

AP English Language and Composition

2019 Summer Reading Assignment: Part I

Due: **Wednesday, August 14th**

Mount de Sales Academy

Dr. Michael Muth

This assignment is due on the first day of class, but I recommend that you complete this portion of the summer assignment by **mid-July**, in order to ensure that you have time to complete the other two parts.

Text:

The same text will be used for all parts of the summer assignment:

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself

Frederick Douglass

Second Norton Critical Edition

Edited by William L. Andrews and William S. McFeely

New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2017

ISBN: 9780393265446

Please be sure to purchase this edition of the text. There are less expensive editions (it is even available on the internet), but I have reasons for choosing this one.

1. The Second Norton Critical Edition provides not only the text itself, but also other texts by Douglass and his contemporaries that help us understand the social context for his autobiography.
2. This edition also contains several very fine critical essays, written by scholars of our day, that can help us better understand the significance of Douglass' text and his life.
3. This edition is also a standard edition used in many colleges and universities, and AP students need to become acquainted with the apparatus (e.g., footnotes, contextualizing texts, and critical essays) of the academic world.

(If the \$20 price tag will be a financial burden, please contact me and we can find a workable solution.)

This text will be our first work in American literature and letters, as well as the first text we will use to develop rhetorical awareness and skills.

The Rhetorical Situation:

Writing does not occur in a vacuum. A writer is trying to say something to others for specific purposes and with imagined hopes for how the audience will respond and how the world will be affected by the writing. The personal and social circumstance in which writing is created and read is called **the rhetorical situation**.

A rhetorical situation contains several components:

- The **rhetor**, i.e., the speaker or writer.
- The rhetor's **purpose**, i.e., why he or she is writing.
 - It could be to persuade others, to entertain, to inform, to educate, to inspire, to call to action, etc.
 - The purpose will usually focus on a **topic** or **issue** (sometimes called the **exigence**) about which the rhetor has some purpose in writing.
- The **audience**, i.e., those who the rhetor hopes will read his or her text.
- The **medium** (e.g., speech, writing, film, etc.) and **genre** (e.g., poetry, epic, autobiography, fiction, etc.) the rhetor chooses, based largely on the rhetor's purpose and audience.
- The **social context** of the writing.
 - This includes the rhetor's and the audience's cultural milieu, i.e., the time period and the religious, political, economic, educational, etc. context of the rhetor and the audience.
 - For example, part of the social context for your writing this year is your participation in AP Language at Mount de Sales.

Assignment:

Use the following chart to examine **the rhetorical situation** of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Type in the provided space, and expand the boxes as needed as you type. Please type in Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman with a 10 pt. font. Using the table format below is preferable. However, if your software has trouble formatting the table, feel free to format your responses in standard paragraphs with the appropriate headings. If you do this, list source information below each typed paragraph.

Each response should be a **well-developed paragraph**, using complete and grammatically correct sentences. Make sure you are ready to discuss the text in class.

[**A word of warning:** Douglass uses the n-word in this text, seemingly offhandedly, but really to illustrate the manner of talk of overseers, owners, and members of slave-owning society in general. Other words that we might not hesitate using today (though perhaps not around our grandmothers), such as “damned” and “bitch,” are effaced (printed as “d—d” and “b—h”), but the n-word (note that I can’t bring myself to write it) he gives complete every time.]

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| <p><u>The Writer:</u> Describe the writer of <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> at the time of the writing of the text. Consider these questions: Who is he? Where does he live? When did he write the text? What is his background? What does he do for a living? (Don’t write about everything – pick out what seems most important.)</p> | <p><u>Source(s):</u> Where did you find this information? To what source or sources did you turn? Give basic bibliographical information for the source (author, title, page number). Remember that you might need to look not only at the beginning and end of the text itself, but also at introductions and prefaces, and some of the critical essays (starting on p. 131).</p> |
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| <p><u>The Writer’s Purpose:</u> Why is Douglass writing? What does he hope his text will do? Is there something he hopes the text will achieve? What is the main topic or issue of the text?</p> | <p><u>Source(s):</u> Where did you find this information? To what source or sources did you turn? Give basic bibliographical information for the source (author, title, page number). Remember that you might need to look not only at the beginning and end of the text itself, but also at introductions and prefaces, and some of the critical essays (starting on p. 131).</p> |
| | |
| <p><u>The Audience:</u> To or for whom is Douglass writing? Who does he hope will read the text? Why is he targeting this audience?</p> | <p><u>Source(s):</u> Where did you find this information? To what source or sources did you turn? Give basic bibliographical information for the source (author, title, page number). Remember that you might need to look not only at the beginning and end of the text itself, but also at introductions and prefaces, and some of the critical essays (starting on p. 131).</p> |
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| <p><u>Medium and Genre:</u> These should be reasonably straightforward (is this a speech, a book, a newspaper article, etc.? is this a novel, a biography, a poem, an autobiography, etc.?).</p> | <p><u>Source(s):</u> Where did you find this information? To what source or sources did you turn? Give basic bibliographical information for the source (author, title, page number). Remember that you might need to look not only at the beginning and end of the text itself, but also at introductions and prefaces, and some of the critical essays (starting on p. 131).</p> |
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| <p><u>Social Context:</u> What is the larger social context of the text? When was it written? Where? What are some of the relevant characteristics (economic, religious, political, etc.) of the time and place the text was written? (Don't give a complete social history, but focus on those aspects of society that are most relevant to the author, his purpose, and his audience.)</p> | <p><u>Source(s):</u> Where did you find this information? To what source or sources did you turn? Give basic bibliographical information for the source (author, title, page number). Remember that you might need to look not only at the beginning and end of the text itself, but also at introductions and prefaces, and some of the critical essays (starting on p. 131).</p> |
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AP English Language and Composition

2019 Summer Reading Assignment: Part II

Due: **Thursday, August 15th**

Mount de Sales Academy

Dr. Michael Muth

This assignment is due the second day of class, but I recommend that you complete this portion of the summer assignment by **late July**, in order to ensure that you have time to complete the last part of the summer assignment.

