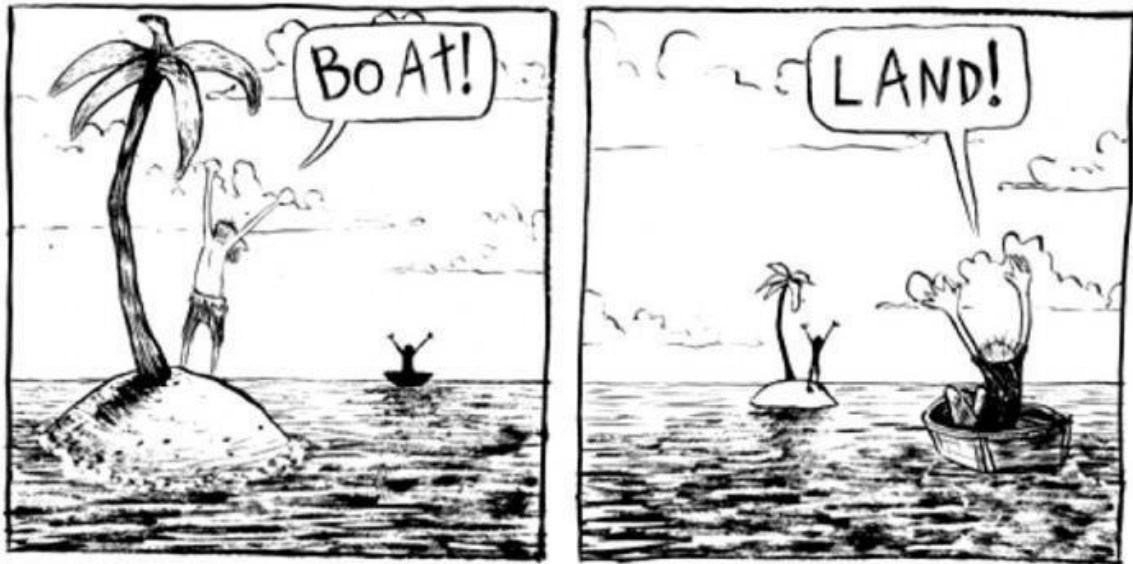


Course Notes I

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE



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HF-2110

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Kamala Harris Shaped by Berkeley and a ‘Do Something’ Mother

Much of who Kamala Harris is today traces back to her childhood in Berkeley in the 1960s and early '70s, and a mother who taught her it wasn't enough just to complain about the way things were.

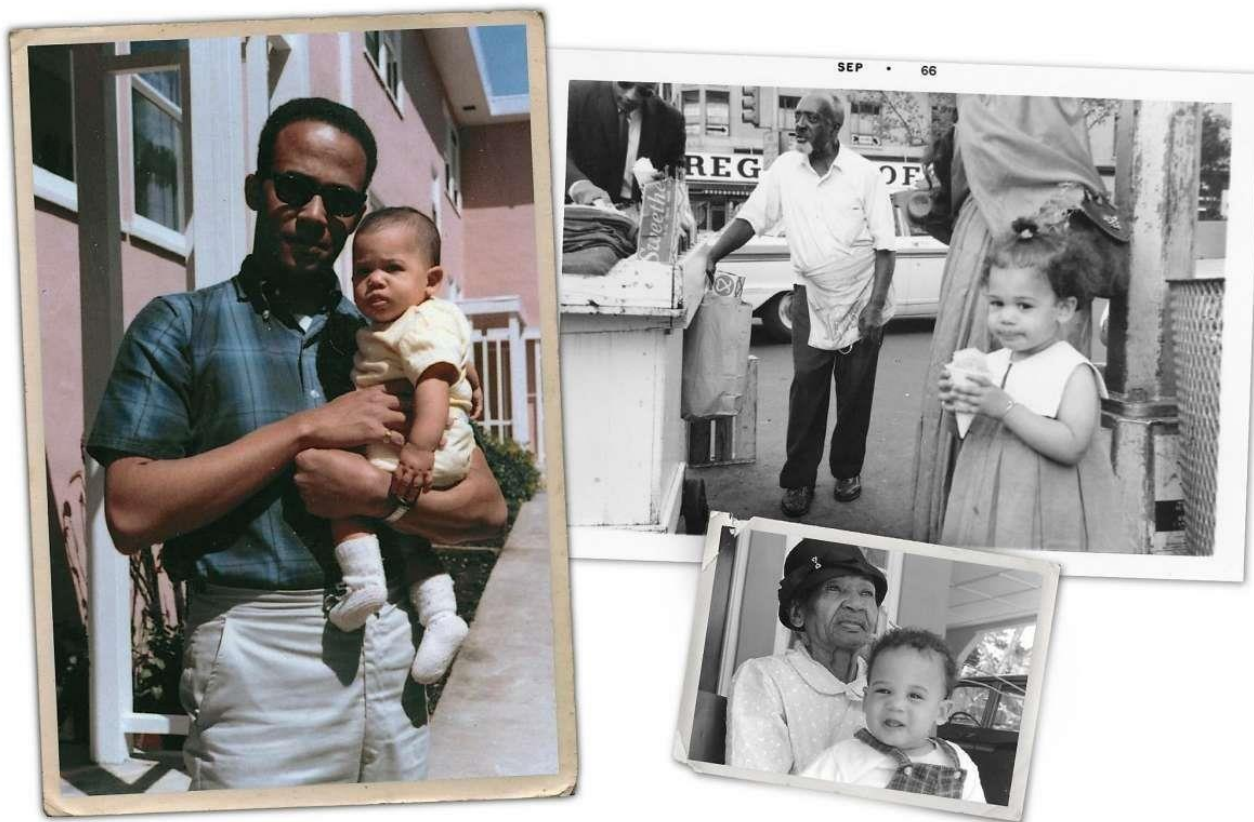
WASHINGTON — When Kamala Harris wants to make a particularly strong point, there's one person she almost always quotes: her mother.

The California senator cited her late mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, in her first public appearance last week as Joe Biden's vice presidential nominee-to-be. Gopalan shows up on more than 30 pages of Harris' 2019 autobiography, "The Truths We Hold." Her mother's words of advice and wisdom were an integral part of Harris' stump speeches when she was running her own presidential campaign last year.

It's a reflection of what Harris and those who know her best will readily say: Much of who she is today traces back to her childhood in Berkeley in the 1960s and early '70s, and the example Gopalan set as a trailblazing scientist and single mother.

18 Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf, a fellow daughter of the East Bay in that era, said she sees the
 19 influence of Harris' mother and upbringing in the area in her longtime friend, both as a person
 20 and as a politician.

21 "When we look at (House Speaker) Nancy Pelosi, Kamala Harris, women who have survived the
 22 crucible of Bay Area politics — yeah, you don't just have tough skin, you have Teflon armor,"
 23 Schaaf said. "You see that rare combination of kindness and compassion and no hesitation to gut
 24 your opponent..... Her ability to just drill down to the truth, to not suffer fools, to advance
 25 unapologetically an agenda in the face of criticism — that is Bay Area street tough at its finest."



26 In this April 1965 photo provided by the Kamala Harris campaign, Donald Harris holds his daughter, Kamala. This September 1966
 27 photo provided by the Kamala Harris campaign shows her during a family visit to the Harlem neighborhood of New York. In this
 28 undated photo provided by the Kamala Harris campaign in April 2019, Iris Finegan holds her great granddaughter, Kamala Harris, in
 29 Jamaica. Photo: Chronicle Photo Collages With Images From Kamala Harris Campaign Via AP

30 Harris, 55, was born to Gopalan, an Indian immigrant who came to the U.S. by herself at age 19,
 31 and a Jamaican immigrant father when both were graduate students at UC Berkeley in 1964. The
 32 couple fell in love while participating in the active local civil rights movement, and Harris was
 33 often brought along for the ride — literally.

34 "That's how they met — as students, in the streets of Oakland, marching and shouting for this
 35 thing called justice, in a struggle that continues to this day," Harris said in her first public remarks
 36 Wednesday as Biden's running mate. "And I was part of it. My parents would bring me to
 37 protests — strapped tightly in my stroller."

38 Harris added that as she grew, her mother would
 39 encourage that same activism in her: “She’d tell us,
 40 ‘Don’t just sit around and complain about things. Do
 41 something.’”

42 Her mother and father divorced when Harris was 7,
 43 with Gopalan taking primary custody of her and her
 44 younger sister, Maya. They lived in the flatlands of
 45 west Berkeley. Her father, Donald Harris, remains an
 46 economist and professor emeritus at Stanford
 47 University.

48 While not entirely estranged from her father, Harris was
 49 much closer to her mother, and it was her influence that
 50 shaped the future senator. Harris wrote in her book that
 51 she would see her father on weekends and in the
 52 summers, but lived with her mother and built the
 53 strongest ties with Gopalan’s close friends here and her
 54 family in India.

55 Gopalan, a breast cancer researcher, died in 2009.

56 “Shyamala was a doctor. She was just like Kamala: super
 57 smart, super determined to live out her values, and
 58 incredibly kind and compassionate,” said Schaaf, whose
 59 mother was friends with Gopalan. “I like to think both of
 60 us were blessed with mothers who were nurturing, but
 61 also fierce in their values and unafraid to show their
 62 intelligence.”

63 Schaaf was with Harris the night she was elected to the
 64 Senate in 2016. “We just had a little moment with both of
 65 us in tears in our eyes,” Schaaf said, “and I said, ‘I wish
 66 your mom was here. She would be so proud of you right
 67 now.’”

MORE INFORMATION

Kamala Devi Harris at a glance:

Date of birth: Oct. 20, 1964, in Oakland.

Education: Bachelor’s degree from Howard University, 1986. Earned her law degree from UC Hastings College of the Law in 1989.

Career: Deputy district attorney of Alameda County, 1990-98. San Francisco District Attorney’s Office managing attorney and chief of San Francisco City Attorney’s Office division on children and families, 1998-2004. San Francisco district attorney, 2004-11. California attorney general, 2011-16. U.S. senator, 2016-present.

Family: Married to Douglas Emhoff, a Los Angeles attorney. They have two children from his previous marriage.



68 In her Washington Senate office in 2018, Harris holds a picture of her mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, whose civil
 69 rights activism in the 1960s influenced the future leader. Photo: Tal Kopan / The Chronicle 2018

70 One of Harris' prized possessions is a photograph of her mother and a friend as young women on
 71 the UC Berkeley campus in the early 1960s. In the background are people wearing black
 72 armbands, often a symbol of protest and mourning for '60s activists. A sign refers to Birmingham,
 73 Ala., a focal point of the civil rights movement. The photo was dropped off at her Senate office by
 74 a man who didn't leave his name — to this day, Harris doesn't know who he was.

75 "I talk a lot about my mother," Harris said in a 2018 interview with The Chronicle in her office, as
 76 she held the picture. "So this is, I think, my favorite thing on this desk."

77 A former colleague of Gopalan's at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Mina Bissell, recalled
 78 her as strong, principled, brave, thoughtful, "very fierce" and independent. She sees much of
 79 Gopalan in Harris — like her mother, she said, Harris places immense value on education, hard
 80 work and self-sufficiency.

81 Gopalan “was very competent and very opinionated, but scientifically,” Bissell said. She was a
 82 “mom who was powerful and thoughtful and very-education oriented, very warm with her
 83 children.”

84 The two women met when Harris and Bissell’s daughter, Yalda, were in ballet together and
 85 bonded because both their mothers were scientists. Bissell recalled that she and Gopalan were
 86 once finalists for a job opening, but said it turned out they were being interviewed only so the
 87 hiring managers could tell the government grant-writers they had considered women for the
 88 position. She described encountering a “terrible chauvinist” in the hiring process who demeaned
 89 her. The job went to a man.

90 It was emblematic of the time, Bissell said, when women in science had to navigate a field in
 91 which the men who dominated it were often dismissive of them.



93
 94 Clockwise from top left: Kamala Harris with her sister, Maya, on Christmas in 1968. Kamala Harris (right) graduates
 95 from UC Hastings College of the Law in 1989. Shyamala Gopalan Harris, 25, feeds her baby, Kamala. During Kamala
 96 Harris’ freshman year at Howard University in Washington, D.C., almost every weekend was spent at the Mall
 97 protesting apartheid and calling for divestment. Harris (right) stands with Gwen Whitfield in November 1982. An
 98 undated photo of Kamala Harris as a child. Photo: Chronicle Photo Collage With Images From Kamala Harris Campaign

99 It was after that disappointment that Gopalan moved to Canada to take a position at McGill
 100 University, when Harris was in middle school. Gopalan returned to Lawrence Berkeley for the last
 101 decade of her career, where Bissell had risen into leadership and was able to hire her.

102 Her mother wasn’t the only one on that side of the family who influenced Harris. In a recently re-
 103 published 2009 interview with India Abroad, an outlet for the U.S. Indian community, Harris said
 104 her mother made sure her daughters would be proud of their Indian heritage as well as their
 105 Black lineage — the part she knew American society would focus on.

Harris visited India often as a girl and was especially close to her grandfather, P.V. Gopalan, a high-ranking diplomat and former fighter for India's independence from Britain.

"He would take walks every morning along the beach with his buddies, who were all retired government officials, and they would talk about politics, about how corruption must be fought and about justice," Harris told the India Abroad interviewer. "They would laugh and voice opinions and argue, and those conversations, even more than their actions, had such a strong influence on me in terms of learning to be responsible, to be honest, and to have integrity."



Sen. Kamala Harris arrives to kick off her presidential campaign at a rally at Frank Ogawa Plaza in Oakland in January 2019. Her East Bay roots have influenced who she is today. Photo: Scott Strazzante / The Chronicle 2019

When the interviewer asked if that was the true source of her activism — more than Berkeley — Harris said it was all of the above.

“It is important to not say one thing to the exclusion of the other, because I don’t feel the need to do that,” she said. “They are of equal weight in terms of who I am and the impact that they had on me growing up. My grandparents used to visit us in Berkeley all the time. My grandfather and grandmother enjoyed the time they spent with people of all walks of life who were involved in the civil rights movement.”

Berkeley schools have featured prominently in Harris’ political storytelling — including in a memorable flash point between Harris and her now-running mate in a presidential primary debate in June 2019.

Harris told the story of how she was among the first waves of students to integrate Berkeley schools, and criticized Biden for opposing desegregation busing in the 1970s and speaking highly of senators who had been vocal segregationists.

“There was a little girl in California who was part of the second class to integrate her public schools, and she was bused to school every day. And that little girl was me,” Harris said, in a phrase that her campaign marketed on T-shirts.



District Attorney Kamala Harris (left) with her hand on the Bible held by her mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, is sworn in by Sen. Dianne Feinstein for a second term in January 2008. Photo: Michael Maloney / The Chronicle 2008

Although the implication was that Harris might have faced discrimination or difficulty in that period, in her autobiography she describes a pleasant and intellectually stimulating upbringing in

138 the area on the border of Berkeley and Oakland, surrounded by activists and people of all sorts of
139 backgrounds.

140 “At the time, all I knew was that the big yellow bus was the way I got to school,” Harris wrote.
141 “Looking at the photo from my first-grade class reminds of how wonderful it was to grow up in
142 such a diverse environment..... We were a varied bunch; some grew up in public housing, and
143 others were the children of professors. I remember celebrating varied cultural holidays at school
144 and learning to count to 10 in several languages.”

