

Thursday Handouts

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Concrete Detail and Commentary

[Row B]

Concrete Detail

Concrete detail in a novel includes specific descriptions, actions, words from the text.

In a play, much of the concrete detail comes in stage directions.

The details are fact, not opinion. Everyone looking at them will see the same thing:

<i>In a novel, for instance:</i>	<i>Examples from a novel:</i>
What a narrator says things are like:	<i>The wind from the lake brings a sweetish smell to the shore.</i>
What a narrator says happens:	<i>The airplane ride exhilarated him, encouraged illusion...</i>
What a narrator says characters do:	<i>Suddenly she lifted her head and made a sound like a hoot owl.</i>
What a narrator says characters say:	<i>"Keep your eyes open," Freddie went on.</i>
What a narrator says characters think:	<i>He had come to believe... that he was impregnable.</i>
<i>In a play, for instance:</i>	<i>Examples from a play (Italics are stage directions; Roman type is dialogue.)</i>
What the text says things are like:	<i>All is calm and peaceful.</i>
What happens:	<i>Immediately a storm comes up.</i>
What a character does:	<i>Aunt Ester is smoking a pipe.</i>
What a character says:	<i>Solly: Here, put this piece of chain in your pocket.</i>
What a narrator says characters think:	<i>He has arrived at the City of Bones. He is awed by its beauty.</i>

Commentary

Commentary is reaction, response, opinion, comment, observation, interpretation.

Different readers will see the same concrete detail but may differ in their interpretation of it.

Countless questions can help with forming an interpretation; here are some to start with:

Does the detail:

- suggest something?
- echo anything from earlier in the work?
- foreshadow something coming later?
- contrast with another detail?
- appear similar to another detail?
- fit into a pattern with other details?
- seem motivated by other details?
- contain its own contradiction or irony?
- come in an unexpected place?
- have unusual or unexpected language?

Strategies:

Color Highlighting:

1. On a previous essay: highlight all the concrete detail from the work or passage in one color (blue?).
2. Then highlight all your commentary about that detail in another (yellow?).
3. Now check if you can see if you have close to an average of two pieces of commentary for each detail and if you have them grouped in a way that will help a reader follow your line of reasoning.

Column Writing:

1. Use a first column for the concrete detail you want to use to support your interpretation. Use a second column for your commentary on that detail. List at least two pieces of commentary for each concrete detail.

INTRODUCTIONS

Try beginning your paper with:

1. A straight-forward, matter-of-fact, statement of a subject. This can be rhetorically effective for critical papers, or as understatement for startling events.
2. An enigmatic opening.
3. A question, possibly rhetorical.
4. An anecdote or a startling fact, like those often used as openers for after dinner speeches or assembly talks.
5. A quotation.
6. The creation of a mood or feeling for a locale, a device common to the short story or novel.
7. A statistic.
8. The withholding of key information until late in the paragraph, hence, evoking suspense in the reader.
9. Effective repetition.
10. A figure of speech.
11. The use of sound (onomatopoeia) to attract the reader's attention.
12. A strong contrast.
13. The reversal of a cliché.
14. A historical comparison.
15. An opinion.
16. An immediate physical description of main character-- holding the name till later.
17. An autobiographical account.

from the editors of *Time Magazine*.

Some sample introductions (not all good, but...)

1. All our important ideas about the rights of individuals in a society grow directly from political writings of the Renaissance.
2. We don't agree on when the Renaissance began, on when it ended, on what brought it about, nor on what snuffed it out. People then didn't even know they were living in it. But it has more impact on our lives to day than any other period of history.
3. How could one person not just succeed but excel in every known area of human activity?
4. Fleas changed the world of the Renaissance more than all the people who lived in it combined.
5. "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman," Queen Elizabeth I told a critic, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too."
6. The last leaves hung yellow on the small trees, and a late morning breeze that chilled lifted off the Thames. People waited in line at the Globe in small groups, men in wide hats and capes and dull white ice-cream cone collars and smelling powerfully of garlic and ale, the few women whispering in pumpkin-shaped skirts.
7. Between 1348 and 1350, the Black Death wiped out exactly half the population of Europe.
9. Love rang in the songs. Love filled the poetry and painting. Love gave theme and form to drama. Love returned to the churches.
10. Trying to distinguish the nature of the Renaissance is like trying to eat walnuts with your bare hands. You might find the tools to get at the meat, but you come away so scarred that you wonder if the work was worth it.
12. At no time in history had people been more free; at no time had they more resembled prisoners.
13. We look first to books to help us find the words and ideas to serve as a cover for the Renaissance. But you can't judge a cover by its book.
14. In the outburst of literature, music, art, philosophy, exploration, and political thought, the Renaissance and fifth century Athens stand nearly as identical twins..

REVISION STRATEGIES

+ X ÷ —

Revision usually works like arithmetic and in this order:

First,

ADDITION

(adding something that is not there: facts, logical argument, details, examples, illustrations, statistics, *ad infinitum*.)

Next,

MULTIPLICATION

(increasing what is already there; twice as many facts, logical arguments, details, examples, illustrations, and so on.)

Then,

DIVISION

(“chunking” into paragraphs, moving things around, organizing the parts in a different way, and so on.)