Rhetorical Appeals:

Aristotle introduced three basic forms of rhetorical appeal: ethos, pathos, and logos.

- **Ethos:** ethical appeals seek to establish the rhetor's **authority** as a rhetor, by appealing to his or her credibility, character, and identity.
 - A rhetor can either explicitly state his or her credentials or he can more subtly imply or allude to them.
- **Pathos:** pathetic appeals aim to generate certain **emotional reactions and responses** in the audience.
 - Pity and guilt are the two most popular emotions to which rhetors appeal.
- **Logos:** logical appeals use **logic, reasoning, and evidence** to support claims.
 - A logical appeal does not have to be a strict use of logic – it can involve less formal reasoning, including the use of anecdotes to establish a point.
 - This is by far the most important and common form of rhetorical appeal.

Rhetorical Objectives

In each chapter of his *Narrative*, Douglass has certain **points** he is trying to make, **claims he wishes to establish**, especially claims about slavery as a social system, about the effects of slavery on slaves and owners, and about the moral and religious effects of slavery. He uses all three of Aristotle's appeals, especially logos, to do so.

Assignment:

For each chapter and the appendix, **analyze the principal rhetorical objective** – the main point or, if there are several, one of the main points – that is, identify the objective and discuss how Douglass establishes, supports, or argues for it. The objective might be ethical in nature, i.e., to establish Douglass' own character or identity; it might be pathetic, e.g., to generate a reaction of pity or anger; or it might be logical, e.g., use rational argument or an anecdote to establish a rational (not emotional) point. Your analysis should also discuss how the chapter's objective supports Douglass' overall purpose for the book (see Assignment Part I).

As an example, one of Douglass' principal rhetorical objectives in chapter one is to make clear to his audience slavery's destructive effects on "natural" family relations, esp. that between a mother and her children. An analysis of this objective would consider how Douglass shows the naturalness of the relation, how the system of slavery works to destroy such a relationship, and what effects it has on slaves and slave society, as well as this objective's relationship to Douglass' overall purpose for the book (as you determined in Assignment Part I).

As with the first assignment, type in the provided space, and expand the boxes as needed as you type. As you specifically reference points in the text, provide page and paragraph citations in the right column. The citation should look like the following: (Pg. 30, Par. 2). Please type in Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman with a 10 pt. font. Using the table format below is preferable. However, if your software has trouble formatting the table, feel free to format your responses in standard paragraphs with the appropriate headings. If you do this, list source information below each typed paragraph.

| Chapters | Rhetorical Objective Analysis: After reading the text of each chapter, locate and analyze the principal rhetorical objective. Consider whether the objective is ethical, pathetic, or logical (the last will be most common). Analyze how Douglass establishes, supports, or argues for the objective. Discuss how the chapter's objective supports Douglass' overall purpose for the book (see Assignment Part I). | Page #: Identify the page #(s) of the textual evidence. Do this for each quotation/reference. Highlight in the book. |
|-----------------|--|---|
| One | | |
| Two | | |
| Three | | |
| Four | | |
| Five | | |
| Six | | |
| Seven | | |
| Eight | | |
| Nine | | |
| Ten | | |
| Eleven | | |
| Appendix | | |

AP English Language and Composition

2019 Summer Reading Assignment: Part III

Due: **Friday, August 16th**

Mount de Sales Academy

Dr. Michael Muth

This assignment is due on the first Friday of class, but I recommend that you complete this portion of the summer assignment by **early August**, so that you have time to review all three parts before submitting them.

Assignment:

Use the following chart to develop **an analysis of the rhetorical strategies in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass***. You will use the “**Analyzing Rhetorical Strategies**” handout (as well as the “Some Rhetorical Devices of Emphasis and Syntax” handout) in order to analyze rhetorical strategies found in Douglass’ autobiography. You will need to dedicate some time for reading through the handouts. You will need to identify **five different rhetorical strategies** used by Douglass and **analyze how they help him achieve his rhetorical objectives**.

As with the earlier assignment, type in the provided space, and expand the boxes as needed as you type. As you specifically reference points in the text, provide page and paragraph citations in the right column. The citation should look like the following: (Pg. 30, Par. 2). Please type in Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman with a 10 pt. font. Using the table format below is preferable. However, if your software has trouble formatting the table, feel free to format your responses in standard paragraphs with the appropriate headings. If you do this, list the page and paragraph citations below each typed paragraph.

Each response should be a **well-developed paragraph of analysis** based on your understanding of the strategy and text. Make sure you are ready to discuss the text in class.

| <u>Chapter #</u> | Writing/Style Critique: After reading the text, locate and analyze the use of five rhetorical strategies Douglass uses in the text, discussing how the strategy helps Douglass achieve one of his objectives (i.e., tell me how the strategy helps Douglass make or reinforce one of his main points). Make sure to read the entire text. Make sure to quote the example and then provide your analytical commentary. Be sure to fill in only 5 of the spaces. | Page #: Identify the page #(s) of the textual evidence. Do this for each quotation/reference. Highlight in the book. |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Example: Juxtaposition</p> <p>(You can still look for any uses of juxtaposition in the text, but you cannot, obviously, use this particular case.)</p> | <p><i>In chapter VIII, Douglass juxtaposes human beings and animals: “We were all ranked together at the valuation. Men and women, old and young, married and single, were ranked with horses, sheep, and swine. There were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination. Silvery-headed age and sprightly youth, maids and matrons, had to undergo the same indelicate inspection. At this moment, I saw more clearly than ever the brutalizing effects of slavery upon both slave and slaveholder.”</i></p> <p><i>By juxtaposing human beings and animals—i.e, putting them together in the same class of things—Douglass makes clear that slavery dehumanizes human beings, making them into merely property like domesticated animals. Thus he shows in his words the “brutalizing” force of slavery—it makes human beings into brutes.</i></p> | Chapter VIII, p. 45 |
| Diction | | |
| Tone | | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Antithesis | | |
| Juxtaposition | | |
| Figurative Language | | |
| Counterargument | | |
| Rhetorical Devices of Emphasis | | |
| Syntactical Rhetorical Devices | | |