145 Schaaf said that “when you grow up in particularly Oakland and Berkeley in the ‘70s, in the early
146 ‘80s, you are very comfortable with protest and you are very comfortable with challenging
147 authority. You have a keen sense and comfort with the issue of racial justice. I can’t tell you how
148 proud Oakland is to claim Kamala’s roots as the first Black woman vice president (candidate), the
149 first Asian woman vice president, the first biracial vice president. Kamala has always lifted up her
150 biracial identity — she’s never shied away from it.”



151

152 Clockwise from left: Shyamala Gopalan Harris holds her daughter, Kamala, in this undated photo. Kamala Harris and
153 her sister, Maya, are pictured in March, 1967. Kamala Harris, center front, stands with her sister, Maya, mother,
154 Shyamala, and her maternal grandparents in this undated photo. | Chronicle Photo Collage With Images From Kamala
155 Harris Campaign

156 Harris is often asked to define her racial identity, which she usually does with a quip. At her
157 January 2019 presidential campaign launch at her alma mater, Howard University, one of the
158 nation’s most prominent historically Black universities, a reporter noted that Harris was both an
159 African American and Indian American woman — “Indeed!” she replied — and asked how she
160 would describe herself.

161 “How do I describe myself? I describe myself as a proud American, that’s how I describe myself,”
162 she said.

163 That comfort with being multiracial is a signature of Oakland, said Aimee Allison, president of She
164 the People, a group that works to promote women of color in politics. She is an Oakland resident
165 and also biracial, the daughter of a white mother and Black father, who grew up in the Bay Area.

166 Allison said that what she sees in Harris — advocating for racial justice issues and comfortable in
167 her own skin as a Black woman, an Indian American woman and the daughter of immigrants — is
168 what she sees in her community today.

169 “The country may not know Oakland deeply in this way,” Allison said, “but that really comes from
170 time in Oakland and the capacity to be around a lot of different people with a lot of different
171 backgrounds. There’s a sense you can be lots of different things, you can have a complex, full
172 identity.”

173 And, she said, “I think being from Oakland really prepares Kamala, and a lot of us, to lead and
174 organize in the America of now: a multiracial America.”

THE
FILM CLUB

A TRUE STORY OF
A FATHER AND SON

DAVID GILMOUR

Thomas Allen Publishers
Toronto

The Film Club

1

I know nothing about education except this: that the greatest and most important difficulty known to human beings seems to lie in that area which deals with how to bring up children and how to educate them.

— MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE (1533–92)

I was stopped at a red light the other day when I saw my son coming out of a movie theatre. He was with his new girlfriend. She was holding his coat sleeve at the very end with her fingertips, whispering something into his ear. I didn't catch what film they'd just seen—the marquee was blocked by a tree in full flower—but I found myself remembering with a gust of almost painful nostalgia those three years that he and I spent, just the two of us, watching movies, talking on the porch, a magic time that a father doesn't usually get to have so late in a teenage boy's life. I don't see him now as much as I used to (that's as it should be) but that was a gorgeous time. A lucky break for both of us.

When I was a teenager, I believed that there was a place where bad boys went when they dropped out of school. It was somewhere off the edge of the earth, like that

graveyard for elephants, only this one was full of the delicate white bones of little boys. I'm sure it's why, to this day, I still have nightmares about studying for a physics exam; about flipping, with escalating worry, through page after page of my textbook—vectors and parabolas—because *I've never seen any of this stuff before!*

Thirty-five years later, when my son's marks began to wobble in grade nine and toppled over entirely in grade ten, I experienced a kind of double horror, first at what was actually happening, second from this remembered sensation, still very alive in my body. I switched homes with my ex-wife ("He needs to live with a man," she said). I moved into her house, she moved into my loft, which was too small to accommodate the full-time presence of a six-foot-four, heavy-footed teenager. That way, I assumed privately, *I* could do his homework for him, instead of her.

But it didn't help. To my nightly question "Is that all your homework?" my son, Jesse, responded with a cheerful "Absolutely!" When he went to stay with his mother for a week that summer, I found a hundred different homework assignments shoved into every conceivable hiding place in his bedroom. School, in a word, was making him a liar and a slippery customer.

We sent him to a private school; some mornings, a bewildered secretary would call us. "Where is he?" Later that day, my long-limbed son would materialize on the

porch. Where had he been? Maybe to a rap competition in some shopping mall in the suburbs or someplace less savoury, but not school. We'd give him hell, he'd apologize solemnly, be good for a few days and then it would all happen again.

He was a sweet-natured boy, very proud, who seemed incapable of doing anything he wasn't interested in, no matter how much the consequences worried him. And they worried him a great deal. His report cards were dismaying except for the comments. People liked him, all sorts of people, even the police who arrested him for spray-painting the walls of his former grade school. (Incredulous neighbours recognized him.) When the officer dropped him off at the house, he said, "I'd forget about a life of crime, if I were you, Jesse. You just don't have it."

Finally in the course of tutoring him in Latin one afternoon, I noticed that he had no notes, no textbook, nothing, just a wrinkled-up piece of paper with a few sentences about Roman consuls he was supposed to translate. I remember him sitting head down on the other side of the kitchen table, a boy with a white, untannable face in which you could see the arrival of even the smallest upset with the clarity of a slammed door. It was Sunday, the kind you hate when you're a teenager, the weekend all but over, homework undone, the city grey like the ocean on a sunless day. Damp leaves on the street; Monday looming from the mist.

4 I DAVID GILMOUR

THE FILM CLUB 1 5

After a few moments I said, "Where are your notes, Jesse?"

"I left them at school."

He was a natural at languages, understood their internal logic, had an actor's ear, this should have been a breeze, but watching him flip back and forth through the textbook, you could see he didn't know where anything was.

I said, "I don't understand why you didn't bring your notes home. This is going to make things much harder."

He recognized a tone of impatience in my voice; it made him nervous, which, in turn, made me slightly queasy. He was scared of me. I hated that. I never knew if it was a father-and-son thing or whether I, in particular, with my short temper, my inherited impatience, was the source of his anxiety. "Never mind," I said. "This'll be fun anyway. I love Latin."

"You do?" he asked eagerly (anything to get the focus off the missing notes). I watched him work for a while; his nicotine-stained fingers curled around the pen. His bad handwriting.

"How exactly do you seize and carry off a Sabine woman, Dad?" he asked me.

"I'll tell you later."

Pause. "Is 'helmet' a verb?" he said.

On and on it went, the afternoon shadows spreading across the kitchen tiles. Pencil tip bouncing on the vinyl tabletop. Gradually, I became aware of a kind of hum in

the room. Where was it coming from? From him? But what was it? My eyes settled on him. It was a kind of boredom, yes, but a rarefied kind, an exquisite, almost cellular conviction of the irrelevance of the task at hand. And for some odd reason, for those few seconds, I was experiencing it as if it were occurring *in my own body*.

Oh, I thought, so this is how he's going through his school day. Against *this*, you cannot win. And suddenly—it was as unmistakable as the sound of a breaking window—I understood that we had lost the school battle.

I also knew in that same instant—knew it in my blood—that I was going to lose him over this stuff, that one of these days he was going to stand up across the table and say, "Where are my notes? I'll tell you where my notes are. I shoved them up my ass. And if you don't lay the fuck off me, I'm going to shove them up yours." And then he'd be gone, slam, and that'd be that.

"Jesse," I said softly. He knew I was watching him and it made him anxious, as if he was on the verge of getting in trouble (again), and this activity, this flipping through the textbook, back and forth, back and forth, was a way of diverting it.

"Jesse, put down your pen. Stop for a second, please."

"What?" he said. He's so pale, I thought. Those cigarettes are leaching the life out of him.

I said, "I want you to do me a favour. I want you to think about whether or not you want to go to school."

6 I DAVID GILMOUR

"Dad, the notes are at my—"

"Never mind about the notes. I want you to think about whether or not you want to keep going to school."

"Why?"

I could feel my heart speeding up, the blood moving into my face. This was a place I'd never been to before, never even imagined before. "Because if you don't, it's all right."

"What's all right?"

Just say it, spit it out.

"If you don't want to go to school anymore, then you don't have to."

He cleared his throat. "You're going to let me quit school?"

"If you want. But please, take a few days to think about it. It's a monu—"

He got to his feet. He always got to his feet when he was excited; his long limbs couldn't endure the agitation of keeping still. Leaning his frame over the table, he lowered his voice as if afraid of being overheard. "I don't need a few days."

"Take them anyway. I insist."

Later that same evening, I braced myself with a couple of glasses of wine and called his mother at my loft (it was in an old candy factory) to break the news. She was a lanky, lovely actress, the kindest woman I've ever known. An "unactressy" actress, if you know what I mean. But a

THE FILM CLUB I 7

worst-case scenarist of the first order and within only a few moments she saw him living in a cardboard box in Los Angeles.

"Do you think this has happened because he has low self-esteem?" Maggie asked.

"No," I said, "I think it's happened because he hates school."

"There has to be something wrong with him if he hates school."

"I hated school," I said.

"Maybe that's where he's getting it from." We went on in this vein for a while until she was in tears and I was spouting rash, sweeping generalizations that would have done Che Guevara proud.

"He's got to get a job then," Maggie said.

"Is there any point, do you think, in substituting one activity he loathes for another?"

"What's he going to do then?"

"I don't know."

"Maybe he could do some volunteer work," she sniffed.

I woke up in the middle of the night, my wife, Tina, stirring beside me, and wandered over to the window. The moon hung disproportionately low in the sky; it had lost its way and was waiting to be called home. What if I'm wrong? I thought. What if I'm being hip at the expense of my son and letting him ruin his life?

It's true, I thought. He's got to do something. But what? What can I get him to do that won't be a repetition of the whole school debacle? He doesn't read; he loathes sports. What does he like to do? He likes to watch movies. So did I. In fact, for a few years in my late thirties, I had been the rather glib film critic for a television show. What could we do with that?

Three days later he turned up for dinner at Le Paradis, a French restaurant with white tablecloths and heavy silverware. He was waiting for me outside, sitting on a stone balustrade, smoking a cigarette. He never liked to sit in a restaurant by himself. It made him self-conscious, everybody writing him off as a loser with no friends.

I gave him a hug, you could feel the strength in his young body, its vitality. "Let's order the wine and then have a chat."

We went in. Handshakes. Adult rituals which flattered him. Even a joke between him and the bartender about John-Boy from *The Waltons*. We sat in a slightly distracted silence waiting for the waiter. We were both waiting on something crucial; there was nothing else to talk about till then. I let him order the wine.

"Corbière," he whispered. "That's southern France, right?"

"Right."

"A bit of barnyard?"

"That's the one."

"The Corbière, please," this to the waitress with a smile which said, I know I'm playing monkey-see, monkey-do here but I'm having fun anyway. *God, he has a beautiful smile.*

We waited till the wine arrived. "You do the honours," I said. He smelled the cork, gave the wine a clumsy whirl in his glass, and rather like a cat at an unfamiliar dish of milk, took a sip. "I can't tell," he said, his nerve abandoning him at the last moment.

"Yes, you can," I said. "Just relax. If you think it's off, it's off."

"I get nervous."

"Just smell it. You'll know. First impression is always right."

He took another smell.

"Get your nose right in there."

"It's fine," he said.

The waitress sniffed the top of the bottle. "Nice to see you again, Jesse. We see your dad here all the time."

We looked around the restaurant. The elderly couple from Etobicoke was there. A dentist and his wife, their son finishing up a business degree at some university in Boston. They waved. We waved back. *What if I'm wrong?*

"So," I said, "have you been thinking about what we talked about?"

I could see he wanted to get to his feet but he couldn't. He looked around as though irritated by the constraint.

Then drew his pale face close to mine as if he was divulging a secret. "The truth is," he whispered, "I don't ever want to see the inside of a school again."

My stomach fluttered. "Okay then."

He looked at me, speechless. He was waiting for the *quo* in the *quid pro quo*.

I said, "One thing, though. You don't have to work, you don't have to pay rent. You can sleep till five every day. But no drugs. Any drugs and the deal's off."

"Okay," he said.

"I mean it. I'll drop a fucking *house* on you if you start in with that stuff."

"Okay."

"But," I said, "there's something else." (I felt like the detective in *Columbo*.)

"What?" he said.

"I want you to watch three movies a week with me. I pick them. It's the only education you're going to get."

"You're kidding," he said after a moment.

I didn't waste any time. The next afternoon, I sat him down on the blue couch in the living room, me on the right, him on the left, pulled the curtains and showed him François Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959). I figured it was a good way to slide into European art films which I knew were going to bore him until he learned how to watch them. It's like learning a variation on regular grammar.

Truffaut, I explained (I wanted to keep it brief), came to filmmaking through the back door; he was a high-school dropout (like you), a draft dodger, a small-time thief; but he adored movies and spent his childhood sneaking into the cinema houses that were all over post-war Paris in those days.

When he was twenty years old, a sympathetic editor offered Truffaut a job writing film criticism—which led, a half-dozen years later, to making his first film. *The 400 Blows* (which means literally "sowing your wild oats") was an autobiographical look at Truffaut's troubled early years of truancy.

To find an actor to play a teenage version of himself, the twenty-seven-year-old novice director put an ad in the newspaper. A few weeks later a dark-haired kid who'd run away from a boarding school in central France and hitchhiked to Paris turned up to audition for the role of Antoine.

His name was Jean-Pierre Léaud. (By now, I had Jesse's attention.) I mention that with the exception of one scene in a psychiatrist's office, the film was shot entirely without sound—that was added later—because Truffaut didn't have the money for recording equipment. I ask Jesse to watch for a famous scene where a whole class of kids disappears behind their teacher's back during a field trip through Paris; I touch lightly on a marvellous moment when the young boy, Antoine, is talking to a woman psychiatrist.

12 | DAVID GILMOUR

"Watch for the smile he gives when she asks him about sex," I say. "Remember, there was no script; this was totally improvised."

Just in time I caught myself starting to sound like a dandruffy high-school teacher. So I put on the movie. We went all the way to the end, that long scene where Antoine runs away from reform school; he runs through fields, past farmhouses, through apple groves until he arrives at the dazzling ocean. It's as if he's never seen it before. Such *immensity*! It seems to stretch out forever. He goes down a bank of wooden steps; he advances across the sand and there, just where the waves start in, he pulls back slightly and looks into the camera; the film freezes; the movie's over.

After a few moments, I said, "What did you think?"

"A bit boring."

I recouped. "Do you see any parallels between Antoine's situation and yours?"

He thought about that for a second. "No."

I said, "Why do you think he has that funny expression on his face at the end of the movie, the last shot?"

"I don't know."

"How does he look?"

"He looks worried," Jesse said.

"What could he be worried about?"

"I don't know."

THE FILM CLUB | 13

I said, "Look at his situation. He's run away from reform school and from his family; he's free."

"Maybe he's worried about what he's going to do now."

I said, "What do you mean?"

"Maybe he's saying, 'Okay, I've made it this far. But what's next?'"

"Okay, let me ask you again," I said. "Do you see anything in common between his situation and yours?"