Finally,

SUBTRACTION

(taking out unnecessary words, material, sharpening diction, working on tone and audience consciousness, honing arguments, working on stylistic devices).

Being process, any of these can be — and usually is, with skilled writers — recycled and used again... and again.

REVISION GUIDE

Symbol Suggested revision

Style / Stance

<i>ds</i>	Avoid “dead” sentences, those with insufficient reason for being.
<i>echo</i>	Avoid repeating a word or phrase you’ve just used.
<i>gs</i>	Do you want this gender-specific language? It might offend some.
<i>I</i>	Stay in the background; avoid mentioning your paper; imply your outline.
<i>SC</i>	Use sentence-combining techniques to join closely related ideas.
<i>V</i>	Use strong verbs in the active voice.
<i>VV</i>	Work for variety in your diction, especially verbs.
<i>W</i>	Eliminate needless words.
<i>WW</i>	This isn’t the word you want, is it?
<i>[]</i>	Consider dropping this word or phrase.
<i>//</i>	Express parallel ideas in parallel form.
<i>~~~</i>	Reword this unclear, inappropriate, or wordy passage.

Organization

<i>tr</i>	Add a transition to get from one idea or paragraph to the next.
<i>¶</i>	Make the paragraph the unit of composition.

Support

<i>A</i>	Attribute all borrowed words or ideas to their source.
<i>S</i>	Support this idea with specific illustration.

