**From:** RIHISPEECH@aol.com

**Sent:** Saturday, December 29, 2001 08:21

**To:** AP-English

**Subject:** [ap-english] Portrait ideas, anyone?

Hello,

I have received help from people on the list for Portrait, and I would like to pass my ideas on as well.

“INTO” activities

1. Early in the year, before we do Portrait, I assign an autobiographical essay/narrative based on each student’s earliest memory.  When we get to Portrait, I have them revise the piece in the style of Joyce’s first page, having them simulate the language, or approximate their fluency, when they were the age at which their earliest memory occurred.  This helps them to empathize with Joyce and not reject him as a ‘weirdo’ with statements of “Why does he write this way?”
2. I have a PowerPoint presentation on oil painting and sculpture from approximately the Renaissance to the 1920s.  We look at examples of how perspective changed over the years, and I mention how oil paints sold in tubes let artists travel rather than be forced to mix their paints in the studio, how rail transportation allowed artists to travel a great distance in a short amount of time to paint subjects, then briefly talk about the advent of the camera.  After viewing twenty or thirty landscapes and assorted paintings, a second PowerPoint presentation presents portraits from the Renaissance to the modern era.  Students see that Joyce is tapping into a history of “Portrait of the Artists” and they see how perspective, color, etc changed in the late 1800s in portraits specifically.  This helps to make them more open to the novel.

“THROUGH” activities

1. I help them track, for the first third or so of the first chapter, the switches from direct narration, to Stephen’s thoughts and daydreams.  It helps them to know that the narrative technique will alternate back and forth between “inner” and “outer” reality, and that Joyce often drops out outer sequences, or physical events, that we consider fairly important - ie “What does Stephen do to Eileen Vance that he has to hide under the table and ‘apologise’?”  ”How does Stephen get from the playground to the corridor?”  Joyce doesn’t show us, because we are in Stephen’s head during that time.  By recognizing that some sequences are left out entirely, students begin to realize what I repeat in class so often: Joyce did this for a reason!  They begin to focus heavily on what Joyce does give the reader, rather than worry about the “ill-constructed” narrative, or the spots he left out.
2. A formal assignment for #2 that I tried with success this year required them to read the first section, up to the Christmas dinner, and log every switch from outer to inner, and as well, log every image employed by Joyce in the first pages.  The next day they were very sensitive to Joyce repeated images.
3. I gave reading quizzes every day (we read Ch. 1-4 in one week, and spent 3 or 4 days on Ch. 5 before going back to re-cover important motifs.
4. I allowed students to choose motifs or ideas that run through the book and required them to prepare a lecture on their motif.  Students worked in pairs on one of the following: birds/flight, water, urine/excrement, smells, religion, women, fathers, aesthetic theory, the Daedalus myth, colors, names, literature, imagination, light, and riddles.  It was up to them to decide how long they needed for their lecture, and to provide a visual (ranging from handouts, to Power Point presentations to posters).   
     
   The goal for the lecture was to determine how Joyce uses the motif; what is its purpose; does it serve more than one purpose; does the way the motif is represented change over the course of the novel (ex. bird: the eagle which will punish Stephen by pulling out his eyes in Ch. 1, a negative/punitive image of flight, contrasts with the birdgirl at the end of Ch. 4, arguably a moment of aesthetic arrest, and therefore pure art, for Stephen.
5. Their lecture must be typed up as an essay.

Help!  My students have read and thought about Portrait outside of a historical literary context, and I want to close with a couple of lectures on modernism.  Any ideas for resources?

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Thursday 05 April 2012