He grinned. "You mean what am I going to do now that I don't have to go to school?"

"Yes."

"I don't know."

"Well, maybe that's why the kid looks worried. He doesn't know either," I said.

After a moment he said, "When I was in school, I worried about getting bad marks and getting in trouble. Now that I'm not in school, I worry that maybe I've ruined my life."

"That's good," I said.

"How is it good?"

"It means you're not going to relax into a bad life."

"I wish I could stop worrying though. Do you worry?"

I found myself taking an involuntary breath. "Yes."

"So it never stops, no matter how well you do?"

"It's about the *quality* of the worry," I said. "I have happier worries now than I used to."

He stared out the window. "This is all making me feel like having a cigarette. Then I can worry about getting lung cancer."

For dessert I gave him *Basic Instinct* (1992) with Sharon Stone the next day. Again, I offered up a little intro to the film, nothing fancy. Simple rule of thumb: Keep it bare bones. If he wants to know more, he'll ask.

I said, "Paul Verhoeven. Dutch director; came to Hollywood after a few hits in Europe. Great visual attack; exquisite lighting. Made a couple of excellent films, ultra-violent but watchable. *Robocop* is the best of the bunch." (I was starting to sound like a Morse code machine but I didn't want to lose him.)

I went on, "He also made one of the worst films ever, a camp classic called *Showgirls*."

We started in, a tawny-skinned blond butchering a man with an ice pick while engaged in sexual intercourse with him. Nice opening volley. After fifteen minutes it's difficult not to make the assumption that *Basic Instinct* is not just *about* sleazy people, it's *by* sleazy people. There's a dirty-eared, schoolboy's fascination with cocaine and lesbian "decadence." But it's a marvellously watchable film, you have to say that. It evokes a kind of agreeable dread. Something important or nasty always seems to be happening, even when it isn't.

And then there's the dialogue. I mention to Jesse that the writer Joe Esterhas, a former journalist, was paid three million dollars for this kind of stuff:

Detective: How long were you dating him?

Sharon Stone: I wasn't dating him. I was fucking him.

Detective: Are you sorry he's dead?

Sharon Stone: Yes. I liked fucking him.

Jesse couldn't take his eyes off the screen. He may have appreciated *The 400 Blows* but this was something else.

"Can we pause it for a moment?" he said and raced to the toilet for a pee; from the couch I heard the clank of the toilet seat, then a gush, as if a horse was standing in there. "Close the door, Jesse, for Pete's sake!" (We were learning all sorts of things today.) Bang, door closed. Then he hurried back, stocking feet thumping the floor; holding his pants by the waist, he vaulted back onto the couch. "You have to admit it, Dad, this is a *great* film."

READING 5.1

Short Story: The Woman Who Talked to Horses

Leon Rooke (1934–) is an American-born author living in Ontario. He is a prolific short-story writer, novelist and poet. Rooke was made a member of the Order of Canada in 2007 (Toye 536–537).

READING FOR INFORMATION

- Read the short story a first time, underlining the words listed in the chart below and highlighting information essential to understanding the plot. (The vocabulary is listed in order of appearance in the text.)
- Fill in the chart, defining the words according to their contexts. (You may need to refer to a dictionary.)
- In sixty words or fewer, summarize the plot in the space provided.

COMPANION

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
1. emaciated (adj.)	
2. standoffish (adj.)	
3. strutted (v.)	
4. meek (adj.)	
5. tangible (adj.)	

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
6. haughty (adj.)	
7. bristled (v.)	
8. glean (v.)	
9. placid (adj.)	
10. benign (adj.)	

[illegible]

The Woman Who Talked to Horses

by Leon Rooke

"That's right," she said, "I talk to them. They will talk to me when they will talk to no one else."

"But they *can* talk," I said.

"Oh, sure."

5 "To each other?"

"All the time."

I looked over at the horses. They were in their stalls, eating hay, their rumps and hind legs about all I could see of them. They looked the same as they always had. I didn't believe they talked. I certainly didn't believe they
10 would talk to her.

"What's your fee?" I asked.

She looked off at the horses, too, then glanced at me, then worked one toe into the ground and looked at that. She was wearing blue cloth shoes with thick white shoelaces—all very clean. Too clean. She looked clean all
15 over. I didn't think she knew snot about horseflesh or about anything else. I figured she was a straight-out phoney.

"Your fee," I said.

She had a little itch behind one ear. She scratched there.

"Before we go into my fee structure," she said, "we need to have a quiet
20 discussion."

Fee structures? Holy Christ.

I had a good mind to turn and walk away.

"You won't tell me your fee?"

She pawed the ground again and the hand again went up to get at that
25 itch. I stared at that hand. She had long, slender fingers and white immaculate skin with hardly any fuzz on it, and wrists no thicker than my thumb. All very feminine. She wasn't wearing a ring; I noticed that. I had her figured by this time. She was another one of those frail, inhibited, emaciated females who knew nothing about the real world but like to think they could tell you
30 about horses. One of those grim, pitiful creatures who was forever saying to themselves and to each other, *I can relate to horses*.

I'd had my share of that lot back when I had been boarding.

"I can't tell you my fee," she said, "until I know what you want of me and why you want it."

35 I nearly laughed in her face. The whole business was stupid. I didn't know why I'd let myself get talked into calling her. I wished now that she'd just get in her car and go away, so I could go into the house and tell Sarah, "Well, Sarah, you got any more of your dumb ideas? Let's hear them, Sarah." Something like that. And watch her shrivel up. Watch her mew and sob and
40 burn and hide away.

READING 5.1

Christ, the time I was wasting. *All* the time I had wasted, listening to Sarah. Trying to take her seriously. Giving in when I knew it would prove a waste of time, all to keep a little peace in the house. To keep poor Sarah upright and not shrivelling.

45 I stared up at the house. Wondering if Sarah was watching. If she wasn't up there gritting her teeth, gnawing the woodwork, the broom in one hand, shoving hair out of her eyes with another, as she pressed her scared little face against a secret window. That was Sarah. Ever spying. The one way she had—so she'd tell it—of keeping her guard up.

50 "Mr. Gaddis?" the woman said.

"Yes, what is it?"

"All I need to know is what trouble it is you are having. With your horses. Then we can talk price."

"How about we talk *method*," I said. "*Then* price. You going to go up
55 and whisper sweet nothings in these horses' ears? Is that what I'm paying you for?"

The woman eyed me peculiarly. Her head tilted, her mouth a shade open. It wasn't dislike so much—though I knew she did. Nor was she making judgments. I didn't know what it was. A quiet distance. A watching.

60 Disapproval, too: that was there.

"I don't know what the trouble is," I said. "That's why I called you. I want to know what's going on. All I know is they've been acting funny lately."

"Funny how?"

"It's hard to say. Standoffish, maybe."

65 "Horses are like that. Can't horses have moods, Mr. Gaddis?"

"Not on my time," I said. "They're not producing. You'd think the bastards had gone on vacation. Zombies, the lot of them."

"I see," the woman said.

Bull. She saw nothing.

70 I stared at her open throat. She had on this soft cottony blouse, tinted like old rose, with a wide, folded collar, and at her throat a gold necklace no thicker than a fish line.

She had on these black britches.

Up at the house Sarah had all the
75 doors and windows shut up tight and outside not a hint of wind was stirring. Even the grass wasn't growing. It seemed to me all the life had gone out of that house. It looked dumb and
80 impenetrable and cold.

"Sure they can have moods," I said. "And they do. All the time. But this time it's different. This time it's affecting me."



She closed the blouse and held the hand at her throat.

85 “How do you mean?”

“I’m losing. I haven’t had a horse in the running all year.”

“That could be bad luck. It could be that the other horses are better.”

“Could be but it isn’t,” I said. “These are good horses.”

She glanced up at the house. Then she went on to the roofline and from
90 there up to the hills behind it. She wanted me to know she’d heard that
story a thousand times before. Every owner thought he had good horses.

I thought to tell her I had a fortune tied up in these horses. That they
were top dollar. Then I thought I had better not. You didn’t talk fortune and
top dollar when some nut was trying to get it from you. Especially a nut
95 who imagined she could talk to horses.

“About fees,” she said. “Naturally, if your horses that now are losing
begin winning after I’ve had my chat with them, then my fee will be higher.”

“A chat!” I said. “You’re going to have a chat with them?”

“A serious discussion. Do you like that better?”

100 “I don’t like any of it,” I said. “You wouldn’t be here if—” I stopped. I didn’t
see any point in raking up the family history.

“I didn’t invite myself, Mr. Gaddis. You invited me.”

She didn’t say that with any anger. She was playing it very cool.

We both heard a door slam, and turned. Over at the back door of the
105 house my wife stood, splashing out water from a white enamel pot. Then
she swayed a little, standing there with her head bowed. Something must
have told her we were looking. She glared our way, then flung her pot into
the yard, and strutted back inside.

The woman beside me laughed.

110 I was pretty surprised myself. Sarah is prone to the odd explosion now
and then—for reasons totally incomprehensible—but she’d never done
anything like this before, not when someone else was around. Meek and
long-suffering: that was the word for Sarah.

“I gather your wife dislikes that pot,” the woman said. She laughed again, a
115 velvety, softly arching laugh. I wanted to tell her it was none of her business.

“Forget Sarah,” I said. “A minute ago you were saying something about
your fee structure and my hypothetical winnings.”

“Was I?”

For no reason at all this woman suddenly squatted down on her legs and
120 began rooting through the thin grass with her long fingers. I couldn’t make
it out. I couldn’t tell whether she was searching for rock or flower or clover,
or for nothing at all. Maybe she had dropped a nickel. I had no idea what
the hell she was doing. I moved a little closer. I was tempted to step on her
hand. Her blouse ballooned out and I could see down her neckline to her
125 breasts. She wasn’t wearing any brassiere.

Maybe that’s why she was kneeling there.

READING 5.1

She began speaking without lifting her head. "Yes," she said, "I think that's fair. Obviously much more is involved, more work for me, if I am to talk to your horses, root out their troubles, and get them winning. On the other hand, if you simply want me to walk over to the stalls and ask how they're doing today—"How you making it, kid," that sort of thing—and then come back here and simply repeat to you what they said, well in that case my fee would be minimum. Thirty dollars, let's say. Is that what you want?"

My wife was standing at the back door again. She had this fixed, zombielike expression which altered even as I watched. The skin reddened, her lips twitched, and in a moment she was twitching all over.

Then she pitched a pillow out into the yard. One of our big bed-pillows with the green slipcover still on it. Then she retreated.

The horse lady, down on the grass, hadn't noticed.

I had got around so that my back was to the door. "I was looking for something more solid," I told her. "Something tangible that I could act on. Useful, you know. Useful information. I *have heard* that you get good results."

She stood up. She turned and silently regarded the pillow in the yard.

"But you want my services for free, is that it, Mr. Gaddis?"

This made me mad. It was clear to me that this woman carried some sort of chip around on her shoulder. That she had no use for men. One of *those*, I thought.

"Now listen," I said. "George Gaddis pays for goods and services properly rendered, and he always has. He pays top dollar. But it's crazy for me to fork over hundreds of dollars just to watch you go over there for an hour or two and whisper into the ears of my horses."

She stopped studying the pillow and looked across at the door. No one was at the door. Sarah had closed the screen door, then she'd closed the cedar door behind it. It was quiet as a tomb in there.

"I don't often whisper, Mr. Gaddis," she said. "I speak distinctly and usually with some force, and if you'll allow me, most horses do the same."

Haughty and reproving. She seemed to think I deserved this.

"Their powers of articulation are quite well-developed, Mr. Gaddis. Perhaps more so than our own."

"They do talk?"

She bristled. "*Yes, they talk!*"

She struck off, moving down towards the fence at a determined pace.

She truly disliked me. There, she stood leaning up against the fence with her hands in her pockets. She had narrow shoulders and narrow bony hips that would fit in a cigar box. She was a woman all right, but she was too mean and skimpy for me.

"That filly I got from Quebec," I said, "she'd be speaking French, I suppose? *J'ai la mort dans mon â, J'ai la mort dans mon â, mon cœur se tend comme un lourd fardeau.*"

170 She spun and stared directly at me, her face burning. Mercy, one of the horses, plodded up to the fence and nuzzled her neck and shoulders. I wasn't impressed. Mercy was a dreamer. She liked people.

The woman strolled back, calm once more.

"We are getting nowhere," she said, "and my time is valuable. I did not
175 drive out here to give you a free estimate, or to illustrate my capabilities, or to listen to your troubles. No, Mr. Gaddis, the horses do not *talk* as such, not as we are talking, but they do think and develop their thoughts logically, except in dire cases. I am able, in a word, to read their minds."

"ESP, you mean?"

180 "Something like that." She fluttered a vague hand.

"You can guarantee this?"

"I do not give guarantees. I can swear to you that I shall talk to your horses, but the effectiveness with which you utilize the information I glean is clearly out of my hands."

185 "All right," I said. "Suppose I employ you and make good use of your information, and my horses begin winning. What's your standard contract? How much do you get?"

"Normally, ten percent."

"Good God! As much as that?"

190 "Yes. But in this instance I shall demand twenty-five."

She shot that out. She wasn't negotiating any more.

"You're out of your mind," I told her. "You got a screw loose."

"You are a difficult person to talk to," she said. "You are a distrusting person, a bullying one, and I should imagine your horses have picked up these
195 traits or are responding to them. It will make my job that much more difficult."

"Twenty-five *percent!*" I laughed. I still couldn't believe it. "Hell, lady, you'd be costing me more than my trainer does!"

"Then let your trainer talk to your horses."

It was my turn to walk down to the fence. Mercy saw me coming, and
200 plodded away.

"I'll have to think about this," I said. "I don't know if any of it makes any sense."

"You have my literature, sir," she said. "You have my testimonials. Call or not call, as you wish."

205 She started over to her car, a low convertible, red and shining and new, which stood in my driveway with the top down. Very expensive. Just as she was.

"I'd much prefer you *didn't* call," she said, stopping. "I don't believe I like you. Your situation does not attract my interest."

210 I waited until she got in the car.

"I don't suppose you like my horses *either*," I said. "I suppose you find

READING 5.1

them dull, too. I suppose you're one of those sanctified, scrubbed-out bitches who puts the dollar sign first. I don't suppose you care one crap about my horses' well-being."

215 Go for the throat, I thought. Get them in the old jugular.

She wasn't offended. Her expression was placid, composed, even a little amused. I knew that look. It was the look Sarah had when she found me in something foolish. The look would last about two minutes, then she'd begin slamming doors.

220 She started the engine.

I stayed by the fence, close to laughter, waiting to see if this was a woman who knew how to drive a car.

She cut the engine. She stared a long time over at my house, her hands still up on the wheel, that same benign, watchful, untroubled look in her
225 face. Then she turned in her seat and looked down at my fences and barn.

All four horses had come out. Mercy had her nose between the lowest boards, trying to get at grass, but the other three had
230 their necks out over the fence, looking at the woman in the car.

Something funny happened in the woman's eyes and in her whole face. She went soft. You
235 could see it soaking through her, warming her flesh.

"Go on," I said. "Get out of here."