Analyzing Rhetorical Strategies

One of the most important tasks you will be required to do this year is examine **an author's rhetorical strategies**—how the author uses the many tools of language and thought, such as diction, tone, repetition, antithesis, figurative language, imagery, word and paragraph order, argument, implication, etc., to get his or her message across.

Some useful **rhetorical terms and concepts**—what you need to be focusing on to analyze rhetorical strategies:

- **Diction—Word Choice**
 - Recognizing the **effects** produced by specific **word choices**.
 - Look for **how words will affect the reader and readers' perceptions** of the topic.
 - E.g., note how “livid pink” has a different impact than “soft pink.”
 - E.g., note how different the impact of “in the sticks” is from “in the country.”
 - E.g., note the difference between:
 - “The Spaniards *devastated* Central and South America by *imposing on* this New World the religion, economics, and politics of the Old”
and
 - “The Spaniards *affected* Central and South America by *introducing to* the New World the religion, economics, and politics of the Old.”
 - The first conveys a harsh judgment on the activities. The second does not.
 - E.g., “semiotic” vs “symbolic”
 - The first word tells you that the writer is well-educated and familiar with academic jargon. The second makes the text more readily accessible to a wide audience.
 - Some examples of descriptive terms for diction:
 - Formal, informal, colloquial, archaic, sophisticated, unsophisticated, complex, simplistic, bombastic, soothing, scathing, sympathetic, soft, harsh, smooth, hard, strong, weak, mild, positive, negative, etc.
 - **If you cannot find any other rhetorical strategy, you can *always* focus on diction.**
 - Everyone has to use words to say things, and any good writer will use words strategically.
 - **Thesis example:**
 - By choosing positive words—such as “light,” “optimism,” “freedom,” and “unyielding resolve”—Thatcher presents Reagan as an angelic, even Christ-like, figure of hope in a “dark” and “oppressive” world.
- **Rhetorical appeals: ethos, pathos, logos**
 - These terms were introduced in the assignment for Part II
 - These are useful terms, but do not rely too heavily on them.
 - If you use them in a thesis, be sure to **specify the nature of the appeal:**
 - Don't claim; “Adams uses ethos to convince her son that this trip will be good for the development of his character.”

- **Figurative Language**
 - Powerful, and thus common, rhetorical devices
 - You should be able to recognize and analyze an author's use of:
 - **Simile**
 - **Analogy**
 - **Metaphor**
 - **Metonymy**
 - **Synecdoche**
 - **Personification**
 - **Allusion**
 - **Eponym**
 - **Epithet**
 - **Thesis example:**
 - Through the use of a metaphor of a stream growing as it flows further from its source, Abigail Adams attempted to justify her heavy hand in pushing her son to travel to France with his father.

- **Counterargument—Use of Quotations from a Source**
 - Counterarguments are usually developed **in combination with quotations** from a source that the author wishes to refute.
 - **Thesis example:**
 - Sanders uses many quotations from Rushdie, not so much to explain Rushdie's love for rootless people, but to provide fodder for his counterargument that human beings and the natural environment would both be better served by a people with roots and thus responsibilities to the world around them.

- **Argument**
 - Argument, or the rhetorical appeal of **logos**, is central to academic writing.
 - It is the attempt to appeal to every person's rational power—and thus avoid changing people's minds only through threat or force.
 - Parts of an argument:
 - **Premises**
 - These are the pieces of evidence or accepted facts about the universe that are used to prove something not as obvious.
 - **Conclusion**
 - What the premises or evidence is intended to prove, establish, or make more probable.
 - A conclusion is usually not an obvious fact about the world, but something we “arrive” at through connecting the more obvious facts (the premises)
 - Classic example:
 - All human beings are mortal
I am a human being
Therefore, I am mortal. (Not what I wanted to hear)
 - Because argument is so basic, people hardly think of it as a rhetorical strategy—but, of course, it is (as are appeals to emotion [pathos], threats, and coercion—but argument avoids the emotional messiness of the first and is nicer than the other two).
 - As mentioned above, it is **critical that you distinguish premises from conclusion**.
 - **Thesis example:**