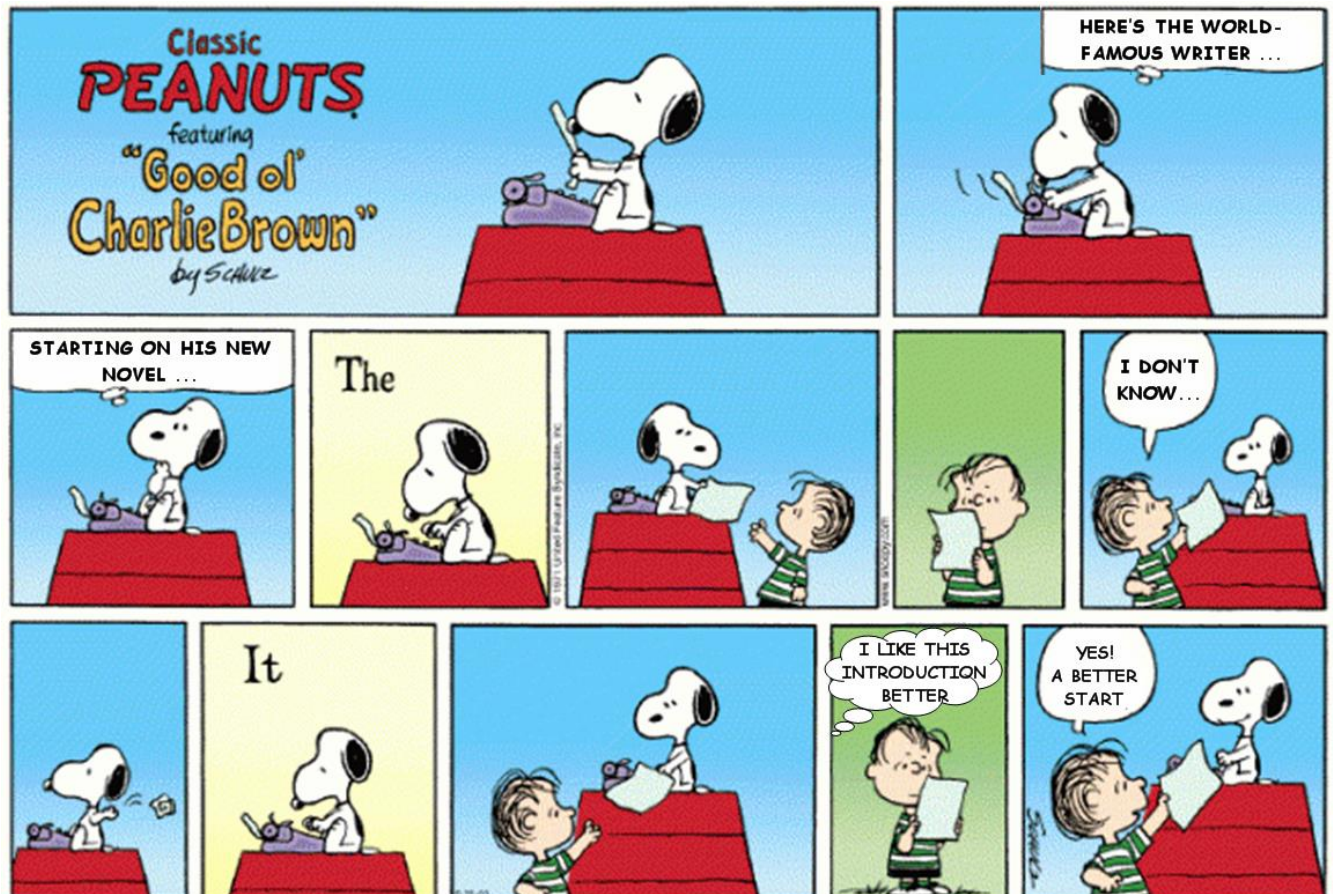
Mechanics

<i>mm</i>	Keep related words together; move a misplaced element.
<i>p</i>	Find and correct the punctuation error.
<i>ref</i>	This pronoun (or adjective or article) has a confusing referent—or none at all.
<i>id</i>	Find and correct the error in idiomatic construction.
<i>SS</i>	Find and correct the error in sentence structure.
<i>SV</i>	Be sure your verbs agree with their subjects.
<i>agr</i>	Be sure your pronouns agree with their antecedents.
<i>X</i>	Is there a word missing here?
<i>!</i>	You’ve violated a rule we’ve worked on in class. Shame.
<i>#</i>	Avoid shifting number, person, or tense.
<i>—</i>	Find and correct the error in spelling or diction.

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO STRUNK

1. Form the possessive singular of nouns by adding 's.
2. In a series of three or more terms with a single conjunction, use a comma after each term except the last.
3. Enclose parenthetical expressions between commas.
4. Place a comma before a conjunction introducing an independent clause.
5. Do not join independent clauses by a comma.
6. Do not break sentences in two.
7. Use a colon after an independent clause to introduce a list of particulars, an appositive, an amplification, or an illustrative quotation.
8. Use a dash to set off an abrupt break or interruption and to announce a long appositive or summary.
9. The number of the subject determines the number of the verb.
10. Use the proper case of pronoun.
11. A participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence must refer to the grammatical subject.
12. Choose a suitable design and hold to it.
13. Make the paragraph the unit of composition.
14. Use the active voice.
15. Put statements in positive form.
16. Use definite, specific, concrete language.
17. Omit needless words.
18. Avoid a succession of loose sentences.
19. Express co-ordinate ideas in similar form.
20. Keep related words together.
21. In summaries, keep to one tense.
22. Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.



Grading Dialectical Journals

You have come to the most difficult place in teaching. That is, how to reward good, quality thought and work without setting specific guidelines that divert attention to quantity or inhibit thought.

You, of course, can recognize a log entry that is thoughtful and insightful as opposed to one which was hastily completed during lunch. You—and all of us—want the thoughtful and insightful entry to get an ‘A’ and the hastily completed one to get a much lower grade. But how to describe what a thoughtful and insightful entry is like? This cannot be done by creating specific guidelines, since guidelines must always be written with some sort of quantifiers and are by nature restrictive. The more specific, the more inhibitive.

So, here is my solution. Require whatever number of entries you think good. Then, be bold and confident and give only a check, check plus or check minus rather than number grades or letter grades. If there is an outstanding entry, give a check double-plus. If there is a really slack entry, give a check double-minus. When the students ask, “What does a check mean?” Just say, “It means you did the required number of entries.” A check plus then means “You did them better, had some good insights” and a check double-plus means “You did careful reading, had some excellent insights and original thoughts.” You can read examples, anonymously, to the class or you could make overheads, anonymously, and point out what you mean by ‘excellent.’ It will, of course, never include any of the check or check minus or check double minus entries. Those students will get the point.

You can record the check, check minus, and check-plus in your gradebook, and over time you can see which students get the same marks over and over and where improvement occurs. There you can find your ‘A’s, ‘B’s, ‘C’s and ‘D’s for the reader’s log portion of your course grades. It will come out fair, and it might help some students.

Dixie Dellinger

Name

Name

[illegible]

EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING THE PAPER LOAD

from the apenglish electronic discussion group

1. Give students choice in topic (within the parameters of your content) so they are invested and you have a variety of papers to read.
2. Set a page limit and emphasize proving the thesis with apt, clearly written support. Less is more!
3. Assign two short papers and ask the students to determine (perhaps with the help of their peers) which one they want you to respond to. Collect both papers.
4. Give students the opportunity to share their first drafts with peers in a structured writing group. The quality of the writing that you receive in the next draft will be higher. You will spend less time correcting misconceptions about the assignment and silly errors.
5. Teach the students oral presentation skills and use this mode for several presentations each marking period. These presentations can show you a great deal about student learning yet can be evaluated "on the spot."
6. Give the students an opportunity to show their understanding of a work of literature and its author's style by imitating it. This type of assignment is both analytical and creative. Students tend to invest and the resulting work is interesting to read. Students can also be asked to perform their pieces in class, which makes it possible for you to become familiar with them before you actually need to read and grade them.
7. Ask students to evaluate their own writing, using your performance standards. This can provide you with insight into the students' processes and make grading easier.
8. Conclude the activities for the last unit of study in the marking period a week prior to the end of the marking period. This will give you time to read and evaluate final projects and share grades with students before you're under pressure to report grades on disk.

THE LOGICAL DEFINITION

A LOGICAL DEFINITION is a statement of the meaning of a word or word group in which the word or group is identified as the TERM, is placed in a CLASS, and is supplied with sufficient DIFFERENTIAE to eliminate all other members of the class.

TERM: The name of the thing, person, or idea to be defined

CLASS: A group into which the term fits

DIFFERENTIAE: Characteristics that differentiate the term from all other members of the class.