She wasn't listening to me.
240 She seemed, for the moment, unaware of my presence. She

was attuned to something else. Her jaw dropped open—not prettily ... she *was* a pretty woman—her brows went up, she grinned, and a second later her face broke out into a full-fledged smile.

245 Then a good solid laugh.

She had a nice laugh. It was the only time since her arrival that I had liked her.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Your stallion," she said. "Egorinski, is that his name? He was telling me a
250 joke. Not very flattering to you."

Her eyes sparkled. She was genuinely enjoying herself. I looked over at Egor. The damned beast had his rear end turned to me. His head, too. He seemed to be laughing.

She got her car started again and slapped it up into first gear. "I shall
255 send you a bill for my time," she said. "Goodbye, Mr. Gaddis."



As she drove out, down the narrow, circling lane, throwing up dust behind her and over the white fence, I could still hear her laughing. I imagined I heard her—sportive now, cackling, giving full rein to her pleasure—even as she turned her spiffy car out onto the highway.

260 Sarah was at the yard pump. She'd picked up the enamel pot and was filling it with water. She was wearing her print work-dress, but for some reason she'd put back on the high heels she'd been wearing last night. She'd put on her lipstick. The little scratch on her forehead was still there. It had swollen some.

265 She'd brought out a blanket and dumped that out in the yard beside the pillow.

As I approached, she glanced up, severe and meaning business. "Stay away," she said. "Don't touch me. Go on with whatever you were doing."

I could see now wasn't the time. That the time hadn't come. That maybe 270 it would be a long time before it did.

I went on down to the barn, scooted up the ladder, and sat on a bale of hay at the loft door. I looked out over the stables, over the fields, over the workout track and the further pasture and out over all of the long valley. I looked at the grey ring of hills. I wondered what had gone wrong with my 275 life. How I had become this bad person.

(2894 words)

Source: Rooke, Leon. "The Woman Who Talked to Horses." *The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories*. Ed. Margaret Atwood and Robert Weaver. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986. 263–269. Print.

READING FOR MEANING

- Read the questions below.
 - Read the short story a second and a third time (or more), answering the questions as you do so.
1. Which of the following statements is *false*? Circle the letter of the correct answer.
 - a) The narrator, George Gaddis, is the main character.
 - b) From the start of the story, the main character is contemptuous of the female consultant.
 - c) From the start of the story, the female consultant is contemptuous of the main character.
 2. Why is it significant that no character other than George himself uses his first name?

3. Why is it significant that we never learn the name of the female consultant?

4. George calls his horses “zombies” (line 67) and refers to his wife as “zombielike” (line 134). Why are all the creatures in George’s world lifeless like zombies?

5. Explain the significance of the following: “Up at the house Sarah had all the doors and windows shut up tight and outside not a hint of wind was stirring. Even the grass wasn’t growing. It seemed to me all the life had gone out of that house” (lines 74–79).

6. George describes the house as looking “dumb and impenetrable and cold” (lines 79–80). Which characters in the story would George (erroneously) describe this way? How is this significant?

7. Why does Sarah put on lipstick and the high heels she’d been wearing the night before (lines 262–263)?

READING FOR RHETORIC

→ Answer the following questions.

1. It was Sarah’s idea to consult with “the woman who talked to horses.” George agrees to a consultation, “to keep poor Sarah upright and not shrivelling” (lines 43–44). How is this statement **ironic**?

2. Is childhood shorter for some than it is for others?
3. Take a position for or against the following: You can never go back.
4. Can you ever completely leave your childhood behind?
5. What is the topic of "To Every Thing There Is a Season"? What is the theme?

A Question of PERSPECTIVE

If you were the narrator as an adult (the author), would you want to relive your youth?

READING 6.2

Memoir: Girls Gone Mild

Rupinder Gill is a writer whose first book, a memoir titled *On the Outside Looking Indian*, was released in March 2011. In the memoir, Gill comically relates her experiences as she sets out to have the North American childhood she was denied while growing up in an Indian-Canadian household. The prologue to the memoir is reprinted opposite.

READING FOR INFORMATION

- Read the memoir a first time, looking for the words that match the definitions in the chart below.
- When you find a word, underline it in the text, write it in the chart and indicate its part of speech.

COMPARISON
Web

PARAGRAPH (LINES)	DEFINITION	VOCABULARY
4 (21–25)	1. rough or boisterous activity	
4 (21–25)	2. silly behaviour	
9 (40–48)	3. childhood education / rearing	
9 (40–48)	4. anything that restricts freedom	
10 (49–55)	5. dull	
16 (96–102)	6. beat / was more important than	
17 (103–108)	7. arrogant	
21 (137–147)	8. extracted	
23 (155–162)	9. lying in an enjoyable way	
26 (180–196)	10. desperate or frenzied	

Girls Gone Mild

by Rupinder Gill

There is a phenomenon in Amish culture called *Rumspringa*, in which Amish adolescents are permitted to break free from their modest traditional lifestyles and indulge in normally taboo activities. They dress however they want, go out if and when they please, smoke, drink, and party like it's 1899. At the end of their Springa Break they decide whether they will maintain their new lifestyles or return and join the Amish church.

In Indian adolescence you never break free of the rules. You cook, clean, babysit, clean, get good grades, clean, be silent, clean, and don't challenge your parents in any way—especially while cleaning. This was my life. I grew up in a town whiter than snow, about an hour outside of Toronto. Like most children of immigrants, I was raised by the rules of one culture and looked longingly at those living a distinctly different way.

I didn't have time for a continent-wide census, but from what I know, this is how typical North American kids spend their summer vacations growing up:

July—summer camp, family trip, or cottage. Activities include swimming, canoeing, travelling, laughter, horseplay, tomfoolery, and

general merriment. Mother makes glazed ham while father reads Russian classics and smokes a pipe. Kids dance around maypoles.

August—return home and play with friends, have sleepovers, take weekend trips, and shop for fabulous new back-to-school clothes while dreading the inevitable return to academia.

Here is how I spent my summer vacations growing up:

July—TV room. Activities include hanging out with my sisters and watching anything and everything on television, including *Welcome Back, Kotter*, *Who's the Boss?*, *227*, and various other programs offering canned laughter and some much-needed escapism. Brief breaks for housecleaning and being nagged for not cleaning enough.

August—basement TV room (much cooler). Count down the return to school. Find blank VHS tapes on which to tape *Days of Our Lives* (dying to know if Patch and Kayla will get together!). Fight with parents about their annual two shirts, two pants back-to-school shopping policy. Pray that sideburns spontaneously fall off by Labour Day.



Amish courting buggy

CULTURAL NOTE

A "maypole" is a tall wooden pole for spring and other festivals. Today, it is most often associated with May Day celebrations, which take place on May 1. The origins of the maypole are unclear, but its use in Europe dates back to the Middle Ages.

READING 6.2

40 If an Indian version of *Rumspinga* existed—a *Ram-Singha* of sorts—I would bet my last rupee¹¹ that at the end of it, only one out of every hundred kids would return to their traditional Indian upbringing. The rest of us would be hanging out at the mall in acid-washed jeans, schooling the younger members of the group in how to undo their parental shackles and
45 integrate into Western society. Sessions would be set up for courses such as You Are Not Your Cousin Ravi: How to Function in a Culture That Doesn't Compare You Against Everybody Else's Kids and Less is More: A Workshop in Applying Men's Musk Oil Cologne.

Unfortunately no such program existed during my adolescence, so my
50 parents raised us by the standard rules of northern Punjab¹² nunneries. I don't wholly blame my parents for my lacklustre childhood. Having been to India, I am aware that the majority of kids there don't spend their summers singing around campfires or learning to play the flute. From a young age you are expected to make a contribution to the house, not simply to hang
55 up your favourite cartoon posters in it.

Whenever we complained, my parents liked to remind us that they hadn't grown up like Richie and Joanie Cunningham¹³ either. "When I was a kid, we made toys out of mud," my dad once said. This was the Indian equivalent of the walking-two-miles-to-school tale that white parents used as their
60 trump card. According to my dad, they would fashion mud cars, mud guns, or mud animals and pray it didn't rain before they finished their game of cops and robbers.

Since their own childhoods were so limited, I understood why they didn't see value in the things we were missing out on. But what they seemed to
65 miss was that they weren't living in India anymore. They tried desperately to hold on to their culture. For years the only friends they had were fellow Indians. I took the opposite approach.

Growing up, I had friends, but I didn't have a single Indian friend. This was due
70 partly to the fact that there were only two other Indians in our primary school, but also because I was not interested in all things Indian. I grew bored of Bollywood films, didn't listen to Indian music, and ate
75 cereal for dinner so I didn't have to eat saag.¹⁴ I viewed the fact that I was Indian as the reason I was living my life hanging out in my basement. It was the reason I couldn't go to dances, go to movies past five p.m., take
80 singing lessons, or be friends with boys, so I wasn't really interested in embracing any more of the culture than was required.



From the musical *Bollywood Love Story*, Barcelona, Spain, 2009

11. common unit of money in India and Pakistan

12. a region located in both India and Pakistan

13. characters from the American TV show *Happy Days* (1974–1984)

14. spinach- or mustard leaf-based dish eaten in India and Pakistan

In high school there were a few other Indian kids at my school. They all hung out together, but I never made it into the fellowship. I didn't know the
 85 first thing about the latest and greatest bhangra¹⁵ tracks and couldn't roll out samosa¹⁶ dough to save my life.

That left my white friends as my only source of comparison, and it seemed fairly clear that we had very different lives. For starters, they had two distinct eyebrows, while above my eyes I had one hibernating slug.
 90 Their parents knew the names of their kids' friends and welcomed them into their homes. But more important, they had freedom—my version of freedom at least. They had the luxury of indulging their interests. They went to "lessons" and "hung out" on weekends. They went on family trips and actually had stories to tell in September when the teacher asked us
 95 what we did on our summer vacations.

I wanted that, and didn't understand why I couldn't have it. Suffice it to say, my parents were strict. I was rarely allowed to go out. I wasn't allowed to take lessons or to talk on the phone with boys, or for extended periods with girls. I was discouraged from being too involved in extracurricular
 100 activities. I was expected to get good grades, although cleaning and taking care of the needs of houseguests trumped homework. I was not allowed to attend sleepovers, nor were my friends ever invited into our home.

I was, however, permitted to watch hours upon hours of television, because television kept us quiet and indoors. Unfortunately for my parents,
 105 it just exposed us further to the lives that other kids were leading. Those TV kids had even cooler clothes and adventures than the real kids I knew, pushing my sense of injustice into feelings of anger. I wanted to punch the TV every time those smug Cosby kids were on it.

One sunny August weekend not too long ago, my high school friends and
 110 I went up to our friend Jessie's cottage. We were celebrating her and our friend Johanna's upcoming weddings. As I sat on the dock and watched them swimming in the crystal-clear lake, I felt envious—not for their marriages, but for their ability to swim. I couldn't swim. I had spent my whole life sitting on the pool deck, standing in the shallow end, or simply avoiding the
 115 situation altogether. If we'd been at an ice-skating rink instead of a lake, I wouldn't have been able to participate there either. Ditto for skiing, tennis, gymnastics, camping, swapping stories about family vacations, and reminiscing about teenage love. I didn't have any camp friends or photos of me dressed as a bumblebee in a dance recital. Never having been on a
 120 team, I didn't have a shiny Little League trophy.

I had always joked about my boring and uneventful childhood. That day, the reality of it truly hit me. I had lost hundreds of hours of my childhood and missed countless experiences as I sat in front of that television. It may have been that I had just turned thirty, an age that makes you evaluate your

15. form of dance and music from the Punjab region

16. pastry stuffed with potatoes, onions, peas, coriander and lentils or ground beef or chicken

125 life whether you want to or not. It may also have been that I was surrounded by the very friends I had watched have the childhood experiences I wanted.

For years I believed that childhood experiences (or the lack thereof) were strictly once-in-a-lifetime. I always thought, *When I have my own kids, they will do all the things I never did.* But that day, as I contemplated risking 130 death for a few minutes of feeling the water lap around me, I didn't care about those hypothetical future kids. Those jerks weren't going to put me through eighteen hours of labour and be rewarded for it with clarinet lessons. From a childhood lived in a fun-proof cave had grown an adult who didn't take chances, who didn't boldly go anywhere, and who was, well, 135 quite bored with my routine-filled life. I needed to experience for myself what I had missed, or I would forever live a life of sitting on the sidelines.

When I got back to the city, I vowed I would finally learn to swim. As I researched lessons in my neighbourhood, I started to get excited at the thought of diving into a pool on a hot day, the way they do in diet soda 140 commercials. I also started thinking about all the other lost experiences of youth. There were so many other things I wished I had done as a kid, so whenever I thought of a new one, I would write it down. Soon I became overly ambitious. As summer gave way to the cool of fall and the fall gave way to the bitter cold of winter, my list grew. I culled some items because 145 I really didn't think it was that important to learn to tie-dye my own scrunchies¹⁷ or backpack through Europe like Mike Seaver in *Growing Pains*, and soon I had created a workable list of goals.

It wasn't until January that I started to take action on the list. It was a new year and I was thirty—it felt like the perfect time for a new start. The 150 items on the list were some of the missing links between the life I had and the one I wanted. A few were life skills, some were just desires, but all of them were important enough that I felt they warranted pursuing. I could have added a million more items, but I started by setting five concrete goals to tackle. The list read as follows, in no particular order:

155 1. LEARN TO SWIM. Indians don't swim. They don't have cottages, they don't go on cruises, and they are rarely seen basking in the sun at the beach. Indian girls especially don't swim, because only a fool would think that learning a life-saving skill is more important than keeping your body hidden forever. No doubt the Indian 160 women's swimming team practises in full snowsuits with matching glittery bracelets. This was a life skill I had just assumed I would never have; it was time to change that thinking.

2. TAKE LESSONS. Oh, how I wanted to take lessons when I was a kid. How I wanted to hate my piano teacher and do dance routines 165 in the junior high talent show like all the other girls. What I would have given to say "I can't—I have karate" or "No, thanks, I have to get to gymnastics," instead of "I have to go. It is my night to clean the stove!"

17. fabric-covered elastic hair ties

3. VISIT DISNEY WORLD. Yes, I know not every kid visited Disney
 170 World, but I always dreamed of it. Like many children with boring
 home lives, my fantasy life was incredibly vivid, and it involved
 many imaginary characters from the Disney catalogue, children's
 stories, and various nonsensical cartoons. We would record
 Disney specials from TV onto VHS tapes and watch them over and
 175 over, fast-forwarding through the commercials for Hypercolor¹⁸
 shirts and Mini Pop Kids albums. We never did family trips longer
 than two days, and even those overnights would be simply to
 see family. I didn't want to see another uncle I had never met—
 I wanted to see Goofy.

