

**Required Pre-Course Assignment for  
ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENGLISH III-LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION (10337A)  
Holly Springs High School  
2008-2009**

This course focuses on expository, analytical, and argumentative writing, thus emphasizing the study of nonfiction works in a variety of modes. Thus, the HSHS English Department has chosen required pre-course assignments that will offer a learning stretch and educational enrichment for AP-level students. The AP teacher will conduct additional activities that may include seminars, book talks, class discussions, group work, writing assignments, and additional related readings in conjunction with the assignments below. This assignment is due on Friday, August 29, 2008. If you have any questions concerning the assignment, please feel free to email me at [tyfherring@gmail.com](mailto:tyfherring@gmail.com) (Ms. Herring).

***Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston.**

According to the Saturday Review, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is “[the] classic story of light-skinned Janie Crawford’s evolving selfhood through three marriages. A novel that ‘...belongs in the same category with that of William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ernest Hemingway.’”

A bildungsroman novel is the story of a single individual’s growth and development within the context of a defined social order. The growth process, at its roots a quest story, has been described as both “an apprenticeship to life” and a “search for meaningful existence within society.” In addition, to spur the hero or heroine on to their journey, some form of loss or discontent must jar them at an early stage away from the home or family setting. Traditionally, a bildungsroman novel ends on a positive note, though it may be tempered by resignation and nostalgia.

(Definition compliments of Marianne Hirsch in “The Novel of Formation as Genre”)

Upon completion of a close reading of the novel, write a thoughtful and carefully constructed essay (2-4 pages) in which you use specific evidence to defend, challenge, or qualify the assertion that Zora Neale Hurston’s novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, is an example of a bildungsroman novel.

**Analyzing Rhetoric**

1. Choose 6 articles from 6 different newspapers and newsmagazines. Cut these out or photocopy them. Tape cut-out articles on a clean sheet of paper. In proper MLA format, cite each article properly. You may use the citation machine at: <http://citationmachine.net/> to help you with this task. It would be helpful if all of the articles had similar and/or related subjects/topics. Choose the articles from 6 different types of sources. The list below is simply a suggestion. **Feel free to get these articles from any source you deem fit; however, only one article can come from each type of source.** For instance, you cannot choose an article from *Newsweek* and *Time*. Remember to check the internet, high school media center homepage, and your local libraries for these and other titles. You need not subscribe to the titles to be able to use current articles.

**Local newspaper**

*The Holly Springs Sun*

**State newspaper**

*The News and Observer*

**National newspaper**

*USA Today*

**Newsmagazine**

*Newsweek*

*Time*

**Scientific Magazine**

*Popular Science*

*The Smithsonian*

**Financial Magazine**

*The Economist*

*Forbes*

**Literary Magazine**

*The New Yorker*

*Reader’s Digest*

**Entertainment Magazine**

*People*

*Entertainment Weekly*

**Special Interest Magazine**

*Sports Illustrated*

*Field and Stream*

*Architectural Digest*

**Satirical Magazine**

*Mad*

*Mental Floss*

*The Onion*

3. Choose 3 articles to analyze the rhetorical devices. Use the questions provided (on the back of this paper) to guide your analysis. Then, formulate a 3-paragraph response that addresses the rhetorical devices of diction, syntax, and structure for each article. You will have three 3-paragraph responses for three different articles when complete. The articles should span a time throughout the summer not just before the due date on the first day of school. Although should enjoy your summer vacation, you should not wait until the last minute to collect your articles.

Use the following questions to help you formulate your responses to “Analyzing Rhetoric.” You will have three 3-paragraph entries when you are done.

A. **Diction** is the analysis of word choice. Word choice conveys voice or the author’s or character’s personality through the choice of idiom.

- Is the language concrete or abstract? General or specific?
- Are the words monosyllabic or polysyllabic?
- Compare denotative (dictionary meaning) versus connotative (emotional meaning) words. Do the words have interesting connotations?
- Is the diction formal or informal? Colloquial? Slang? Jargon?
- What words are euphonious (pleasant sounding) or cacophonous (harsh sounding)?
- Is there any change in the level of diction in the passage?
- What can the reader infer about the speaker or speaker’s attitude from the word choice?
- Are there interesting images or patterns of imagery in the passage?
- Does the author create analogies, like similes and metaphors or broader descriptive comparisons?
- What part do rhythm and sound devices play in the passage?

B. **Syntax** is the sentence structure of the passage, the arrangement of the words to form meaning. It includes whether the sentence structure relies on prepositional phrases, verbal phrases, clauses, or other structures.

- Are the length of the sentences telegraphic (fewer than 5 words), short (approximately 5 words), medium (approximately 18 words), or long and involved (30 words or more)?
- Are the sentences simple and direct or complex and convoluted?
- Does length vary?
- Why is sentence length effective? How is it effective in this situation?
- How does sentence structure fit the subject matter?
- Is there a wide variety of sentence patterns present?
- Does the author use repetition, parallel structure, or juxtaposition (unassociated ideas, words or phrases next to each other) for emphasis?
- Does the author write periodic or cumulative sentences?
- Are there rhetorical questions in the passage?
- Are there dramatic shifts in sentence patterns?
- What can the reader infer about the speaker or speaker’s attitude from the syntax?

C. **Structure** is the way the entire work is organized.

- What organizational pattern(s) does the author use? (general to specific, specific to general, chronological, narrative, spatial, comparison and contrast, definition, question and answer, cause and effect)
- Are there repeated structural elements?
- How are the paragraphs related to each other?
- How are the paragraphs related to the work as a whole?
- If the passage is titled, what is the significance of its reflection on the passage as a whole?
- How does the organization of the passage help achieve the author’s purpose?