Examples

TERM	CLASS	DIFFERENTIAE
1. Stockholm	capital	of Sweden.
2. kite	light frame	covered with paper or cloth and designed to be flown in the air at the of a string.
3. geek	circus performer	often billed as a wild man whose act usually includes biting the head off a live chicken or snake.
4. dollar	monetary unit	of New Zealand, equal to 100 cents.

FALLACIES IN LOGICAL DEFINITIONS

The Class

1. Too restrictive: if it eliminates the term itself or any part of it. (A magnet is a piece of iron that attracts other pieces of iron.)
2. Too inclusive: if it does not sufficiently restrict the class. (A glowworm is a little thing that gives off light.)

The Differentiae

1. Too broad: if they allow the inclusion of members of the class other than the term. (A touchdown is a scoring play in football.)
2. Too inclusive: if they eliminate the term itself or any desired part of it. (A copyreader is one who reads copy for a newspaper.)

Circularity

Circular definitions: A definition is said to be "circular," and therefore inadequate, if it repeats the term or depends on a word lexically related to the term. (*e.g.*, A diagonal line is a line that runs diagonally.)

Testing by inversion:

You can frequently test the logical completeness of a logical definition by inverting it according to these formulæ:

"Any/all" + [the class] + [the differentiae] = [the term]

"Any/all" + [the term] = [the class] + [the differentiae]

If the result is not "true," the definition needs more careful examination.

PRACTICE ONE: For the following logical definitions list the term and the class.

1. A ewer is a large, wide mouthed water pitcher.
2. A four poster is a bedstead with tall cornerposts that sometimes support a canopy of curtains.
3. A squeegee is a tool in the shape of a T having the crossbar edged with a strip of rubber or the like used to scrape water from a flat surface.
4. A theist is a person who believes in the existence of a god or gods.
5. An ape hanger is a handle bar that is unusually high, especially on a motorcycle.
6. A slumlord is a landlord who receives unusually high profits from substandard property.

PRACTICE TWO: For the following, identify the term, the class, and the differentia.

1. Two or more letters united in printing are called a ligature.
2. A metaphor is a figure of speech that implies a comparison between two unlike things that actually have something important in common.
3. Letterhead is stationery with a printed or engraved heading.
4. The literary language of tenth and eleventh century Slavic manuscripts is called Old Church Slavonic.
5. A gargoyle is a roof spout carved to represent a grotesque human or animal figure.
6. The Greek goddess of wisdom and the arts is Athena.

PRACTICE THREE: For the following inadequate definitions, identify the problem and suggest a repair.

1. A fledgling has newly developed flight feathers.
2. John Doe is used in legal proceedings to designate fictitious or unidentified persons.
3. A plutocracy is a form of government.
4. A kilt is a short pleated thing reaching to the knees, worn by men of the Scottish highlands.
5. Avarice is the vice characteristic of avaricious persons.
6. Italian is a European Romance language.

PRACTICE FOUR: Write a complete logical definition for each of six terms. Choose four from the list below and two from a field in which you are interested.

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| • concerto | • Pasadena | • toucan |
| • judo | • Shakespeare | • impeachment |
| • Aristotle | • soldier | • Christmas |
| • speakeasy | • cafeteria | • Huck Finn |

PRACTICE FIVE: Choose one of the following groups and write a logical definition for each term in the group

- GROUP 1. duck, Adam, Tiger, Sacramento, big top
GROUP 2. alligator, Bordeaux, ruble, photosynthesis, sign language.
GROUP 3. cola, basset, Anaheim, Michelangelo, KCET.
GROUP 4. Delphi, mononucleosis, brewery, pistol, Chaucer
GROUP 5. spaghetti, Leningrad, hostage, James Earl Jones, dowry
GROUP 6. Frank Lloyd Wright, ash, Omaha, lathe, merry go round

SOME DEFINITIONS... LOGICAL AND OTHERWISE

1. Coal is a black rocky type substance which can be burned to produce heat.
2. A junior high school is an educational institution which teaches students from eleven years old to fourteen years old.
3. A flying buttress is an architectural device used to support or hold up buildings.
4. A fork is a utensil used for eating.
5. A leprechaun is a fairy-tale creature who, when spotted by a person, must grant them three wishes.
6. Socialization is a process in which a person learns the traditions, customs, and accepted behaviors of the group in which he lives.
7. A myth is a story based on fact which tries to explain the phenomena which occur in a given environment.
8. A right angle is an angle which has a measure of ninety degrees or one half π radians.
9. A diamond is a precious gem found deep inside the earth's crust.
10. Copernicus was an ancient astronomer who was able to find orbital speeds and periods of the planets.
11. Paris is the largest city in France.
12. Junior high school is the educational step after grammar school preparing students for high school.
13. New Orleans is a city in Louisiana located at the mouth of the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico.
14. Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States.
15. Halftime is the midpoint of a football game, preceded and followed by two periods of play, which lasts approximately twenty minutes.
16. Saturn is the sixth planet in our solar system.
17. Marijuana is an intoxicating drug obtained from the hemp plant and usually smoked.
18. An apple is a fruit that can be red, yellow, or green and grows on trees.
19. A balance sheet is a financial statement prepared at the end of a business period, either yearly or quarterly, to give a clear picture of a company's financial position.
20. A fork is a piece of silverware that has three or four prongs.
21. An hourly is a college exam weighted less than midterms or finals and more than quizzes.
22. A right angle is formed when two perpendicular lines intersect each other in a plane.
23. Illinois is a Midwestern state of the United States sharing borders with the states of Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Kentucky, and Indiana.
24. Greek mythology was a religion, practiced in ancient Greece, which consisted of many gods and goddesses.
25. A fork is an eating utensil with pointed prongs that is used to spear a piece of food and to put it in one's mouth.
26. Illinois is a state located in the Midwestern section of the United States.
27. A truck is a motorized vehicle having 4 wheels or more used for a variety of purposes, most having to do with hauling goods.
28. The Field Museum is a natural history museum in Chicago, Illinois, and is considered one of the finest in the world.
29. Athena is a goddess in Greek mythology who is associated with logic and wisdom.
30. The United States is a country in the northern hemisphere of Earth.