180 4. GO TO CAMP. I longed to sleep on a flea-infested mattress set
 on wooden planks, swim amongst leeches, and sing "Kumbaya"
 while up roasting s'mores to perfection. In my seventh grade the
 junior school offered an end-of-the-year camp trip. Two weeks
 before the deposit was due, I took the permission slip to my dad
 185 and offered him a sales pitch straight out of *Glengarry Glen Ross*.¹⁹
 "Forget it," he told me. I was always advised to forget whatever
 I wanted. If only he could have forgotten to say no, just once.
 As a desperate measure I went to my mom, who simply asked
 what my father had said. Two days before the application was
 190 due, I grew frantic. All my classmates had already committed,
 and the only people outstanding were ethnic girls and suspected
 bedwetters. Knowing that both my parents would have left for
 their jobs by six thirty a.m., I woke up at six and went downstairs
 for one last effort. At least they were considerate enough to yell
 195 "No!" in less than a minute, allowing me to go back to bed and get
 another hour of sleep before school.

5. OWN A PET. I have wanted a dog my whole life. All my sisters
 have too. We would take out library books on dog breeds, buy
 dog magazines, cut pictures of cute pups out of them, and dream
 200 of the day that our parents' tundra hearts would melt. My mom
 always had the same response: "I have enough animals in this
 house already!" It was a killer joke in the Indian mothers' circle.
 But I was out of her house now, and what could make my house
 a home more than a furry foot-warmer to sit with me while
 205 I watched *Seinfeld* reruns?

I typed out my list the same way I had typed out hundreds of lists before
 it. And, as with every list I had ever made, I wondered how in hell I was
 going to really achieve any of it.

210 "Set one new New Year's resolution for each year until you are done," my
 friend Madeleine suggested.

"You know how that goes," I said.

18. clothing line consisting mostly of T-shirts and shorts that changed colour with heat

19. 1992 American film, based on the play by David Mamet, about four salesmen who will do almost anything to make a sale

READING 6.2

Madeleine and I met in college. We had created a deep friendship based on a mutual love of eating, complaining about our weight, and each year swapping lists of New Year's resolutions that we had abandoned like clock-
 215 work by January 15.

I don't think I had ever achieved one of my New Year's resolutions. I never learned to do the worm²⁰ (1988), alphabetized my VHS movie tapes (1994), read every book on the *New York Times* fiction list (1998), or lost ten pounds (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006). If I tried to do only one item on the list
 220 each year, I would have one foot in a ballet shoe and the other in the grave by the time I got around to them all. There was only one logical solution I could think of—I would have to do them all at once.

This was a bit of a goal-setting stretch for someone who had not achieved the vast majority of goals she set for herself, but if I pulled it off, perhaps
 225 I could finally stop looking at the past and move gracefully into the future. Thirty seemed as good an age as any to finish off my youth. And if I had time left at the end, maybe I would learn to do the worm.

(2602 words)

Source: Gill, Rupinder. "Prologue: Girls Gone Mild." *On the Outside Looking Indian: How My Second Childhood Changed My Life*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2011. 1–10. Print.

READING FOR MEANING

- Read the questions below.
- Read the memoir a second and a third time (or more), answering the questions as you do so.

1. In your own words, what is *Rumspringa* (line 1)?

2. Which of the following statements is *false*? Circle the correct answer.

The narrator (the author)

- a) had a restricted upbringing;
- b) believes that, given the chance, most Indian children would opt for a Western upbringing over a traditional Indian upbringing;
- c) blames her parents completely for her restricted childhood;
- d) resisted Indian culture while growing up.

3. What (more formal) expression in paragraph 16 (lines 96–102) means "let's just say"?

20. dance move associated with breakdancing in which the subject lies face down and forms a rippling motion through his or her body

4. What made the author finally decide to seek out the experiences she had missed in childhood?

5. The author wrote her “childhood experiences to do” list in a day.

☐ True ☐ False

6. Why did the author set out to have all her missed childhood experiences at once and not treat them as New Year’s resolutions to be fulfilled one at a time, one per year, year after year?

READING FOR RHETORIC

→ Answer the following questions.

1. What famous song is (comically) **alluded** to in the first paragraph?

2. In paragraph 2 (lines 7–16), which word is **repeated** for comic effect?

3. Identify and explain the **metonym** in paragraph 2 (lines 7–16).

4. When describing the childhoods of her non-Indian peers (lines 21–28), the author uses **hyperbole** for an added touch of humour. Provide one example.

5. Identify and explain the **metaphor** in line 89: “... above my eyes I had one hibernating slug.”

The Formal Analytical Essay

In the Post section of each unit in *Perspectives Plus*, you were presented with one short and two long writing activities: writing a paragraph and writing a formal analytical essay on a literary work using either a close-reading or a reader-response approach. In Unit 1, you learned about writing a paragraph (pages 15–16); in this appendix, you will learn about writing a formal essay in which you analyze a literary work.

Definition, Categories and Approaches

Writing a formal analytical essay about a literary work gives you the opportunity to learn more about the human condition and the human experience. While challenging, writing a literary analysis is also highly satisfying: the writing process sharpens your critical-thinking and analytical skills and rewards you with insights into living a fuller and richer life (Mulvaney and Jolliffe 103).

A literary analysis is, obviously enough, the analysis of a literary work (or works) or parts thereof. It is not a retelling of the work beyond the necessary references to situate the reader of the essay: the writer may assume the reader has read the work prior to reading the analysis.

There are two basic categories of literary analysis:

1. The self-created analysis
2. The secondary-source analysis (Mulvaney and Jolliffe 103–104)

As the names imply, the self-created analysis refers only to the literary work itself, while the secondary-source analysis refers to the literary work and other sources, such as articles of literary criticism, journal articles, book reviews, lecture notes, author biographies, etc. When using secondary sources, remember to include a works-cited section at the end of your analysis and to reference sources correctly. (For more information, see Appendix C: Researching, Referencing and Revising, page 198.)

Two common approaches to literary analysis include the following:

1. The close-reading approach
2. The reader-response approach (Mulvaney and Jolliffe 103)

In the close-reading approach, the writer focuses on one or more literary elements and their relation to the overall meaning or theme of the literary work. When adopting this approach, do not use the first and second persons (*I, my, me, we, our, us; you, your*, etc.); maintain an impersonal stance throughout the analysis. In the reader-response approach, the writer focuses on the effect the literary work has had on him or her from an emotional or an intellectual standpoint. When adopting this approach, it is permissible to use the first person (while advisable to avoid the second person) and to relate personal experiences pertinent to the analysis.

LITERARY NOTE

Many educators frown on using the first-person singular or plural (in any of its forms) in a formal essay. It is possible to adopt a reader-response approach when writing an essay and still not use the first person, as shown in the following examples:

- Avoid the first-person singular:
~~*I think that Mrs. Turner is admirable.*~~ ⇒ *Mrs. Turner is admirable.*

- Refer to yourself in the third person:
~~*From my experience...*~~ ⇒ *From the writer's experience ...*;
~~*From our perspective...*~~ ⇒ *From a young person's perspective ...*

- Use the indefinite pronoun:
~~*You can never truly know yourself.*~~ ⇒ *One can never truly know oneself.*

LITERARY NOTE

It is important not to confuse the terms *topic* and *thesis*. A thesis is an essay writer's opinion about a topic in the same way that a theme is a **narrative** writer's opinion about a topic. (For more information on topic and theme, see page 2 in the *Literary Handbook*.)

Elements and Structure

Regardless of the category or approach used, a literary analysis must be constructed around a *thesis statement*, a declarative statement that expresses the writer's opinion about the topic of the essay.

For a thesis statement to be effective, it must be based on a topic that is *single, significant, specific* and *supportable* (Norton and Green 24, 29, 31, 113). In other words, the topic on which the thesis statement is based must pass the "4-S" test.

THE 4-S TEST

To pass the 4-S test, a topic must be:

1. Single

A formal analytical essay deals with one topic—and only one topic. As a consequence, the thesis statement—upon which the entire essay is constructed—must express the writer's opinion on one, and only one, topic.

2. Significant

A formal analytical essay is written to be read. In an educational setting, the reader is typically your teacher and perhaps one or more of your classmates. Your teacher and your classmates deserve to read essays on meaningful topics.

3. Specific

A formal analytical essay is brief. The more specific your thesis statement, the more justice you can do to the topic selected; for example, instead of writing about love, write about the love parents have for their newborn child.

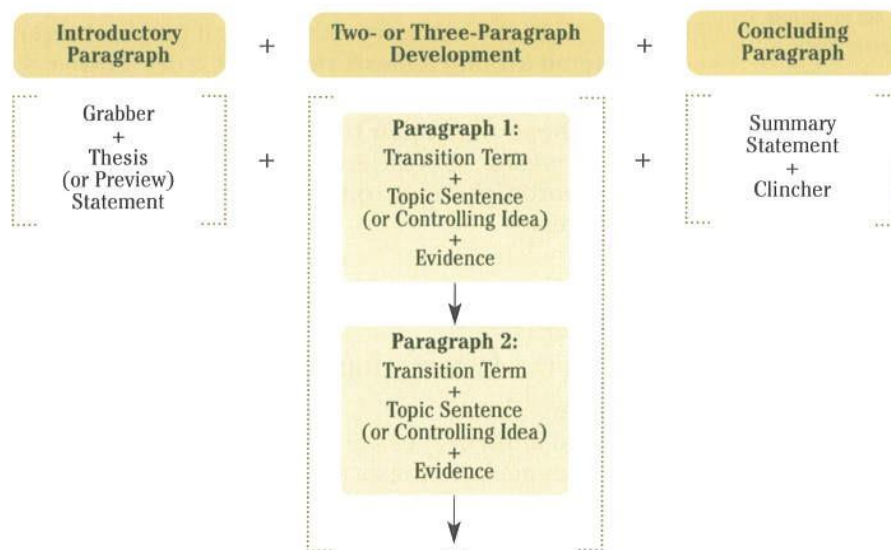
4. Supportable

An academic essay requires that you prove your point (your thesis). If you can't support your thesis statement, change it!

Even when assigned a topic, you will likely have to refine it so that it passes this very important test.

The thesis statement is placed at the end of the introduction to the formal analytical essay, an essay that typically consists of four or five paragraphs: the introductory paragraph, the two- or three-paragraph development and the concluding paragraph. (See the diagram on the next page.)

Formal Analytical Essay



Introductory Paragraph

The first sentence of the introductory paragraph should grab the reader's attention. Not surprisingly, this first sentence is often referred to as a *grabber*. Effective grabber techniques include (but are not limited to) using quotations, definitions and facts.

The introductory paragraph must end with a thesis statement (the author's opinion on a single, significant, specific and supportable topic—see previous page), and this statement may be followed by a list of two or three main points to be used to support the thesis. When a thesis statement is followed by a list of main points, it is referred to as a *preview statement*.

Two- or Three-Paragraph Development

The first sentence of each paragraph in the development is the *topic sentence*, a statement that supports the thesis statement. The topic sentence is the controlling idea of the paragraph. Each topic sentence begins with a transition term, such as *first*, *second*, *third*, *to begin*, *to continue* and *finally*, and is backed up with evidence: statistics, an expert opinion or an example. Ideally, different types of evidence are used in the development.

Transition Terms

Transition terms lend coherence to a text, indicating relationships between ideas. The following list provides examples of commonly used transition terms and the functions of these terms:

FUNCTION	EXAMPLES
To add an idea	additionally, also, furthermore, in addition (to), in the same way, likewise, moreover, similarly
To conclude	all in all, briefly, by and large, in brief, in conclusion, in short, in summary, to conclude, to sum up



To emphasize an idea	indeed, in fact
To provide an example	for example, for instance, to illustrate
To sequence	after, earlier, finally, first, in the beginning, next, now, once, second, third, throughout, to begin with, to continue
To show a contrast	although, even though, however, in contrast, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, yet
To show a result	as a result, because, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus
To show priority	above all, for one reason, in the first place

Concluding Paragraph

The first sentence of the concluding paragraph is the *summary statement*, a paraphrase of the thesis statement and topic sentences. The summary statement begins with a transition term such as *to sum up*, *in summary*, *to conclude* or *in conclusion*.

The last sentence of the concluding paragraph is the *clincher*, used to encourage the reader to reflect on the essay. Effective clincher techniques include (but are not limited to) connecting with the introduction, asking a rhetorical question and offering a suggestion.

LITERARY NOTE

A literary analysis, such as the one presented below, is a formal piece of writing; for this reason, contractions (*he's*, *they're*, *we're*, *don't*, *doesn't*, etc.) are not used.

Model Literary Analysis and Exercises

The following text is an analysis of Margaret Atwood's short story "Happy Endings," a work the reader is assumed to have read prior to reading the analysis itself. ("Happy Endings" appears at the end of this appendix, on page 192.) Following the model analysis, you will find a series of questions that will help you evaluate how well you have learned the material covered in this appendix.

"Happy Endings": A Didactic Work on Plot

by Brent Davis Reid

The first rule for plot is this: "something happens" (Rabinowitz, qtd. in Smith and Wilhelm). In "Happy Endings," Canadian author Margaret Atwood underscores this truism by creating six plots, each of them variations on a theme. Plot A is the "happy ending," and while Plots B, C, D, E and F deviate from this plot for a time, each returns—indeed, *must* return—to Plot A, which ends with the deaths of the main characters. Atwood's work is a didactic work that instructs the reader of literary works to focus less on the "what" of a narrative and more on the "how" and "why."

To begin with, the "what" of the six plots is of greater or lesser interest. Significantly, Plot A—the happiest of the "happy endings" plots—is by far

the most mundane: John and Mary fall in love, get married, have children and die. Their names reflect the banality of their lives, which, in spite of being happy, are excruciatingly boring to read about on the printed page. The plot is mercifully short, and Atwood makes an interesting point: happy lives are not necessarily interesting lives. However, interest levels do rise in the remaining plots, which describe a one-sided relationship in which the female partner commits suicide (Plot B); a love triangle that ends in a murder-suicide (Plot C); a human-against-the-elements story of survival (Plot D); a struggle-to-survive story in which one romantic partner dies, leaving the other to carry on (Plot E); and a story of intrigue set in Canada (Plot F). Nevertheless, the only authentic ending to any story is the death of the characters involved, and as such, story endings (as well as story beginnings and the “stretch in between”) can rapidly be dismissed by the reader: “The only authentic ending is the one provided here: *John and Mary die. John and Mary die. John and Mary die.* So much for endings.”

To continue, a rereading of the plots, focusing on “how” and “why,” transforms the tediousness of the initial “what” (or surface) reading experience into a richer and more rewarding one. Why are some satisfied with living “the American dream” (Plot A)? Why do some women allow men to treat them shabbily? And why do they think they can change such men (Plot B)? Why do some middle-aged men cheat on their wives (Plot C)? Why do some survive while others perish (Plot D)? How does one carry on after a loved one has passed away (Plot E)? Why do some challenge the system while others embrace it (Plot F)? The answers to such questions cannot be found in plot; they can be found only in other literary elements such as character and characterization, setting, narrative point of view and theme—elements left undeveloped by Atwood to make the point that knowing the “what” informs while knowing the “how” and “why” transforms.

To conclude, Atwood counsels the reader of literary works not only to read the lines but to read between them. Reading literary works must be more than “story-driven” (Chatman, qtd. in Smith and Wilhelm); it must be “point-driven” (Vipond and Hunt, qtd. in Smith and Wilhelm). It must focus not only on the story level but on the discourse level as well. Discourse implies a discussion, a conversation between a reader and an author who relates something that happened—something that demands pondering, merits understanding and offers personal enrichment to the reader who both ponders and understands.