- Along with appeals to his audience's religious convictions, Chavez argues from the negative effects of violence and the positive effects of nonviolence that, though it may sound paradoxical, nonviolence is more powerful than violence.
- **Rhetorical Devices of Emphasis**
 - An author often indicates what is really important through **techniques of emphasis**—keep an eye out for the following devices:
 - **Irony**
 - **Hyperbole**
 - **Understatement**
 - **Rhetorical question:**
 - It is worth pointing out an author's use of this device to focus the reader on a specific claim or point.
 - Structural devices: **parallelism** and **chiasmus**.
 - Devices of repetition: **anaphora, epistrophe, anadiplosis, conduplicatio, diacope, and epizeuxis**.
 - If you can't remember the names or how they are different, just mention an author's use of repetition
 - E.g., "Martin Luther King's repetition of "I have a dream," emphasizes his faith in the future of the United States when people of good will are willing to work together for justice."
 - The device is specifically anaphora.
 - One other device of repetition to watch for is **amplification**—repeating a word or expression while adding more detail to it, in order to emphasize what might otherwise be passed over.
 - E.g., "Pride--boundless pride--is the bane of civilization."
- **Syntax**
 - Look at the way the author **structures his or her sentences**.
 - What is **emphasized** through different structures?
 - E.g., note the difference between "I am here!" and "Here I am!" The former emphasizes *me*, that *I* am here, whereas the latter emphasizes *where* I am.
 - You should keep your eyes open for rhetorical devices that play with word order:
 - **Hyperbaton**
 - **Anastrophe**.
 - Also devices that interject ideas or thoughts into a sentence:
 - **Appositive**
 - **Parenthesis**.
 - Like diction, tone, and rhetorical appeals, **you can always analyze syntax**—every author must structure his or her sentences.
 - Like tone, such analysis can be enlightening, but not always.
 - Many authors stick to accepted patterns of syntax.

Some Rhetorical Devices for Summer Assignment

Antithesis:

Antithesis establishes a clear, contrasting relationship between two ideas by joining them together or juxtaposing them, often in parallel structure. Human beings are inveterate systematizers and categorizers, so the mind has a natural love for antithesis, which creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas:

- To err is human; to forgive, divine. --Pope
- That short and easy trip made a lasting and profound change in Harold's outlook.
- That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind. --Neil Armstrong

Antithesis can convey some sense of complexity in a person or idea by admitting opposite or nearly opposite truths:

- Though surprising, it is true; though frightening at first, it is really harmless.
- If we try, we might succeed; if we do not try, we cannot succeed.
- Success makes men proud; failure makes them wise.

Antithesis, because of its close juxtaposition and intentional contrast of two terms or ideas, is also very useful for making relatively fine distinctions or for clarifying differences which might be otherwise overlooked by a careless thinker or casual reader:

- In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it. --Samuel Johnson
- The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. --Matt. 23:2-3 (RSV)
- I agree that it is legal; but my question was, Is it moral?
- The advertisement indeed says that these shoes are the best, but it means that they are equal; for in advertising "best" is a parity claim and only "better" indicates superiority.

Note also that short phrases can be made antithetical:

- Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning should carry in his mind, at once, the difficulty of excellence and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompense of labor, and that labor, vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward. -- Samuel Johnson

Irony:

Irony comes from the Ancient Greek εἰρωνεία (*eirōneía*), which means 'dissimulation, feigned ignorance'. In its broadest sense, irony is a rhetorical device, literary technique, or event in which what appears, on the surface, to be the case, differs radically from what is actually the case. Irony may be divided into categories, such as **verbal**, **dramatic**, and **situational**.

According to *A glossary of literary terms* by Abrams and Hartman,

Verbal irony is a statement in which the meaning that a speaker employs is sharply different from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. The ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech-situation that the speaker intends a very different, and often opposite, attitude or evaluation.

Verbal irony is distinguished from situational irony and dramatic irony in that it is produced *intentionally* by speakers. For instance, if a man exclaims, "I'm not upset!" but reveals an upset emotional state through his voice while truly trying to claim he's not upset, it would not be verbal irony by virtue of its verbal manifestation (it would, however, be situational irony). But if the same speaker said the same words and intended to communicate that he was upset by claiming he was not, the utterance would be verbal irony.

This distinction illustrates an important aspect of verbal irony – speakers communicate implied propositions that are intentionally contradictory to the propositions contained in the words themselves. There are, however, examples of verbal irony that do not rely on saying the opposite of what one means, and there are cases where all the traditional criteria of irony exist and the utterance is not ironic.

In a clear example from literature, in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Mark Antony's speech after the assassination of Caesar appears to praise the assassins, particularly Brutus ("But Brutus says he was ambitious; / And Brutus is an honourable man"), while actually condemning them. Although the words on the surface say that Brutus is honorable and Caesar ambitious, the speech as a whole makes it clear that Antony means the opposite (Brutus is ambitious and Caesar was honorable).

Dramatic irony is not of importance to rhetoric, though certainly to understanding many works of drama. This type of irony exploits the device of giving the spectator an item of information that at least one of the characters in the narrative is unaware of (at least consciously), thus placing the spectator a step ahead of at least one of the characters.

Situational irony is a relatively modern use of the term, and describes a sharp discrepancy between the expected result and actual results in a certain situation. Lars Elleström writes: "*Situational irony* ... is most broadly defined as a situation where the outcome is incongruous with what was expected, but it is also more generally understood as a situation that includes contradictions or sharp contrasts."

Some examples of situational irony:

- When John Hinckley attempted to assassinate Ronald Reagan, all of his shots initially missed the President; however, a bullet ricocheted off the bullet-proof Presidential limousine and struck Reagan in the chest. Thus, a vehicle made to protect the President from gunfire instead directed gunfire to the president.
- *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is a story whose plot revolves around situational irony. Dorothy travels to a wizard and fulfills his challenging demands in order to go home, before discovering she'd had the ability to go back home all along. The Scarecrow longs for intelligence, only to discover he is already a genius, and the Tin Woodsman longs to be capable of love, only to discover he already has a heart. The Lion, who at first appears to be a whimpering coward, turns out to be bold and fearless. The people in Emerald City believed the Wizard to be a powerful deity, only to discover that he is a bumbling, eccentric old man with no special powers at all.
- In O. Henry's story "The Gift of the Magi", a young couple are too poor to buy each other Christmas gifts. The wife cuts off her treasured hair to sell it to a wig-maker for money to buy her husband a chain for his heirloom pocket watch. She's shocked when she learns he had pawned his watch to buy her a set of combs for her long, beautiful, prized hair. "The double irony lies in the particular way their expectations were foiled."