THE PARAGRAPH OF EXTENDED DEFINITION

Assignment: Write a one paragraph composition of extended definition. Your “thesis sentence” should be a logical definition of the term and should begin your paragraph. The body of your paragraph should clarify the term, class, and differentia. You may wish to make your development explanatory, historical, or analytical. You may want to use comparison or contrast. Your audience is a group of high school seniors of reasonable intelligence.

Topic: _____

Criteria:

1. Is the logical definition clear, complete, and accurate
2. Is every sentence clearly relevant to the logical definition?
3. Does every sentence lead logically to the next?
4. Is the paragraph developed in a manner suitable to the term being defined?
5. Have the writers used the skills of sentence combining from last week to avoid strings of short, choppy statements?
6. Does the paragraph end rather than just stopping?
7. Is the spelling accurate and the sentence structure and punctuation correct?
8. Is there a variety of sentence beginnings to make the paper readable?
9. Have the writers avoided depending on linking verbs, especially forms of the verb 'to be'?
10. Is the factual development of the definition free of careless judgments and unsupported views?

Process:

Avoid turning in rough work. Write your logical definition and check it using the formula on page 1. Then decide on a method of development and outline your details. Arrange the details in a logical order, and write your draft. You will have time for only one draft today. Leave a minute or two to proofread for logic and mechanics.

SENTENCE COMBINING #2

Blocking Characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Combine the following elements into a coherent paragraph that explains the function of *blocking* characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

- 1 The climax of many comedies is the marriage of young lovers.
- 2 A good plot requires this.
- 3 The marriage is delayed.
- 4 This delay or suspense is usually achieved by characters.
- 5 They are called blocking characters.
- 6 They consciously oppose the marriage.
- 7 Their folly somehow stands in the marriage's way.
- 8 Parents are most frequently blocking characters.
- 9 Parents represent practical, puritanical, and antiromantic forces in society.
- 10 The marriage is often blocked.
- 11 It is blocked by some folly or fault.
- 12 The fault or folly is in one or both of the lovers.
- 13 This happens in
- 14 This is the plays' primary plot.
- 15 Jack's plan to marry Gwendolen is initially blocked by the girl's mother.
- 16 The mother is Lady Bracknell.
- 17 Lady Bracknell is concerned with Jack's family background.
- 18 She is more concerned with this than with her daughter's desires.
- 19 Gwendolen herself also threatens to be a block.
- 20 Gwendolen is in love with Jack and willing to marry him.
- 21 She can only love someone named Earnest.
- 22 This is what she says.
- 23 Jack uses the name Earnest when he is with her in London.
- 24 The audience believes this.
- 25 The hero's name is Jack.
- 26 Gwendolen's infatuation with the name of Ernest seems likely to become an obstacle.
- 27 This happens at the end of Act 1.
- 28 The audience is led to expect this.
- 29 Jack will discover a respectable set of parents.
- 30 Jack will get a new name.
- 31 This will satisfy the aristocratic conditions of Lady Bracknell.
- 32 This will satisfy the romantic expectations of Gwendolen.

Sentence Combining

The original line from *The Importance of Being Earnest*:

Lady Bracknell: Untruthful! My nephew Algernon? Impossible! He is an Oxonian.

The sentences to combine:

Lady Bracknell says that Algernon cannot be untruthful.

He is her nephew.

She says it is because he is an Oxonian.

Her statement is nonsense.

Absolute Phrases

a group of words that modifies an independent clause as a whole; it has no finite verb

Her statement nonsensical, Lady Bracknell declares that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Adjective Clause

any clause which modifies a noun or pronoun

Lady Bracknell says nonsensically that her nephew Algernon, *who is an Oxonian*, cannot be untruthful.

Adverb Clause

any clause which modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb

Lady Bracknell again talks nonsense *when she says that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian*.

Appositives

a noun, noun phrase, or series of nouns used to rename or identify another noun, noun phrase, or pronoun

An Oxonian, Algernon is incapable of being untruthful, his aunt Lady Bracknell says nonsensically.

Participial Phrases

one built on a past or present participle; it always modifies the subject of the main clause, whether the writer intends it to or not

Lady Bracknell, *lapsing again into nonsense*, says that her nephew Algernon is incapable of being untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Prepositional phrases

one beginning with a preposition, ending with the preposition's object, and working as an adjective or as an adverb

Lady Bracknell says, *in another example of nonsense*, that her nephew Algernon cannot be untruthful because he is an Oxonian.