(576 – 25 = 551 words)

Work Cited

Smith, Michael W. & Jeffrey D. Wilhelm. *Fresh Takes on Teaching Literary Elements*. Toronto: Scholastic, 2010. Print.

Appendix

B

The Formal Analytical Speech

In the Present section of each unit in *Perspectives Plus*, one short and one long speaking activity are proposed: a small-group speaking activity and an individual formal analytical speech. In this appendix, you will learn about giving a formal analytical speech on a literary or cultural work.

Elements and Structure

The structure of a formal analytical speech is identical to that of a formal analytical essay: an introduction (with grabber and preview statement), a development (with transition terms, main ideas and evidence) and a conclusion (with summary statement and clincher) are all required (see pages 185–187). However, different grabber and clincher techniques, better suited to oral expression, are often used. While a formal analytical speech may be a self-created analysis or a secondary-source analysis, only a reader-response approach is recommended. (See page 184 for more information.) Contrary to the formal analytical essay, the first and second persons are freely used (*I*, *you*, *we*, *my*, *your*, *our*, etc.) as are contractions (*he's*, *they're*, *we're*, etc.). Like the formal analytical essay, the topic of a formal analytical speech should pass the 4-S test (see page 185).

Introduction

The opening line of a formal speech is the *grabber*. Grabber techniques suggested for oral expression include (but are not limited to) rhetorical questions (questions for which no answers are expected), provocative statements and short anecdotes. At the end of the introduction, a *preview statement* is required (see page 186).

Development

Typically, two or three main points are presented during a formal speech. Each main point should be introduced with an appropriate transition term (see page 186). Each main (or *controlling*) idea should be supported with evidence: statistics, an expert opinion or an example. Ideally, different types of evidence are used in the development. Should you be responding to more than one work, you may wish to focus exclusively on one work in each of the main points; for example, you could support your thesis by referring to a short story in your first main point, an oral story in your second main point and a memoir in your third main point.

English Language and Communication 604-HJ2-RI

Literary Devices

Allusion is a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place, or event, or to another literary work or passage. Most allusions serve to illustrate or expend a subject. Since allusions are not explicitly identified, they imply a fund of knowledge that is shared by the author and the audience (Abrams 10).

Being reserved for the educated or people in the know, they create a certain effect in the passage and the text as a whole. Most allusions are loaded with cultural, historical and literary content. This content thus comes spouting on the mind of the reader, much the same as symbolism works.

The show and movie *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* features turtles with the names of the famous Italian artists Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Raphael (storyboardthat.com), and they all love pizza!

Characters and Characterization *Literary Handbook*, p. 3 and 8-9

Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual and emotional qualities by inferences from *what* the person says and their distinctive *way of saying it* – the **dialogue** (1) – and from what they do – the **action** (2) (Abrams 33).

The grounds in the characters' *temperament, desires, and moral nature* for their speech and actions are called their **motivation**.

A character may remain essentially “**stable**” or unchanged in outlook and disposition, from beginning to end of a work (Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Micawber in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, 1849-50) or may undergo a radical change [**unstable**], either through a gradual process of development (1) (the title character in Jane Austen's *Emma* 1816) or as the result of a crisis (2) (Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Pip in Dickens' *Great Expectations*).

Whether a character remains stable or changes, the reader of a traditional and realistic work expects “consistency” – the character should not suddenly break off and act in a way not plausibly grounded in his or her temperament as we have already come to know it. [Breaking off from such expectancy creates a dramatic effect.]

A **flat character** or two-dimensional, built around “a single idea or quality” (E.M. Forster, 1927) and is presented without much individualizing detail, and can be described in a sentence.

A **round character** is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity; such a character therefore is as difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and like real persons, capable of surprising us (Abrams 33).

The degree to which, to be regarded as artistically successful, characters need to be three-dimensional depends on their function in the **plot** (Abrams 34).

English Language and Communication

604-HJ2-RI

Almost all dramas and narratives, properly enough, have some characters who serve merely as functionaries and are not characterized at all, as well as other characters who are left relatively flat. There is no need, in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part I*, for Mistress Quickly to be as globular as Falstaff (Abrams 34).

Characterization is the method of establishing the distinctive character traits of the person in a narrative: a distinction is frequently made between showing and telling

In **Showing**, also called “the dramatic method,” the author simply presents the characters talking and acting, and leaves it entirely up to the reader to infer the motives and dispositions that lie behind what they say or do. The author may show not only external speech and action, but also a character's inner thoughts, feelings, and responsiveness to events. (e.g. point of view, stream of consciousness) (Abrams 34).

In **telling** the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to evaluate, the motives and dispositional qualities of the characters.

The **protagonist**, or alternatively, the **hero** or **heroine (HÈro-inn)**, is the chief character in a plot, on which our interest centers.

The **antagonist** is the character, an important opponent, against which the protagonist is confronted. If the antagonist is evil, or capable of cruel and criminal actions, he or she is called the **villain**.

A **foil** is a character who, by contrast, serves to stress and highlight the distinctive temperament of the protagonist.

Comic, comedy, Humour (explaining a joke kills it!)

“Fight with parents about their annual two-shirt, two pants back-to-school shopping policy” (37)

Didactic Literature is applied to works of literature designed to intentionally expound a branch of knowledge, or else to embody, in imaginative or fictional form, a moral, religious, or philosophical doctrine or theme. The adjective “didactic” means “intended to give instruction” (Abrams 65).

Genre means a type of art, literature, or music characterized by a specific form, content, and style. For example, literature has four main genres: poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction. All of these genres have particular features and functions that distinguish them from one another. Hence, it is necessary on the part of readers to know which category of genre they are reading in order to understand the message it conveys, as they may have certain expectations prior to the reading concerned. (Literarydevices.net)

English Language and Communication 604-HJ2-RI

Genre denotes the types or classes of literature.

There are three large classes:

Lyric, uttered throughout the first person;

Epic or **narrative**, in which the narrator speaks in the first person and lets the characters for themselves;

Drama, in which the characters do all the talking

Prose genres: autobiography, biography, the character, drama, essay, fable, fantastic literature, memoir, nature writing, novel, parable, satire, short story

Verse genres: ballad, drama, poem, epic, epigram, fable, light verse, lyric, pastoral, rap, satire (Abrams)

Hyperbole is a bold overstatement or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or possibility. The contrary figure of speech is the understatement (Abrams 127).

I am so hungry I could eat a horse

Irony is a literary device; irony is a contrast or incongruity between expectations for a situation and what is reality. This can be a difference between the surface meaning of something that is said and the underlying meaning. It can also be a difference between what might be expected to happen and what actually occurs. The definition of irony can further be divided into three main types: verbal, dramatic, and situational. We describe these types in detail below.

Irony is sometimes confused with events that are just unfortunate coincidences. For example, Alanis Morissette's song "Ironic" contains many events that are not ironic in any sense. She cites "rain on your wedding day" and "a traffic jam when you're already late" as ironic situations, yet these are merely bad luck. (Literarydevices.com)

Memoir is a genre related to the **autobiography**, the story of one's life as told by himself or herself, usually involving a public portion of the author's life. It relates to a person, historic event, or thing. The text is about the personal knowledge and/or experiences of the author.

In contrast, an autobiography covers the author's entire life to the present, and is expected to include details about his or her public and private life. A **biography** is someone's life story written by another person (Doyon)

In recent years, the distinction between autobiography and fiction has become more and more blurred, as authors include themselves under their own names in novels and autobiographies are written in the asserted mode of fiction (Abrams 22-23)

Memoir writing techniques

A memoir is written in first person from the author's point of view.

English Language and Communication

It is narrative nonfiction written in story form like fiction. Dialogue can be included, but since few people can remember precisely every word spoken, the dialogue is not literally true; instead the author attempts to recreate it as accurately as possible. For this reason, some memoirs, like *Wild Swans*, tell the story without dialogue. (Doyon)

The memoir author should “think small” and make a series of “reducing decisions,” says William Zinsser, author of the perennially popular book, *On Writing Well*, which includes a new chapter about writing memoirs in the latest edition. (Doyon)

Each memoir has a particular theme or focus

A memoir does not contain everything from this particular slice of the author’s life, but rather, events are selected and examined for meaning relative to the purpose of the book.

The author has questioned what happened and come to some kind of new understanding or lesson learned by it. The author shows us how he or she was affected by this experience; how it has profoundly changed the way he sees the world. And by extension, reading the book will change the way the reader sees the world. (Doyon)

In a **metaphor**, a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of meaning, *without* explicitly asserting a comparison like the simile. For example, if Burns had said “O my love is a red, red rose,” he would have uttered, technically speaking, a metaphor.

A **dead metaphor** is one which has been used some much that its users have ceased to be aware of it. An example is “the heart of the matter” (Abrams 103)

In **metonymy** (meTONomy - METonym - Greek for “change of name”) – a metaphor – the literal meaning of the literal term for one thing is applied to another with which it has become closely associated because of a recurrent relation in common experience. Thus, “the crown” or “the spectre” can be used to stand for the king and “Hollywood” for the film industry (Abrams 103).

Narrator or Point of view is the “eye” or narrative voice through which you tell a story. When you write a story, you must decide who is telling the story, and to whom they are telling it. The story could be told by a character who is involved in the story, or from a perspective that sees and knows all of the characters but is not one of them.

First person point of view. In first person point of view, one of the characters is narrating the story. This is generally revealed by the “I” sentence construction and relies on first person pronouns. (“I went to work.”) The reader assumes that this character is closely related to the story’s action—either a main character or someone close to the protagonist. First person narrative can provide intimacy and a deeper look into a character’s mind, but it is also limited by the perceptive abilities of the character. They are confined to report only what they would realistically know about the story, and they are further confined by their own perspective. Nick Carraway of *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ishmael of Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851) are two of the most well-known first person narrators in literature and great examples of this point of view.

English Language and Communication

604-HJ2-RI

Second person point of view. Second person point of view is structured around the “you” pronoun, and is less common in novel-length work. (“You thought you could do it.”) Second person can allow you to draw your reader into the story and make them feel like they’re part of the action because the narrator is speaking directly to them. Writing in second person for any great length is a challenge, and will stretch your writing skills. Lorrie Moore is well-known for her innovative use of second person narration in her short story collection *Self-Help* (1985). Second person point of view is sometimes referred to as second person POV.

Third person point of view. The author is narrating a story about the characters and refers to them with the third person pronouns “he/she.” (“He was hungry.”) This point of view is subdivided into third person omniscient and third person limited. Third person point of view is sometimes referred to as third person POV.

4 Ways to Use Point of View

You can use narrative point of view to many different effects in your writing.

Create suspense. When a reader knows more than the character, as in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), and your reader waits for the character to learn what they already know. This tension will keep your reader on the edge of their seat.

Create an unreliable narrator. When a first person narrator knows more than the reader but withholds information from the reader on purpose, in order to manipulate them. *Gone Girl* (2012) by Gillian Flynn and *Rebecca* (1938) by Daphne du Maurier are brilliant examples of unreliable narrators.

Create comedic irony. When a first person narrator knows so much less than both the reader and the other characters that it creates comedy. In this strategy, the reader is laughing at the narrator, rather than with him or her. Examples include Gulliver in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift, in which a plain-spoken narrator tells whoppers with a straight face, and *A Confederacy of Dunces* (1980) by John Kennedy Toole, in which the narrator complains about the ineptitude of other characters, when he is clearly the most inept character of all. An omniscient narrator can also satirize all a story's characters, as Voltaire does in *Candide* (1759).

Create tragic irony. The characters know less than the reader. Narrative irony also involves foreshadowing, when the omniscient narrator leaves hints for the reader about something that will happen in the future. When a tragic event has been foreshadowed, but the characters don't see it coming, a sense of irony is created. You can also create tragic irony in first person point of view, but you have to walk the fine line of having your narrator foreshadow while remaining truly ignorant of what's going to happen. (Margaret Atwood for masterclass.com)

Nostalgia is a bittersweet longing for things, persons, or situations of the past; the evocation of this emotion, as in a book, a film for effect.

Personification is a figure of speech in which either an inanimate object or an abstract concept is spoken of as though it were endowed with life or human attributes or feelings (*compare pathetic fallacy*).

English Language and Communication 604-HJ2-RI

Plot in a dramatic or narrative work is constituted by its events and actions (including verbal discourse as well as physical actions), as these are rendered and ordered toward achieving artistic and emotional effects (Abrams 233).

Plot and character are interdependent concepts: the actions are performed by the characters and the characters' dispositions and motivations (traits) are revealed through these actions. One cannot exist without the other. The type of characterization thus affects the way the plot is exposed. In **showing**, the author or narrator leaves it to the readers to make their own conclusions and inferences as to the motivations and dispositions of the characters and their actions whereas in **telling**, these are explicitly explained or forced unto the readers.

Pun - substituting a word in an expression for another word, similar in sound or spelling, in order to create an effect such as irony, sarcasm, humour, etc.

The duck said to the bartender, "put it on my bill."

Repetition is a repetition of the same concept for effect.

Repetition is a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer and more memorable. There are several types of repetition commonly used in both prose and poetry.

As a rhetorical device, it could be a word, a phrase, or a full sentence, or a poetical line repeated to emphasize its significance in the entire text. Repetition is not distinguished solely as a figure of speech, but more as a rhetorical device.

I Have a Dream speech (By Martin Luther King, Jr.)

"I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification – one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." (Literarydevices.net)

Sarcasm - A type of irony in which what is implied differs from what is expressed (Literary Handbook)

Sarcasm is an ironic or satirical remark tempered by humor. Mainly, people use it to say the opposite of what's true to make someone look or feel foolish. For example, let's say you see someone struggling

English Language and Communication

604-HJ2-RI

to open a door and you ask them, "Do you want help?" If they reply by saying, "No thanks. I'm really enjoying the challenge," you'll know they're being sarcastic. Sarcasm is all about the context and tone of voice, which is why it works better verbally. It's something you'll know when you hear it.

Sarcasm can also be used for comedic relief. For example, "I walked into my hotel room and wondered if the interior decorators thought orange was the new black." The main gist of sarcasm is that the words are not meant to be taken literally. (Examples.yourdictionary.com)

Similes are a comparison between two distinctly different things, explicitly indicated by the words "like" and "as." A simple example is Robert Burns, "O my love's like a red, red rose." (Abrams 102)

Story is a bare synopsis of the temporal order of what happens (Abrams 233)

Short story is a brief work of prose fiction, and most of the terms for analyzing the component elements, the types and the narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well. It differs from the **anecdote** (ANecdote) – the elaborated narration of a single event – in that, like the novel, it organizes the action, thought, and dialogue of its characters into the artful pattern of plot, directed toward particular effect on an audience. However, the short story differs from the novel in length which subsequently imposes differences in the effects that the story can achieve.

For example, we can say that by and large, the short story writer introduces a limited number of persons, cannot afford the space for a leisurely analysis and sustained social milieu as does the novelist. The author often begins the story close to, or even on the verge of, the climax, minimizes both prior exposition and the details of the setting, keeps the complications down, and clears up the denouement quickly – sometimes in a few sentences. The short narrative is one of the oldest literary forms. The Hebrew Bible, for example, includes the stories of Jonah, Ruth and Ester.