Understatement:

Understatement deliberately expresses an idea as less important than it actually is, either for ironic emphasis or for politeness and tact. When the writer's audience can be expected to know the true nature of a fact which might be rather difficult to describe adequately in a brief space, the writer may choose to understate the fact as a means of employing the reader's own powers of description. For example, instead of endeavoring to describe in a few words the horrors and destruction of the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, a writer might state:

- The 1906 San Francisco earthquake interrupted business somewhat in the downtown area.

The effect is not the same as a description of destruction, since understatement like this necessarily smacks of flippancy to some degree; but occasionally that is a desirable effect. Consider these usages:

- Henry and Catherine were married, the bells rang, and everybody smiled To begin perfect happiness at the respective ages of twenty-six and eighteen is to do pretty well --Jane Austen
- Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. --Jonathan Swift
- You know I would be a little disappointed if you were to be hit by a drunk driver at two a.m., so I hope you will be home early.

In these cases the reader supplies his own knowledge of the facts and fills out a more vivid and personal description than the writer might have.

In a more important way, understatement should be used as a tool for modesty and tactfulness. Whenever you represent your own accomplishments, and often when you just describe your own position, an understatement of the facts will help you to avoid the charge of egotism on the one hand and of self-interested puffery on the other. We are always more pleased to discover a thing greater than promised rather than less than promised--or as Samuel Johnson put it, "It is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke." And it goes without saying that a person modest of his own talents wins our admiration more easily than an egotist. Thus an expert geologist might say, "Yes, I know a little about rocks," rather than, "Yes, I'm an expert about rocks." (An even bigger expert might raise his eyebrows if he heard that.)

Understatement is especially useful in dealing with a hostile audience or in disagreeing with someone, because the statement, while carrying the same point, is much less offensive. Compare:

- The second law of thermodynamics pretty much works against the possibility of such an event.
- The second law of thermodynamics proves conclusively that that theory is utterly false and ridiculous.

Remember, the goal of writing is to persuade, not to offend; once you insult or put off your opponent, objector, or disbeliever, you will never persuade him of anything, no matter how "obviously wrong" he is or how clearly right you are. The degree and power of pride in the human heart must never be underestimated. Many people are unwilling to hear objections of any kind, and view disagreement as a sign of contempt for their intellect. The use of understatement allows you to show a kind of respect for your reader's understanding. You have to object to his belief, but you are sympathetic with his position and see how he might have come to believe it; therefore, you humbly offer to steer him right, or at least to offer what you think is a more accurate view. Even those who agree with you already will be more persuaded because the modest thinker is always preferable to the flaming bigot. Compare these statements and consider what effect each would have on you if you read them in a persuasive article:

- Anyone who says this water is safe to drink is either stupid or foolish. The stuff is poisoned with coliform bacteria. Don't those idiots know that?
- My opponents think this water is drinkable, but I'm not sure I would drink it. Perhaps they are not aware of the dangerous bacterial count . . . [and so on, explaining the basis for your opinion].

Hyperbole:

Hyperbole, the counterpart of understatement, deliberately exaggerates conditions for emphasis or effect. In formal writing the hyperbole must be clearly intended as an exaggeration, and should be carefully restricted. That is, do not exaggerate everything, but treat hyperbole like an exclamation point, to be used only once a year. Then it will be quite effective as a table-thumping attention getter, introductory to your essay or some section thereof:

- There are a thousand reasons why more research is needed on solar energy.

Or it can make a single point very enthusiastically:

- I said "rare," not "raw." I've seen cows hurt worse than this get up and get well.

Or you can exaggerate one thing to show how really different it is from something supposedly similar to which it is being compared:

- This stuff is used motor oil compared to the coffee you make, my love.
- If anyone comes to me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. --Luke 14:26 (NASB)

Hyperbole is the most overused and overdone rhetorical figure in the whole world (and that is no hyperbole); we are a society of excess and exaggeration. Nevertheless, hyperbole still has a rightful and useful place in art and letters; just handle it like dynamite, and do not blow up everything you can find.

Rhetorical Question:

Rhetorical question (*erotesis*) differs from hypophora (see “Rhetorical Devices: Transitions” handout) in that it is not answered by the writer, because its answer is obvious or obviously desired, and usually just a yes or no. It is used for effect, emphasis, or provocation, or for drawing a conclusionary statement from the facts at hand.

- But how can we expect to enjoy the scenery when the scenery consists entirely of garish billboards?
- . . . For if we lose the ability to perceive our faults, what is the good of living on? --Marcus Aurelius
- Is justice then to be considered merely a word? Or is it whatever results from the bartering between attorneys?

Often the rhetorical question and its implied answer will lead to further discussion:

- Is this the end to which we are reduced? Is the disaster film the highest form of art we can expect from our era? Perhaps we should examine the alternatives presented by independent film maker Joe Blow
- I agree the funding and support are still minimal, but shouldn't worthy projects be tried, even though they are not certain to succeed? So the plans in effect now should be expanded to include [Note: Here is an example where the answer "yes" is clearly desired rhetorically by the writer, though conceivably someone might say "no" to the question if asked straightforwardly.]