Two Resources

Kilgallon, Don. *Sentence Composing for High School*. Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1998.

Strong, William. *Sentence Combining: A Composing Book*. McGraw-Hill, 1994.

Force-Feeding Vocabulary

The question of vocabulary may have become our greatest concern with the students, and it appears to have got measurably more serious over the past five or six years. It slows their reading and it makes their writing sound infantile, even for those with perceptive minds.

Most of our students have proved excellent at memorizing words from lists--they've had eleven years of practice and know how to play the game. They devote one small area on their brain's hard disk to "vocabulary storage." It holds 20-25 words with a synonym for each. They score high on vocabulary quizzes. That's another game they play well. After the quiz, they replace the 25 old words with the 25 new words. And so it goes. The result of all this is that by the time they are graduated, they have acquired 25 new words, the ones for that final quiz, still sitting in that small space in their brain.

We've come to think that they are, as Mr Boffo says, 'not clear on the basic concept.' What has led us to that conclusion is that they make a distinction between the English they hear, speak, read, and write on one hand, and "vo-cab" on the other. The phrase that turns our blood cold is "SAT words." Students who use it are telling us that they are not adding these words to the vocabulary they use for communication; they are adding them to their Test Toolbox, and they do not see any connection between the two groups.

We spend a great deal of time feeding words to our students at all levels. They get used to our interrupting them, even come, they tell us, not to notice it any more. We "feed" them during private conversations, class discussions, and while they're talking with teammates (which is what ours do more than any other activity). We do it with literary terminology, but mostly just with everyday English. We do it to introduce them to words we suspect they do not know and to get them to be more specific with the words they do. With a new word, it might sound something like this:

Student: ...and then what she says might mean yes and it might mean no, and he gets all confused.
Teacher: ...and her ambiguous answer confuses him.
Student: Her ambiguous answer confuses him.

We've found it essential that the student repeat what the teacher says. At first some resist, and we have to tell them that they learn the words by hearing them echo in their own mouths and heads.

Student: ...and then what she says might mean yes and it might mean no, and he gets all confused.
T: Her ambiguous answer confuses him.
S: Yeah, whatever.
T: No, not whatever, Her ambiguous answer confuses him. Repeat that so that your mouth learns the word.
S: Her ambiguous answer confuses him.
T: Good!
S: She has this idea that she wants to give him to do but it, like, isn't probably going to work, you know?
T: Her suggestion seems impractical.
S: Her suggestion seems impractical.

We do it with literary terms as well:

S: The way she picks the words helps her meaning.
T: Her diction reinforces her meaning.
S: Her diction reinforces her meaning.

But often just to get them to use words they already know instead of others that are too vague:

S: So this thing she has about ...'
T: (interrupting) So this concern she has...
S: So this concern she has...

Rarely, we stop for a fast explanation...

S: But he's prejudice for lower class people.
T: He's prejudiced against lower class people. Prejudice is a noun, as in 'a prejudice is a preformed opinion.' The adjective you want here is 'prejudiced.' And it governs the prepositions 'against' and 'in favor of.' It's not a bad idea to be prejudiced against black widow spiders. Some might feel a referee is prejudiced in favor of the other team.
T: He's prejudiced against the lower classes.
S: He's prejudiced against the lower classes.
T: Exaggerate that 'D' on the end for me so that I can hear that you're saying it, OK?
S: He's prejudiceD against the lower classes.

When we do assign words, it's almost always from the reading, and we reinforce them orally in this same way, making the kids repeat them.

T: You have 90 seconds. Each one of you tell your teammates one thing you are apprehensive about. You must use the word apprehensive in your sentence. (Then we listen to see if any are misusing the word. We don't catch them all, but we try.)

It all takes time and alert ears, especially in classes of 30-40, and it keeps us moving around the room, but we find it helps.

S: So anyone could see through his lie.
T: His lie is transparent.
S: Yeah, whatever.
T: No, not whatever, His lie is transparent.

Sometimes it's sense discrimination we're after:

S: Laura is shy.
T: Do you mean she's timid or introverted or reclusive? Or something else?

We may stop here if the word is one we suspect most of the students don't use and we risk breaking the flow of a good discussion.

Synonyms

from a dictionary of synonyms:

foretell, predict, forecast, prophesy, prognosticate mean to tell before hand.

Foretell applies to the telling of a future event by any procedure or from any source of information <seers *foretold* of calamitous events.>

Predict commonly implies inference from facts or from accepted laws of nature <astronomers *predicted* the return of the comet.>

Forecast adds the implication of anticipating eventualities and differs from *predict* in being usually concerned with probabilities rather than certainties <*forecast* a snowfall of six inches.>

Prophesy connotes inspired or mystic knowledge of the future, especially as the fulfilling of divine threats or promises, or implies great assurance in predicting <preachers *prophesying* a day of divine retribution>.

Prognosticate suggests prediction based on the learned or skilled interpretation of signs or symptoms <economists are *prognosticating* a slow recovery>.

caustic, mordant, acrid, scathing mean stingingly incisive.