There are different types of short stories. The **tale** or "story of incidents focuses primarily on the course and outcome of the event. Edgar Allen Poe is often referred to as the originator. His detective stories and other adventure stories are an example. **Stories of characters** focus instead on the state of mind and motivation, or on the psychological and moral qualities of the protagonist. Anton Checkov (1860-1904), the Russian master of the form, nothing more happens than an encounter and conversation between two people (Abrams 295).

Symbolism (symbol) in the broadest sense, a symbol is anything which signifies something; in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however, the "symbol" is applied only to a words or a phrase that signifies an object or event which in turn signifies something, or suggests a range of reference, beyond itself.

Some symbols are **conventional**, meaning that they are understood by the majority of people in a culture: thus "the Red Cross" and the Good Shepherd" have significance in Christian culture.

Some symbols are **personal**. They exploit widely shared associations between an object or event or action and a particular concept; for example, in western culture, the general association of a peacock

English Language and Communication 604-HJ2-RI

with pride and of an eagle with heroic behaviour, or the rising sun with birth and the setting sun with death, or climbing with effort or progress and descent with surrender or failure. (Abrams 320)

Metaphors and similes can be regarded as momentary symbols. Signification of one thing is applied to something else to transfer its qualities *momentarily*, meaning for the duration of the metaphor or simile only.

Theme is [...] applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to involve and make persuasive to the reader (Abrams 179).

IAGO: Oh, beware, my lord, of jealousy!
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on.
(Othello by William Shakespeare)

Much of the dramatic action in Othello hinges on the jealousy that Othello feels toward his wife, Desdemona. In this excerpt, Othello's best friend, Iago, warns him of being jealous (the metaphor of jealousy as a green-eyed monster is such a famous quote that it created the idea that a person could be "green with envy"). Ironically, Iago is the one who creates this jealousy and feeds it. (Literarydevices.com)

Citing Sources

How to cite sources in your text and in your presentation:

Direct Quotes

Use quotation marks: "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team."

Mention one of the following - Author, Source, Book/Website/Magazine, Title

Before in your sentence:

Example:

Jack Welch said, "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team."

In a video posted by **Jack Welch Management Institute**, we learn that, "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team."

A top CEO voiced his opinion in a video titled **Jack Welch: The Role of HR**, "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team."

Note: For websites, use the following format: According to **Forbes.com**

After in parentheses:

Every company must understand that "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team." (**Jack Welch**)

Every leader in a company must understand that "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team." (**Jack Welch Management Institute**)

Every company expanding in another country must understand that "HR is the driving force behind what makes a winning team." (**Jack Welch: The Role of HR**)

Indirect Quotes

Use paraphrasing – Using your own words to report what someone said.

Mention one of the following - Author, Source, Book/Website/Magazine, Title

Before in your sentence:

Example:

Jack Welch said that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company.

In a video posted by **Jack Welch Management Institute**, we learn that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company.

In a video titled **Jack Welch: The Role of HR**, a top CEO voiced his opinion on that matter saying that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company.

After in parentheses:

Every company must understand that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company. (**Jack Welch**)

Every leader in a company must understand that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company. (**Jack Welch Management Institute**)

Every company expanding in another country must understand that HR is the most important business function that guarantees success for a company. (**Jack Welch: The Role of HR**)

Place the title of a short work in quotation marks. Italicize (or underline if you are handwriting a document) the title of a longer document.

Short Works		Long Works	
Web article:	"Child Care"	Website:	<i>Statistics Canada</i>
Newspaper article:	"Economic Crisis Deepens"	Newspaper:	<i>The Globe and Mail</i>
Magazine article:	"New Artists"	Magazine:	<i>Rolling Stone</i>
Essay:	"Hip-Hop Nation"	Textbook:	<i>Common Culture</i>
Short story:	"The Awakening"	Book:	<i>Alligator</i>
TV episode:	"The Lie"	TV series:	<i>Lost</i>
Song:	"Mouths to Feed"	CD:	<i>Release Therapy</i>
		Movie:	<i>Donnie Darko</i>
		Artwork:	<i>Sunflowers</i>

Works Cited List

Author, *Title*, Publisher, Source, Link

Jack Welch, *Jack Welch: The Role of HR*, Jack Welch Management Institute, YouTube

Name: _____

Date: _____

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE 604-HJ2-RI Midterm Seminar - Speech and Essay

Competency #1: To present orally the analysis of a literary work, or of a production with a social or cultural theme in the original English version.

Competency #2: To produce a written analysis of a literary work, originally written in English, or of a production with a social or cultural theme.

OVERCOMING CHILDHOOD



Seminar: The Analytical Speech – 20%

Using the self-created, reader-response approach (*Perspectives Plus* Pgs. 184,195–197 *Course Notes I* pgs. 38-43), examine the impact a character, a theme or a passage had on you. Use contextual, cultural, and literary elements from *one* or more of the following texts: *Girls Gone Mild*, *The Film Club*, and *Kamala Harris Shaped by Berkeley and a Do Something Mother*.

Organize your ideas the same way that you would plan a written essay: intro, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use a thesis and topic sentences. (*Perspectives Plus*, pgs. 185-187)

Include at least two to three new vocabulary words in each of your sentences.

Be sure to use proper word and sentence stress and pronounce the verb endings clearly (-ed, -s, ing). End your speech with a discussion question and make at least 3 comments/questions to others' discussion.

Do not read or recite from memory. You can use cue cards. Be concise. Practise, practise, practise.

Be enthusiastic about your topic and ideas. Appear confident and comfortable. Make regular eye contact with everyone. Speak clearly and at a natural pace; not too fast and not too slow. Your talk must last from 6 to 8 minutes + discussion

Seminar Speech Topics

1. Rumspringa is a period during which Amish adolescents are left to “sow their wild oats.” Why do you think the elders permit this? Does your culture have a Rumspringa? Should your culture have one?
2. Discuss the reasons you agree or disagree with the following statement: Parents raise their children the way they themselves were raised.
3. Why do people take stock of their lives when they turn twenty, thirty, forty, and so on?
4. Take position for or against the following: *You can never go back.*
5. Indian parents are prepared to make great sacrifices when it comes to their children’s education including sacrificing leisure activities and Holidays. They are also willing to work extra hours and take a second job. All of this means more work and less leisure. Do their Canadian counterparts make similar or different sacrifices? How do parents’ view on education and readiness to sacrifice affect their children’s upbringing?
6. “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” is a proverb that means that a child grows up to be like his or her parents. Do you agree?
7. What is the role of the parent in a child’s education now that we have public school systems? Elaborate considering one of the following quotes:
 - a. “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.”
– Aristotle
 - b. “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of education.”
– Martin Luther King.
 - c. “The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.”
– James Baldwin
 - d. “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
– Nelson Mandela
 - e. “When women are educated, their countries become stronger and more prosperous.” – Michelle Obama
 - f. “We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced.” Malala Yousafzai
 - g. “One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.” Malala Yousafzai
 - h. “When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.” Malala Yousafzai
8. How does culture affect the way we grow? Do you believe Einstein was right when he said: “the only thing that interferes with my learning is my education?”

Criteria	10	8	6	4	0
CONTENT AND CLARITY /10 points	Accomplished: Student clearly synthesises pertinent ideas; substantial and rich in information that generates interest and effectively uses and cites multiple sources.	Skillful: Student mostly clearly synthesises mostly pertinent ideas; mostly substantial and rich in information that mostly generates interest and mostly effectively uses and cites some sources.	Acceptable: Student exchanges ideas with some difficulty which sometimes lack pertinence, clarity. May appear insubstantial, obvious, or lacking in details. Uses one source effectively. Unclear usage of other sources.	Below standards: Student has difficulty to exchange ideas, or several of them are not clearly expressed, very insubstantial, obvious, or illogical which undermines interest in message. No citations or unclear usage of sources. Hardly engages the audience.	Unacceptable: Student is unable to exchange pertinent ideas, or the ideas exchanged are incomprehensible, completely insubstantial, obvious, or illogical. No quoting, paraphrasing, Ideas fail to engage an audience.
	10	8	6	4	0
VOCABULARY /10 points	Completely task-appropriate, concise, detailed, and formal vocabulary related to the task.	Mostly task-appropriate, concise, precise, detailed, and formal vocabulary related to the task.	Acceptable presence of words related to the task. Some generic and vague vocabulary, somewhat informal. Lacks detailed vocabulary.	Weak vocabulary related to the task. Mostly uses generic, vague, and informal vocabulary. Lacks details, preciseness, and conciseness.	Absence of vocabulary related to task. Very weak generic, and informal vocabulary. No details. Unconcise.
	5	4	3	2	0
GRAMMAR /5 points	Commanding grammar and style that enhance the communication.	Very proficient grammar and style that support the communication.	Minor mistakes in grammar and style that do not support but do not affect the quality of the communication and the message.	Several mistakes in grammar and style that affect the quality of the communication but not the message.	Many mistakes in grammar and style that affect the quality of the communication and the message.
	5	4	3	2	0
INTERACTION /5 points	A capacity to interact, asking or making all grammatically correct, pertinent questions or comments.	A capacity to interact, asking or making almost all grammatically correct, pertinent questions or comments.	A capacity to interact, asking or making many grammatically correct, pertinent questions or comments.	Incapacity to interact, asking or making 2 grammatically correct, pertinent questions or comments.	Incapable of asking or making grammatically correct, pertinent questions or comments.
	7	5.5	4.25	2.75	0
COMMUNICATION /7 points	Pronunciation, debit, intonation, and poise proficiently support content and generate interest. Student effectively presents for message retention.	Pronunciation, debit, intonation, and poise skillfully mostly support content and mostly generate interest, with minor errors. Student mostly presents for message retention.	Some errors, but pronunciation, debit, intonation, and poise support content / generate interest in a way that the quality of, but not the message, is affected. Slightly presents for message retention.	Pronunciation, debit, intonation, and poise undermine content, interest, and message. The speaker appears to be reciting a text. Unclear whether techniques are used to ensure audience retains message.	Pronunciation, debit, intonation, and poise are incapable of supporting content and generating interest. The message is greatly affected. Speaker reads a text. Does not present for audience retention.
	3	2.5	1.75	1.25	0
COMPLIANCE AND RESPECT /3 points	Sources from course content are clearly used. Cue cards with keywords only are preapproved before presentation. Proficient use of visuals (PP, video) without full sentences. Vocabulary sheet and evaluation rubric are handed in. Student shows professionalism throughout the presentations: patience, diplomacy, civility and reacts in a respectful manner and uses polite language. Level of language is professional, gender is neutral. No slang.				
Total	/42.5			20%	

*5% penalty for every thirty seconds less than and minute over the seven-minute mark. Max of 10% penalty for time. Cues cards must be approved before the presentation starts – no presentation will be allowed with full text on cue card



Seminar: The Formal Analytical Essay – 15%

Write a well-organized essay of about 450 words on one of the topics below. You must write an intro, two or more body paragraphs and a conclusion. Use and identify proper essay structure (H, TH, TS, CS)

Using the secondary-source **close-reading** ~~reader-response~~ approach, “analyze one or more texts seen in class withing a broader sociocultural context” (*Perspectives Plus* Pgs. p.184–187 **Course Notes I** pgs. 38-43). Support the thesis with arguments using quotations, paraphrases and/or statistics, examples and/or anecdotes. You must use secondary sources. Respect intellectual property! Mention the authors and the titles of the works that appear in your essay (See *Citing Sources*, Moodle)

Use specific task-related words and expressions. Complete the *Essay Writing Checklist* to revise and make sure you comply with all instructions. No works cited list is necessary. No presentation page is necessary, just a header. Put grid on top, then essay.

Authorized Materials

You are allowed to use your dictionary and an outline. You cannot use translators or any integral text from the Internet without quoting or paraphrasing and referring to the authors and their work. The quotes do not count in the number of words.

Example header

Student's name
English 604-HJ2
Group

(___ words)
October ?th, 20__
Teacher's Name

Seminar Essay Topics

Should parents give their kids complete freedom at a certain point in time? Is this a North American dream? Should there never be such a time, that is, should parents always play a role in the lives of their offspring?

Is it possible to be childlike without being childish?

When is childhood over? Can an adult experience Disney World or camp as a child would?

Is childhood beautiful or is it an erroneous modern concept?

Who has the most to lose from the big decisions of childhood, children or their parents?

Is it possible to reconcile with bad childhood? Does the adult version of oneself care more about one's childhood than when one was a child?

Is it possible to reconcile a bad childhood for a nation? Examine the idea of reconciliation of former students of Canadian reservation school system.

Can childhood memories affect the scope of adulthood?

How does culture play an important part in education?

Does literature play an important part in education?

Should there be mandatory parenting courses, meaning that one cannot become a parent unless they have passed the course?

Should parents be left with the sole purpose of the emotional education of their children?

Is it the school system's responsibility to build personality?

Is school boring and unnecessary? Explore the stereotype.

Statistics show that more girls attend post-secondary education. Explore the mainstream idea that school is not made for boys. What does that mean for them?

Speech and Essay Checklist

Verify that the essay has the following elements:	Check ✓	
	Yes	No
Formatting		
The essay is <i>double-spaced</i> , with a clear and catchy title and a proper header. Paragraphs are indented. The essay has a large font (ex. Arial, size 14).		
The essay is divided into paragraphs: introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion and does not exceed the number of words. Mark every 50 words		
Reliable sources are used, quoting and paraphrasing appropriately with proper punctuation. Sources are always acknowledged (clearly identified) in text.		
Introduction		
The introduction begins with a <u>Hook/Grabber</u> to get the reader's attention: dramatic entrance, short anecdote, background information, historical information or a quotation. Identified (G) and highlighted in yellow		
The introduction builds up to a clearly identifiable thesis statement. Identified (TH) and highlighted in yellow		
The thesis statement provides the main idea of the essay directly <i>without</i> using "This essay is about" or "I will explain."		
Body Paragraphs		
Each body paragraph supports the thesis statement.		
Each body paragraph has a clearly identifiable topic sentence. Identified (TS) and highlighted in yellow		
The topic sentence in each paragraph is supported with adequate evidence and specific details (several supporting points with examples).		
Each body paragraph has unity and focuses on one main idea.		
Each body paragraph has a concluding statement or remark. Identified (CS) and highlighted in yellow		
Conclusion		
The main points are briefly restated in the conclusion.		
The conclusion ends with a clincher, quotation, suggestion, or prediction.		
The conclusion does <u>not</u> introduce new or contradictory information.		
Academic Writing		
No Personal pronouns (I, me, you, we, us); Possessive pronouns (mine, yours, ours); Possessive adjectives (my, your, our);		
There are <u>no</u> contractions in the text. (ex. Don't, wanna, it's)		
The language level is formal and does <u>not</u> include slang words (ex. Stuff).		
Vocabulary		
Use at least 20 new words and expressions. Make words bold.		
Use at least 4 transitional words or expressions in each paragraph but aim for at least 1 every other sentence for logic, <u>underline them.</u>		

Outline

Instructions

Complete the outline below. One sentence only per item for in-class exams.