Several rhetorical questions together can form a nicely developed and directed paragraph by changing a series of logical statements into queries:

- We shrink from change; yet is there anything that can come into being without it? What does Nature hold dearer, or more proper to herself? Could you have a hot bath unless the firewood underwent some change? Could you be nourished if the food suffered no change? Do you not see, then, that change in yourself is of the same order, and no less necessary to Nature? -- Marcus Aurelius

Sometimes the desired answer to the rhetorical question is made obvious by the discussion preceding it:

- The gods, though they live forever, feel no resentment at having to put up eternally with the generations of men and their misdeeds; nay more, they even show every possible care and concern for them. Are you, then, whose abiding is but for a moment, to lose patience--you who are yourself one of the culprits? --Marcus Aurelius

When you are thinking about a rhetorical question, be careful to avoid sinking to absurdity. You would not want to ask, for example, "But is it right to burn down the campus and sack the bookstore?" The use of this device allows your reader to think, query, and conclude along with you; but if your questions become ridiculous, your essay may become wastepaper.

Be very careful using rhetorical questions – you can never be sure that your reader will answer the questions the way you want him or her to. It is usually best to spell out your reasoning, just to make sure that you are being clear. But rhetorical questions, when used carefully, can help capture your reader's attention and sympathy.

Parallelism:

Parallelism is recurrent syntactical similarity. Several parts of a sentence or several sentences are expressed similarly to show that the ideas in the parts or sentences are equal in importance. Parallelism also adds balance and rhythm and, most importantly, clarity to the sentence.

Any sentence elements can be paralleled, any number of times (though, of course, excess quickly becomes ridiculous). You might choose parallel subjects with parallel modifiers attached to them:

- Ferocious dragons breathing fire and wicked sorcerers casting their spells do their harm by night in the forest of Darkness.

Or parallel verbs and adverbs:

- I have always sought but seldom obtained a parking space near the door.
- Quickly and happily he walked around the corner to buy the book.

Or parallel verbs and direct objects:

- He liked to eat watermelon and to avoid grapefruit.

Or just the objects:

- This wealthy car collector owns three pastel Cadillacs, two gold Rolls Royces, and ten assorted Mercedes.

Or parallel prepositional phrases:

- He found it difficult to vote for an ideal truth but against his own self-interest.
- The pilot walked down the aisle, through the door, and into the cockpit, singing "Up, Up, and Away."

Notice how paralleling rather long subordinate clauses helps you to hold the whole sentence clearly in your head:

- These critics--who point out the beauties of style and ideas, who discover the faults of false constructions, and who discuss the application of the rules--usually help a lot in engendering an understanding of the writer's essay.
- When, at the conclusion of a prolonged episode of agonizing thought, you decide to buy this car; when, after a hundred frantic sessions of begging stone-faced bankers for the money, you can obtain sufficient funds; and when, after two more years of impatience and frustration, you finally get a driver's license, then come see me and we will talk about a deal.
- After you corner the market in Brazilian coffee futures, but before you manipulate the price through the ceiling, sit down and have a cup of coffee with me (while I can still afford it).

It is also possible to parallel participial, infinitive, and gerund phrases:

- He left the engine on, idling erratically and heating rapidly.
- To think accurately and to write precisely are interrelated goals.
- She liked sneaking up to Ted and putting the ice cream down his back, because he was so cool about it.

In practice some combination of parts of speech or sentence elements is used to form a statement, depending as always on what you have to say. In addition, the parallelism, while it normally should be pretty close, does not have to be exact in its syntactical similarity. For example, you might write,

- He ran up to the bookshelves, grabbed a chair standing nearby, stepped painfully on his tiptoes, and pulled the fifty-pound volume on top of him, crushing his ribs and impressing him with the power of knowledge.

Here are some other examples of parallelism:

- I shall never envy the honors which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardor to virtue, and confidence to truth. --Samuel Johnson
- They had great skill in optics, and had instructed him to see faults in others, and beauties in himself, that could be discovered by nobody else. . . . --Alexander Pope
- For the end of a theoretical science is truth, but the end of a practical science is performance. -- Aristotle

Chiasmus:

Chiasmus might be called "reverse parallelism," since the second part of a grammatical construction is balanced or paralleled by the first part, only in reverse order. Instead of an AB structure (e.g., "learned unwillingly") paralleled by another AB structure ("forgotten gladly"), the AB will be followed by BA ("gladly forgotten"). So instead of writing, "What is learned unwillingly is forgotten gladly," you could write, "What is learned unwillingly is gladly forgotten." Similarly, the parallel sentence, "What is now great was at first little," could be written chiastically as, "What is now great was little at first." Here are some examples:

- He labors without complaining and without bragging rests.
- Polished in courts and hardened in the field, Renowned for conquest, and in council skilled. -- Joseph Addison
- For the Lord is a Great God . . . in whose hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are his also. --Psalm 95:4

Chiasmus is easiest to write and yet can be made very beautiful and effective simply by moving subordinate clauses around:

- If you come to them, they are not asleep; if you ask and inquire of them, they do not withdraw themselves; they do not chide if you make mistakes; they do not laugh at you if you are ignorant. --Richard de Bury

Prepositional phrases or other modifiers can also be moved around to form chiastic structures.

Sometimes the effect is rather emphatic:

- Tell me not of your many perfections; of your great modesty tell me not either.
- Just as the term "menial" does not apply to any honest labor, so no dishonest work can be called "prestigious."

At other times the effect is more subdued but still desirable. Compare the versions of these sentences, written first in chiastic and then in strictly parallel form. Which do you like better in each case?

- On the way to school, my car ran out of gas; then it had a flat on the way home.
- On the way to school, my car ran out of gas; then on the way home it had a flat.
- Sitting together at lunch, the kids talked incessantly; but they said nothing at all sitting in the dentist's office.
- Sitting together at lunch, the kids talked incessantly; but sitting in the dentist's office, they said nothing at all.
- The computer mainframe is now on sale; available also at a discount is the peripheral equipment.
- The computer mainframe is now on sale; the peripheral equipment is also available at a discount.