Caustic suggests a biting wit <caustic comments about her singing ability>. **ant.** genial

Mordant suggests a wit that is used with deadly effectiveness <*mordant* reviews put the play out of its misery>.

Acrid implies bitterness and often malevolence <a speech marked by *acrid* invective>. **ant.** benign, kindly.

Scathing implies indignant attacks delivered with fierce or withering severity <a *scathing* satire of corporate life>.

proud, arrogant, haughty, lordly, insolent, overbearing, supercilious, disdainful mean showing superiority toward others or scorn for inferiors.

Proud may suggest a feeling or attitude of pleased satisfaction in oneself or one's accomplishments that may or may not be justified and may or may not be demonstrated offensively <a *proud* man, unwilling to admit failure>. **ant.** humble, ashamed

Arrogant implies a claiming for oneself of more consideration or importance than is warranted and often suggests an aggressive, domineering manner <an *arrogant* business executive used to being kowtowed to>. **ant.** meek, unassuming

Haughty suggests a blatantly displayed consciousness of superior birth or position <a *haughty* manner that barely concealed his scorn>. **ant.** lowly

Lordly implies pomposity or an arrogant display of power <*lordly* indifference to the consequences of their carelessness>.

Insolent implies insultingly contemptuous haughtiness <suffered the stares of *insolent* waiters>. **ant.** deferential

Overbearing suggests a tyrannical manner or an intolerable insolence <wearied by demands from her *overbearing* in-laws>. **ant.** subservient

Supercilious implies a cool, patronizing haughtiness <*supercilious* parvenus with their disdainful sneers>.

Disdainful suggests a more active and openly scornful superciliousness <*disdainful* of their pathetic attempts>. **ant.** admiring, respectful

adapted from *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms*,
Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1992. Print.

Language & Composition

Adjectival Forms

Knowing the adjective form of a noun will often help you eliminate unnecessary words and write with more economy and directness. For the italicized nouns or nominal phrase in each of the following, decide what you think the adjectival form should be. Then substitute the adjective for the phrase in which the noun appears and combine the two sentences into one. Use a dictionary *only after* you have made your own decisions. There are right answers for the adjective forms, but you will come up with different changes in the structure of the sentences. No. 0 is done as an example.

0. She is a scholar of *literature*. She has published two books on Pushkin.

A literary scholar, she has published two books on Pushkin.

1. His writing is *like poetry*. It uses many figures of speech.
2. Her life was like a *drama*. It had a happy ending.
3. We are finishing a study of the *theme* of Hamlet. We are studying the madness in the play.
4. The sea here is a *symbol*. It stands for the dangers of the unknown.
5. There are clues in the *context*. They suggest the writer owes a debt to Milton's Paradise Lost.
6. She uses two devices as transitions. They are conjunctions and word repetition.
7. King Arthur may have been a person from history or a character from *fiction*. He has inspired many stories.
8. This whole scene has *irony*. It suggests that Kate may have done some taming of her own.
9. This novel is written in the form of *letters*. It follows Kim's life over sixty-five years. (*This one's a trick; you'll have to go back to the Latin word for 'letter.'*)
10. The scenery looks very *real*. It stands in contrast to the events of the plot.
11. This story is an *allegory*. It would speak to people of nearly all cultures.
12. Her speech features many examples of *hyperbole*. As a result, she becomes comical.
13. The situation here contains a *paradox*. It is that inaction becomes a form of action.
14. The poem has a pattern of *rhythm*. The pattern reinforces the theme.
15. The verse is made up of *syllables*. It is not metrical in the traditional English way.
16. Many Victorian novelists used direct comment by the *author* in their novels. The comment seems intrusive to many modern readers.



Literary Criticism

A Bug's Life

We've adapted another teacher's idea to fit our program. We don't do any criticism during the year. Our kids work throughout the year in teams we assign in August. After the exam, we assign each team one of the critical schools. We use the *Bedford Introduction to Lit* which, like all the others, has a chapter on criticism. Each team has an approach to "study." The textbook has a good two-page explanation of the key ideas of each. We suggest they look at another source or two that will give them a fast overview—something like Wikipedia, not a scholarly study. We assign them at random and, as we often do, we leave the kids 120 seconds to swap with another team if they choose.

We stress that we are not "teaching them literary criticism" but just getting them familiar with some of the terminology they will run up against in college.

At the next class meeting (we meet every other day), we check to see that kids have notes of some kind while they watch "A Bug's Life." Any number of other movies would work, but we've found that animation removes the problem of whether the kids are focused on the characters or the actors, which we want to avoid. We also like that this movie has an uncomplicated story line. Another advantage is that our periods are 100 minutes and the movie runs something like 93. Kids who are out that day can stream the movie or send someone to pick up the DVD, and they get together somewhere to watch it that night or the next. We offer the classroom and the school library, but they nearly always choose to go to someone's home.

The following class starts with time for the teams to talk about the movie through the lens (can you talk through a lens?) of their critical approach and to prepare a short presentation for the class. They are to explain the key ideas of their school of criticism and then apply it to the movie. They react pretty vigorously to each other's "readings" of the movie. One year the Marxists and the Feminists were starting to call each other names. We told them they were behaving like college professors and to cut it out.