Title: _____

Intro

Hook/Grabber/Lead-in:

Background info:

Thesis Statement:

Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence:

Arguments/Evidence:

Concluding Statement:

Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence:

Arguments/Evidence:

Concluding Statement:

Paragraph #3

Topic Sentence:

Arguments/Evidence:

Concluding Statement:

Conclusion

Criteria	10	8	6	4	0
CONTENT AND CLARITY /10 points	Accomplished: Student clearly and logically synthesises pertinent task-related ideas; substantial and rich in information that generate interest* and uses and cites multiple sources effectively.	Skillful: Student mostly clearly and logically synthesises mostly pertinent task-related ideas, mostly substantial and rich in information that mostly uses and cites some sources effectively.	Acceptable: Student exchanges task-related ideas which sometimes lack pertinence, clarity, and logic. May appear insubstantial or obvious that generate minor interest. Uses one source effectively. Unclear usage of other sources.	Below standards: Student has difficulty to exchange task-related ideas, or several of them are not clearly expressed, very insubstantial, obvious, or illogical which undermines interest in message. No in-text citations or unclear usage of sources.	Unacceptable: Student is unable to exchange pertinent ideas, or the ideas exchanged are vague, completely insubstantial, obvious, or illogical. No quoting, or paraphrasing. Ideas are too complex and/or fail to engage audience.
	7.5	6	4.5	3	0
ORGANIZATION /7.5 points	An efficiently organized and very coherent text that makes connections explicit. Reads easily. All the essential elements are used properly: H, T, Ind, G, TH, TS, CS, WC**.	A well-organized and coherent text that makes most connections for the reader. Mostly reads easily. Most of the essential elements are properly used: H, T, Ind, G, TH, TS, CS, WC	A mostly well-organized and coherent text that makes some connections. Some parts must be re-read. Some of the essential elements are used properly: H, T, Ind, G, TH, TS, CS, WC	A somewhat organized text that sometimes lacks coherence and clear connections. Some contradictions. Difficult read. Most of the essential elements are used improperly: H, T, Ind, G, TH, TS, CS, WC	A disorganized text that lacks coherence and clear connections. Hard read. Most of the essential elements are used improperly or are missing: H, T, Ind, G, TH, TS, CS, WC
	10	8	6	4	0
VOCABULARY /10 points	Completely task-appropriate, concise, detailed, and formal vocabulary related to the task. Right connotation.	Mostly task-appropriate, concise, precise, detailed, and formal vocabulary related to the task. Mostly right connotation.	Acceptable presence of words related to the task. Some generic and vague vocabulary. Lacks detailed vocabulary. Neutral connotation.	Weak task-related vocabulary. Mostly uses generic and vague vocabulary. Lacks details, preciseness, and conciseness. Some wrong connotations.	Absence of vocabulary related to task. Very weak generic vocabulary. No details, precision, and conciseness. Wrong usage of connotation.
	2.5	2	1.5	1	0
GRAMMAR /2.5 points	Commanding grammar and style that enhance the communication.	Very proficient grammar and style that support the communication.	Minor mistakes in grammar and style that do not affect the quality of the communication and the message.	Several mistakes in grammar and style that affect the quality of the communication but not the message.	Many mistakes in grammar and style that affect the quality of the communication and the message.
	5	4	3	2	0
SYNTAX & PUNCTUATION /5 points	Effective application of syntax and punctuation. Complex and varied sentence structure.	Mostly effective application of syntax and punctuation. Some complex, varied sentence structure.	Good application of syntax and punctuation. Some fragments, incomplete or wordy sentences. Affect the quality but not the message.	Undermining application of syntax and punctuation. Many fragments and ineffective sentences.	Application of syntax and punctuation greatly affects message.
	5	4	3	2	0
ACADEMIC WRITING AND RESPECT /5 points	Follows proper MLA style and rules of academic writing. Content is respectful.	Mostly follows MLA style and rules of academic writing.	Some MLA style and academic writing mistakes.	Several MLA style and academic writing mistakes.	Several MLA style and academic writing mistakes. Content is disrespectful.
	2.5	2	1.5	1	0
SPELLING /2.5 points	Impeccable spelling.	Good spelling.	Acceptable spelling.	Many spelling mistakes that undermine the communication.	Spelling greatly undermines paper.
Total	/42.5		15%		

***Content may generate interest for a non-expert audience by the use of literary devices such as humour, metaphors, similes, hyperboles, sarcasm, etc. **H-header, T-title, Ind-indentation, G-grabber, TH-thesis statement, TS-topic sentence, CS-concluding sentence, WC-works cited. ***5% penalty for every 25 words less than and to the task 450 words. Maximum penalty of 10%

SYMBOLS USED IN MARKING COMPOSITIONS

Revision January 2024

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
A	Article	Omission or misuse of articles "a, an, the".	I saw <u>a</u> elephant.	I saw an elephant.
Access	Accessibility	Information not accessible to non-experts, or so obvious that it lowers the richness of content	The footage is processed by a powerful NVIDIA GPU.	Provide a short description of NVIDIA GPU in sentence. Give researched info.
Adj	Adjective	Adjectives never take an "s". Add adjective	Four <u>reds</u> shirts.	Four red shirts.
Adv	Adverb	Adverb is wrong.	She plays the piano <u>good</u> .	She plays the piano well.
SVA	Agreement	Mistake in agreement between verb and subject.	They <u>was</u> here last night.	They were here last night.
Aux	Auxiliary	Use of improper auxiliary.	She <u>did</u> been to Cuba.	She has been to Cuba.
C	Capital letter	Capital letter(s) need(s) to be added or omitted.	This article is about <u>canadian</u> culture.	This article is about Canadian culture.
CA	Convincing arguments	These arguments are not convincing.		
Cite	Citation Error	Use quotation marks for short works and italics (print) or underline (handwriting) for long works. Cite the author or source in the text, etc.		
Comp	Comparative form	Comparative form of adjective is wrong or needed.	A <u>more good</u> car.	A better car.
Conj	Conjunction	Missing conjunction or wrong conjunction.	She prefers either milk <u>and</u> coke.	She prefers either milk or coke.
CON	Connotation			
CS	Concluding Sentence	Missing or error in concluding sentence.	READ COMMENT OR ASK YOUR TEACHER.	
Dem	Demonstrative adjective/pronoun	Omission or misuse of demonstrative adjectives/pronouns "this, that, these, those".	I was born in 1980. At <u>this</u> time...	At that time...

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
Det	Indefinite determiner	Omission or misuse of determiners “any” or “some”.	I do not have <u>some</u> money.	I do not have any money.
DRAMA	Dramatic effect	Add or delete a word or some information to positively impact the readers using stronger delivery.	This results in a circle.	This results in a <u>vicious</u> circle.
F	Format	Wrong format. E.g., no subtitles in research papers.		
FA	Faux Ami	A word that looks or sounds similar in both English and French but has different meanings.	I am <u>actually</u> studying in administration.	I am presently studying in administration.
Fact	Fact	Some information is factually wrong.	The earth is flat.	Some believe the earth is flat.
Frag	Sentence fragment	Not a complete English sentence.	John is taking part in the contest. <u>A good contender.</u>	John is taking part in the contest. He is a good contender.
Flow	Helps flow	Changing the sentence structure helps information flow better.		
Ger	Gerund	Gerund form required.	He spends hours <u>to watch</u> TV.	He spends hours watching TV.
Gr	Grammatical error	Grammatical error not covered by other symbols.	ASK YOUR TEACHER	
H	Header	Missing or incorrect header		
Id	Idiom	The idea has not been expressed as it would normally be in English.	Take a decision.	Make a decision.
Inc ?	Incomprehensible	Word, idea, or sentence is incomprehensible.	Pete <u>drove a car horse.</u>	Pete drove a horse-drawn carriage.
Inf	Infinitive	The verb should be in the infinitive form.	I want to <u>going</u> to L.A.	I want to go to L.A.

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION		EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
IP	Infinitive particle	Particle “to” is missing in front of the infinitive form.		I saved some money ____ buy a car.	I saved some money to buy a car.
Logic	Logic	Error in logic. Making unsupported generalizations does not prove anything. Restating a point differently does not prove it.	Some months may earn a lot of money. Women are underpaid. He has a bad attitude because he is negative.	Some employees may earn a lot of money in some months.	
Mood	Modal verb	Omission or misuse of a modal verb.		May I borrow your pen? Yes, you <u>do</u> .	May I borrow your pen? Yes, you may.
Mod	Modifier	Misplaced or dangling modifier			
MW	Missing Word	A word is missing to complete the idea or make sentence grammatically correct.			
N	Number	Singular form used in place of plural or vice versa.		He has <u>assignment</u> to do.	He has assignments to do.
Non	Non-count noun	Non-count nouns are invariable		He has <u>homeworks</u> to do.	He has homework to do.
Neg	Negative	Wrong or missing negative form or positive form should be used.		He <u>not</u> want to go.	He wants to go. He does not want to go.
NEW	Not an English word	The word does not exist in English.		She found it very <u>interessant</u> . It does not make the job regular.	She found it very interesting. It makes the job irregular or precarious.

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
N Sp	Number spelling	Spell out numbers that can be expressed in one or two words. Do not start a sentence with numerals. Spell out fractions, percent, hundred, thousand, etc.		
NS	New structure	A completely new structure is needed to convey proper meaning.	REWRITE	
Obj	Object	Wrong form has been given to object, or object was omitted.	I told __ that I do not have any money.	I told him that I do not have any money.
P	Punctuation	Mistake in punctuation including use of quotation marks, dashes, parentheses, underlining, etc.	He shouted « <u>get out</u> ».	He shouted: "Get out!"
Poss	Possessive case	Possessive adjective, pronoun, or marker is wrong or missing.	<u>The book of Sam</u> .	Sam's book.
Pos +	Positive vocabulary			
PP	Participle	Present or past participle is wrong or misused.	We have just <u>saw</u> Elvis and we are <u>exciting</u> .	We have just seen Elvis and we are excited.
Prep	Preposition	Omission or misuse of a preposition.	Phil lives <u>at</u> Toronto.	Phil lives in Toronto.
PS	Part of speech	Word may express the correct idea, but the wrong part of speech has been used.	LIFE (noun) instead of LIVE (verb or adj.), or GOOD (adj.) instead of WELL (adv.), etc. Financial planners forecast an important <i>grow</i> (verb) in the economy this year. Correct: growth (noun)	
Rep/Red	Repetitive/Redundant	Unnecessary repetition.	We will <u>meet</u> at the <u>meeting</u> .	We will see each other at the meeting.
Ref	Reference	Pronoun reference error may be due to wrong gender, wrong number or wrong case, or too great separation between pronoun and its antecedent. This includes relative pronouns (which, who, whom, that) and possessive adjectives insofar as gender and number are concerned.	▪ A person might think that the environment is healthy. It is <u>her</u> opinion. ▪ I have two dogs, one cat and a fish, and I feed <u>it</u> every day.	

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
ROS	Run-on sentence	A sentence in which two independent clauses are not properly joined by proper punctuation or a conjunction.	He <u>cried, she</u> answered immediately.	He cried and she answered immediately.
Splice	Comma Splice	A run-on sentence error in which two independent clauses are improperly joined by a comma.		
S3	3 rd person sing. Simple present	Wrong form of the Simple present tense in the 3 rd person singular.	Ann <u>work</u> at the restaurant.	Ann works at the restaurant.
Shift	Shift (tense or pronoun)	Verb tense or pronoun is inconsistent.	He went to Italy and sees <u>great</u> art. People need to exercise and <u>you</u> should eat a balanced diet.	He went to Italy and saw great art. People need to exercise and they should eat a balanced diet.
S	Spelling	Spelling error, including the use of the hyphen and the apostrophe.	I ate an <u>appel</u> <u>whit</u> a knife.	I ate an apple with a knife.
Sp	Space	Delete or add space	Also_, he did not _want to do this.	Also, he did not want to do this.
Sub	Subject	Wrong form has been given to subject, or subject was omitted.	<u>They</u> are three of them.	There are three of them.
Sup	Superlative form	Superlative form of the adjective is wrong or needed.	The <u>most great</u> person.	The greatest person.
SVA	Subject Verb Agreement	Subject must agree with verb.		
TH	Thesis Statement	Error in thesis statement.	READ COMMENT OR ASK YOUR TEACHER.	
Trans	Transition	Ideas must be joined by some means of transition or wrong transition is used.	Harley sings in a jazz band. She is really a good singer.	Harley sings in a jazz band. So, she is really a good singer.
TS	Topic Sentence	Error in introducing the topic.	REWRITE	
UI	Unfathomable idea	Unfathomable passage even if grammar and syntax are correct.	In this text, the author explains how to give an antique finish to his piece of furniture. He starts by <u>aging the place</u> where it will be used.	REWRITE

Symb.	MEANING	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
UL	Unacceptable language	Language is not acceptable	REWRITE	
UN or —	Unnecessary	Unnecessary word(s) or information.	It is not very ethical for psychologist to be friends with a client on social media.	
US	Unparallel structure	Wrong enumeration of elements.	I like skiing, swimming, and to <u>bike</u> .	I like skiing, swimming, and biking.
V	Verb	Verb error not covered by any other symbol.	ASK YOUR TEACHER	
Vox	Passive Voice	Change from active to passive voice or vice versa or wrong verb usage of passive voice.	They are <u>locate</u> in Trois-Rivières.	They are located in Trois-Rivières.
VSS	Vary Sentence Style	Avoid using the same type of sentence redundantly or use better sentence style.		
VT	Verb Tense	Wrong tense of verb.	Last night, she <u>goes</u> to Regina.	Last night, she went to Regina.
WC	Word choice	Wrong choice of word(s).	One thing we have <u>similar</u> , ...	One thing we have in common, ...
WCL	Works Cited List	Incorrect format of works cited list. Source missing from works cited list. Absent works cited list.		
W	Wordy/unconcise	Avoid using phrases when idea can be conveyed un a word or two	Discuss the times when he is available...	Discuss his availability...
WS	Wrong academic style	The following elements do not follow MLA style or are unacceptable in academic writing: ▪ In-text citation ▪ Personal pronouns (I, me, you, we, us); ▪ Possessive pronouns (mine, yours, ours); ▪ Possessive adjectives (my, your, our); ▪ Imperative verb tense; ▪ Contractions or slang;	▪ <u>My</u> text is related to <u>my</u> field of study. <u>And I</u> think it respects the teacher's instructions. ▪ Now, <u>let's see</u> what can be done in this	▪ This text is related to the Nursing field of study, and it respects the teacher's instructions. ▪ Here is what can be done in this case.

		▪ "And" at the beginning of a sentence.	case.	
WO	Word order	The order of words is incorrect.	He has <u>blond long</u> hair.	He has long blond hair.
↔	Effect	The correction of a mistake affects another part of the sentence.	An [↖] equilibrated budget. ^{ID}	A balanced budget.
^	Omission	An element has been left out.	Olga is sister.	Olga is her sister.
¶	Paragraph	Incorrect division into paragraphs, or division needed.	CORRECT DIVISION	
X	Delete	Unnecessary and must be deleted.	He likes <u>the</u> rap music better than <u>the</u> blues music.	He likes rap music better than blues music.
→	Indentation	Paragraph must be indented.	Psychology is more popular than ever.	→ Psychology is more popular than ever.