Chiasmus may be useful for those sentences in which you want balance, but which cannot be paralleled effectively, either because they are too short, or because the emphasis is placed on the wrong words. And sometimes a chiastic structure will just seem to "work" when a parallel one will not.

Anaphora:

Anaphora is the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences, commonly in conjunction with climax and with parallelism:

- To think on death it is a misery,/ To think on life it is a vanity;/ To think on the world verily it is,/ To think that here man hath no perfect bliss. --Peacham
- In books I find the dead as if they were alive; in books I foresee things to come; in books warlike affairs are set forth; from books come forth the laws of peace. --Richard de Bury
- Finally, we must consider what pleasantness of teaching there is in books, how easy, how secret! How safely we lay bare the poverty of human ignorance to books without feeling any shame! --Ibid.
- The wish of the genuine painter must be more extensive: instead of endeavoring to amuse mankind with the minute neatness of his imitations, he must endeavor to improve them by the grandeur of his ideas; instead of seeking praise, by deceiving the superficial sense of the spectator, he must strive for fame by captivating the imagination. --Sir Joshua Reynolds
- Slowly and grimly they advanced, not knowing what lay ahead, not knowing what they would find at the top of the hill, not knowing that they were so near to Disneyland.
- They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account. --Samuel Johnson

Anaphora can be used with questions, negations, hypotheses, conclusions, and subordinating conjunctions, although care must be taken not to become affected or to sound rhetorical and bombastic. Consider these selections:

- Will he read the book? Will he learn what it has to teach him? Will he live according to what he has learned?
- Not time, not money, not laws, but willing diligence will get this done.
- If we can get the lantern lit, if we can find the main cave, and if we can see the stalagmites, I'll show you the one with the bat skeleton in it.

Adverbs and prepositions can be used for anaphora, too:

- They are masters who instruct us without rod or ferule, without angry words, without clothes or money. --Richard de Bury
- She stroked her kitty cat very softly, very slowly, very smoothly.

Epistrophe:

Epistrophe (also called antistrophe) forms the counterpart to anaphora, because the repetition of the same word or words comes at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences:

- Where affections bear rule, there reason is subdued, honesty is subdued, good will is subdued, and all things else that withstand evil, for ever are subdued. --Wilson
- And all the night he did nothing but weep Philoclea, sigh Philoclea, and cry out Philoclea. --Philip Sidney
- You will find washing beakers helpful in passing this course, using the gas chromatograph desirable for passing this course, and studying hours on end essential to passing this course.

Epistrophe is an extremely emphatic device because of the emphasis placed on the last word in a phrase or sentence. If you have a concept you wish to stress heavily, then epistrophe might be a good construction to use. The danger as usual lies in this device's tendency to become too rhetorical. Consider whether these are successful and effective or hollow and bombastic:

- The cars do not sell because the engineering is inferior, the quality of materials is inferior, and the workmanship is inferior.
- The energies of mankind are often exerted in pursuit, consolidation, and enjoyment; which is to say, many men spend their lives pursuing power, consolidating power, and enjoying power.

Anadiplosis:

Anadiplosis repeats the last word of one phrase, clause, or sentence at or very near the beginning of the next. It can be generated in series for the sake of beauty or to give a sense of logical progression:

- Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,/ Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain --Philip Sidney

Most commonly, though, anadiplosis is used for emphasis of the repeated word or idea, since repetition has a reinforcing effect:

- They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. --Jer. 2:13
- The question next arises, How much confidence can we put in the people, when the people have elected Joe Doax?
- This treatment plant has a record of uncommon reliability, a reliability envied by every other water treatment facility on the coast.
- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. --John 1:1

Notice how the main point of the sentence becomes immediately clear by repeating the same word twice in close succession. There can be no doubt about the focus of your thought when you use anadiplosis.

Conduplicatio:

Conduplicatio resembles anadiplosis in the repetition of a preceding word, but it repeats a *key word* (not just the last word) from a preceding phrase, clause, or sentence, at the beginning of the next.

- If this is the first time duty has moved him to act against his desires, he is a very weak man indeed. Duty should be cultivated and obeyed in spite of its frequent conflict with selfish wishes.
- The strength of the passions will never be accepted as an excuse for complying with them; the passions were designed for subjection, and if a man suffers them to get the upper hand, he then betrays the liberty of his own soul. --Alexander Pope
- She fed the goldfish every day with the new pellets brought from Japan. Gradually the goldfish began to turn a brighter orange than before.

Like anadiplosis, *conduplicatio* serves as an effective focusing device because with it you can pull out that important idea from the sentence before and put it clearly at the front of the new sentence, showing the reader just what he should be concentrating on. Since keeping the reader focused on your train of thought is critical to good writing, this device can be especially helpful as a transitional connector when the previous sentence has two or more possible main points, only one of which is to be continued in the discussion. Suppose, for example, you have this sentence:

- Submitting a constitutional amendment to a popular vote through a general referendum always runs the risk of a campaign and a vote based upon the selfishness rather than the sense of justice of the voter.

Now, the next sentence could begin with, "Previous campaigns . . ." or "The strength of the appeal to selfish interests . . ." or "Therefore constitutional amendments are best left . . ." all depending on which concept you wish to develop. If you began the next sentence with, "But there certainly can be no doubt that the general referendum will continue to be exploited by those whose issues are aided by the innate

selfishness of human beings," the reader would have to go a considerable distance into the sentence before he would find out exactly which idea is being carried forward and developed.