We evaluate each team according to how well they present their "stuff."

Walt Whitman
Leaves of Grass
THERE WAS A CHILD WENT FORTH

THERE was a child went forth every day;
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became;
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day, or for many years, or
stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
5 And grass, and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,
And the Third-month lambs, and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal, and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barn-yard, or by the mire of the pond-side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there--and the beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads--all became part of him.

10 The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became part of him;
Winter-grain sprouts, and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms, and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and the
commonest weeds by the road;
And the old drunkard staggering home from the out-house of the tavern, whence he had lately risen,
And the school-mistress that pass'd on her way to the school,
And the friendly boys that pass'd--and the quarrelsome boys,
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls--and the barefoot negro boy and girl,
And all the changes of city and country, wherever he went.

His own parents,
He that had father'd him, and she that had conceiv'd him in her womb, and birth'd him,
20 They gave this child more of themselves than that;
They gave him afterward every day--they became part of *him*.

The mother at home, quietly placing the dishes on the supper-table;
The mother with mild words--clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person and
clothes as she walks by;
The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust;
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture--the yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsay'd--the sense of what is real--the thought if, after all, it should prove
unreal,
The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time--the curious whether and how,
Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?
30 Men and women crowding fast in the streets--if they are not flashes and specks, what are they?
The streets themselves, and the façades of houses, and goods in the windows,
Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves--the huge crossing at the ferries,
The village on the highland, seen from afar at sunset--the river between,
Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on roofs and gables of white or brown, three miles off,

- 35 The schooner near by, sleepily dropping down the tide--the little boat slack-tow'd astern,
The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,
The strata of color'd clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint, away solitary by itself--the spread of purity it lies
motionless in,
The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud;
These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth
every day.

Whitman, Walt. 1900. *Leaves of Grass*.

<http://www.cc.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/whitman/whit215.html>

A Child Goes Forth....

First, read Walt Whitman's poem "There Was a Child Went Forth" from *Leaves of Grass*. Read it out loud. Twice.

Then write your own "There Was a Child Went Forth" poem following this pattern:

1. Start with Whitman's first stanza.
2. Then, write about your earliest childhood memories of setting ending with the line "...became a part of this child." (taken from the original)
3. Then a stanza or two about mom and dad (or a mom and dad substitute) ending with "...became a part of this child."
4. Then elementary school memories ending with "...became a part of this child."
5. Then middle school memories ending with "...became a part of this child."
6. Then high school memories ending with "...became a part of this child."
7. Then include more global happenings during the span of your 17-18 years ending with "...became a part of this child."
8. Finally, end with Whitman's final line.

Double lines _ between pairs show the relative height of Talls, Deeps, and Shorts. Wherever possible, finish letters rightwards; those starred * will be written upwards. Also see heading and footnotes overleaf.

	Tall	Deep		Short	Short
peep	l	l	bib	if	i
tot	1	l	dead	egg	l
kick	d	p	gag	ash*	j
fee	j	r	vow	ado*	r
thigh	0	0	they	on	o
so	s	z	zoo	wool	v
sure	l	7	meaSure	out	o
church	l	z	judge	ah*	s
yea	l	/	*woe	are	o
hung	l	8	ha-ha	air	o
	Short	Short		array	o
loll	c	o	roar		
mime*	r	u	nun		
					Tall
lan	r	h	yew		

The Shaw Alphabet Reading Key

The letters are classified as Tall, Deep, Short, and Compound. Beneath each letter is its full name: its *sound* is shown in **bold** type.

Tall:	peep	tot	kick	fee	thigh	so	sure	church	Yea	hung
Deep:	bib	dead	gag	vow	they	zoo	measure	judge	woe	ha-ha
Short:	loll	mime	if	egg	ash	ado	on	wool	out	ah
Compound:	are	or	air	err	array	ear	Ian	yew		

The four most frequent words are represented by single letters: the *ø*, of *f*, and *v*, to 1. Proper names may be distinguished by a preceding 'Namer' dot: e.g. ·*JoS*, Rome. Punctuation and numerals are unchanged. Learn the alphabet *in pairs*, as listed for Writers overleaf.

PROLOGUE

A jungle path. A lion's roar, a melancholy suffering roar, comes from the jungle. It is repeated nearer. The lion limps from the jungle on three legs, holding up his right forepaw, in which a huge thorn sticks. He sits down and contemplates it. He licks it. He shakes it. He tries to extract it by scraping it along the ground, and hurts himself worse. He roars piteously. He licks it again. Tears drop from his eyes. He limps painfully off the path and lies down under the trees, exhausted with pain. Heaving a long sigh, like wind in a trombone, he goes to sleep.

Androcles and his wife Megaera come along the path. He is a small, thin, ridiculous little man who might be any age from thirty to fifty-five. He has sandy hair, watery compassionate blue eyes, sensitive nostrils, and a very presentable forehead; but his good points go no further: his arms and legs and back, though wiry of their kind, look shrivelled and starved. He carries a big bundle, is very poorly clad, and seems tired and hungry.

ՄԱԽՐԺԿԿՉ Ն Ք ՇՐՆ

גרססו

[illegible][illegible]

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENGLISH

The Shavian Alphabet