Anthology of Poems for Further Study \(https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/poem-anthology/\)](https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/poem-anthology/)” In *Composition and Literature* by James Sexton and Derek Soles, licensed under [CC BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) / Extracted just the Shakespeare section from the original OER. Removal of several sonnets and changing the accompanying activity.

## References

Poetry Foundation (n.d.a). *Sonnet 18: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? by William Shakespeare.*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45087/sonnet-18-shall-i-compare-thee-to-a-summers-day>

Poetry Foundation (n.d.b). *Sonnet 97: How like a winter hath my absence been by William Shakespeare.*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45101/sonnet-97-how-like-a-winter-hath-my-absence-been>

Poetry Foundation (n.d.c). *Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun by William Shakespeare.*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45108/sonnet-130-my-mistress-eyes-are-nothing-like-the-sun>

Poetry Foundation (n.d.d). *Sonnet 144: Two loves I have of comfort and despair by William Shakespeare.*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/50651/sonnet-144-two-loves-i-have-of-comfort-and-despair>

# "EASTERN GUARD TOWER" BY ETHERIDGE KNIGHT (HAIKU)

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## Biography

Etheridge Knight was born on April 19, 1931, in Corinth, Mississippi. His father was a farmer and, later, a construction worker on the Kentucky Dam. Knight's childhood was unsettled. He was an excellent student, but opportunities for poor black children in the South were few. He dropped out of school when he was sixteen. He joined the army and served as a medical technician in the Korean War until November 1950. He was wounded and suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, conditions which led to an addiction to painkillers, morphine especially.

He settled in Indianapolis, where his family was now living. Opportunities were still few, and Knight sold drugs to support his own addiction. In 1960, he was sentenced to eight years in prison for armed robbery. In prison, Knight read widely and began to write poetry. By the mid 1960s, he was gaining a reputation—especially among other African-American poets—as a gifted writer. *Poems from Prison* was published in 1968, the same year Knight was released.

Upon his release, Knight married fellow poet Sonia Sanchez. They were, with Dudley Randall, Amiri Baraka, and Gwendolyn Brooks, prominent in the Black Arts Movement. BAM was a more radical successor to the Harlem Renaissance. By the 1960s, African-American writers and artists were impatient with the slow march toward civil rights and their work took a more aggressive, radical, assertive position on the need for social change, for the end to racism, especially.

Knight struggled to control his drug addiction; his marriage to Sanchez did not survive. But his career flourished. He found work as poet-in-residence at several universities, including the University of Pittsburgh. He was the recipient of prestigious grants, including a Guggenheim. He continued to publish poetry collections: *Belly Song and Other Poems*, in 1973; *Born of a Woman*, in 1980. His work was widely acclaimed, and he was nominated for prestigious awards, including a Pulitzer Prize.

Knight got some control over his drug addiction, earned a degree in American poetry and married again, though he and his second wife separated in 1977. He died of lung cancer in March of 1991.

## Eastern Guard Tower

Published 1968

“Eastern guard tower  
glints in sunset; convicts rest  
like lizards on rocks.” (Knight, n.d. as cited in Poetry Foundation, n.d., Lines 1-3).  
by Etheridge Knight

### Analysis

#### Theme

As is usually the case for a haiku, theme emerges from the contrast embedded in the poem’s imagery. The guard tower “glints in sunset,” the tower suggesting the beauty and freedom that lies beyond it. The convicts, resting “like lizards on rocks,” suggests the pain and resentment of incarceration, of the loss of freedom.

#### Form

“Eastern Guard Tower” is a haiku. The haiku is a form of free verse that originated in Japan and, though it is a free verse form, does have its conventions. It is three lines in length. In its strict, classical form, the three lines add up to seventeen syllables: five in the first line, seven in the second, and five again in the third. Knight’s haiku follows this pattern.

A haiku typically consists of two contrasting images, its theme emerging from this contrast.

#### Figurative Language

The image of the guard tower, glinting in the sunset, contrasts with the simile, comparing the convicts to lizards, resting on rocks. From the contrast emerges the theme of the poem.

#### Context

Knight was imprisoned from 1960 to 1968 for armed robbery. In prison, he wrote poems about the pain and anguish of the life of a convict. He wrote a series of haikus which reveal the intensity of his ability to observe life around him and express his vision in the sharp, concise images that haikus require. “Eastern Guard Tower” is the first in the series. It was published in 1968, in *Poems from Prison*.

## Learning Activities

1. Etheridge Knight's experiences shaped his writing. How do you think poems and other art forms help people to express ideas and experiences? How can poems, stories and literature help us to understand others' perspectives and lives? Are poems still relevant in the modern world?

## Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this section is adapted from “24 “[Eastern Guard Tower](https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/eastern-guard-tower-by-etheridge-knight-haiku/)” by [Etheridge Knight \(Haiku\)](#) (<https://opentextbc.ca/provincialenglish/chapter/eastern-guard-tower-by-etheridge-knight-haiku/>)” In *Composition and Literature* by James Sexton and Derek Soles, licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)./ Adaptations include reformatting the page and changing the accompanying activity.

## Reference

Poetry Foundation. (n.d.). *Haiku by Etheridge Knight*. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47593/haiku>

# INFLUENCES ON MUSIC

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Watch the following interview and music video and complete the learning activity.

## Watch It: Music

### **Watch It: Music (Text version)**

**Watch Rebel Music | Native America| Interview with A Tribe Called Red (3 minutes) on YouTube** (<https://youtu.be/O44O59dfOUk>)

Please watch this music video from A Tribe Called Red (the group from the previous video) before completing the learning activity.

**Watch Halluci Nation ft. Black Bear- Stadium pow wow (official video) (4 minutes) on YouTube** ([https://youtu.be/eAEmjW9J3\\_o](https://youtu.be/eAEmjW9J3_o))

**Activity Source:** “Music” H5P activity created by Jessica Jones and oeratgc, licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), except where otherwise noted.

## Learning Activity

1. What influences inspired A Tribe Called Red to create music and perform? What feelings are evoked by the song and the images in the video?

## Summary

A work of literature is affected by an author's history, culture, environment and world view. It is important to recognize these influences in order to better understand an author's intent and message. Communication is based on understanding each other. Understanding that an author's work can be informed by personal history and culture will help you to better identify the purpose and effect of any piece of writing.

## Attribution & References

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# GLOSSARY

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## antagonist

anti = against

agonist = actor

one who acts against another.

## climax

Where the conflict in a story reaches its peak.

## protagonist

pro = move forward (propel)

proto = first

ag = act

agonist = actor

protagonist = first to move action forward/first actor

## resolution

The part in the story where the main problem or conflict has been worked out.