Diacope:

Diacope: repetition of a word or phrase after an intervening word or phrase as a method of emphasis:

- We will do it, I tell you; we will do it.
- We give thanks to Thee, O God, we give thanks --Psalm 75:1 (NASB)

Epizeuxis:

Epizeuxis: repetition of one word (for emphasis):

- The best way to describe this portion of South America is lush, lush, lush.
- What do you see? Wires, wires, everywhere wires.
- Polonius: "What are you reading?" Hamlet: "Words, words, words."

Hyperbaton:

Hyperbaton includes several rhetorical devices involving departure from normal word order. One device, a form of inversion, might be called **delayed epithet**, since the adjective follows the noun. If you want to amplify the adjective, the inversion is very useful:

- From his seat on the bench he saw the girl content—content with the promise that she could ride on the train again next week.

But the delayed epithet can also be used by itself, though in only a relatively few cases:

- She had a personality indescribable.
- His was a countenance sad.

Some rhetoricians condemn delayed epithet altogether in formal writing because of its potential for abuse. Each case must be tested carefully, to make sure it does not sound too poetic:

- His was a countenance friendly.
- These are rumors strange.

And especially make sure the phrase is not affected, offensive, or even disgusting:

- Welcome to our home comfortable.
- That is a story amazing.

I cannot give you a rule (why does "countenance sad" seem okay when "countenance friendly" does not?) other than to consult your own taste or sense of what sounds all right and what does not.

A similar form of inversion we might call **divided epithets**. Here two adjectives are separated by the noun they modify, as in Milton's "with wandering steps and slow." Once again, be careful, but go ahead and try it. Some examples:

- It was a long operation but successful.
- Let's go on a cooler day and less busy.
- So many pages will require a longer staple, heavy-duty style.

Another form of hyperbaton involves the separation of words normally belonging together, done for effect or convenience:

- In this room there sit twenty (though I will not name them) distinguished people.

You can emphasize a verb by putting it at the end of the sentence:

- We will not, from this house, under any circumstances, be evicted.
- Sandy, after a long struggle, all the way across the lake, finally swam to shore.

You might want to have a friend check your excursions into hyperbatonic syntax, and if he looks at you askance and says, "My, talk funny you do," you might want to do a little rewriting. But, again, do not mark this off your list just because you might not be always successful at it.

Anastrophe:

Anastrophe is a hyperbatonic figure of speech in which the syntactically correct order of subject, verb and object is changed. For example, the usual English order of subject, verb and object might be changed to object-subject-verb, as in saying "potatoes I like" to mean "I like potatoes," or object-verb-subject:

- He holds him with his skinny hand, / "There was a ship," quoth he. / "Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!" / Eftsoons his hand dropt he. –Samuel Coleridge (In this case, we have object-verb-subject, "his hand dropt he" rather than the more typical, "He dropped his hand.")
- Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing. --Edgar Allan Poe

In this example, pay attention to Yoda's syntax:

Obi-Wan Kenobi: Do you believe what Count Dooku said about Sidious controlling the Senate? It doesn't feel right.

**Yoda:* Joined the Dark Side, Dooku has. Lies, deceit, creating mistrust are his ways now. [*In both sentences: object-subject-verb.*]

Mace Windu: Nevertheless, I think we should keep a closer eye on the Senate.

Yoda: I agree.

Windu: Where is your apprentice?

Kenobi: On his way to Naboo, escorting Senator Amidala home. I must admit that without the clones, it would not have been a victory.

**Yoda:* Victory? Victory, you say? Master Obi-Wan, not victory. The shroud of the Dark Side has fallen. Begun, the Clone War has!

Appositive:

Appositive: a noun or noun substitute placed next to (in apposition to) another noun to be described or defined by the appositive. Don't think that appositives are for subjects only and that they always follow the subject. The appositive can be placed before or after any noun:

- Henry Jameson, the boss of the operation, always wore a red baseball cap. [This shows the subject (Henry Jameson) with the appositive (the boss of the operation) following the subject. This is the most commonly used variety.]
- A notorious annual feast, the picnic was well attended. [Here, the appositive (notorious annual feast) is in front of the subject (the picnic).]
- That evening we were all at the concert, a really elaborate and exciting affair. [Here the appositive (elaborate and exciting etc.) follows the noun, which is the object of a preposition (concert).]

With very short appositives, the commas setting off the second noun from the first are often omitted:

- That afternoon Kathy Todd the pianist met the poet Thompson.
- Is your friend George going to run for office?

Parenthesis:

Parenthesis, a final form of hyperbaton, consists of a word, phrase, or whole sentence inserted as an aside in the middle of another sentence:

- But the new calculations--and here we see the value of relying upon up-to-date information--showed that man-powered flight was possible with this design.
- Every time I try to think of a good rhetorical example, I rack my brains but--you guessed--nothing happens.

- As the earthy portion has its origin from earth, the watery from a different element, my breath from one source and my hot and fiery parts from another of their own elsewhere (for nothing comes from nothing, or can return to nothing), so too there must be an origin for the mind. -- Marcus Aurelius
- But in whatever respect anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am just as bold myself. --2 Cor. 11:21b (NASB)

The violence involved in jumping into (or out of) the middle of your sentence to address the reader momentarily about something has a pronounced effect. Parenthesis can be circumscribed either by dashes--they are more dramatic and forceful--or by parentheses (to make your aside less stringent). This device creates the effect of extemporaneity and immediacy: you are relating some fact when suddenly something very important arises, or else you cannot resist an instant comment, so you just stop the sentence and the thought you are on right where they are and insert the fact or comment. The parenthetical form also serves to give some statements a context (stuffed right into the middle of another sentence at the most pertinent point) which they would not have if they had to be written as complete sentences following another sentence. Note that in the first example above the bit of moralizing placed into the sentence appears to be more natural and acceptable than if it were stated separately as a kind of moral conclusion, which was not the purpose or drift of the article.