Inglés

Guía de estudio complementaria

2020-2021

MISSION STATEMENT

The College Board's mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. We are a not-for-profit membership organization committed to excellence and equity in education.

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Entre nuestros instrumentos más conocidos se encuentran la PAA™; las Pruebas de Ingreso y Evaluación para el Nivel Secundario (PIENSE™); el Programa de Nivel Avanzado (PNA™); el Inventario CEPA™ (Conoce, Explora, Planifica y Actúa); el English Language Assessment System for Hispanics (ELASH™); las Pruebas de Conocimiento por Área (PC™) y la Prueba de Certificación de Maestros (PCMAS™).

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INTRODUCTION

The Advanced Level course in English is comparable to a higher achievement level, first-year university course. It integrates reading, writing, grammar, and oral communication skills. Readings for this course include essays, short stories, novels, plays, and poems. The intensive study of representative works prepares students for broader independent reading, writing, and critical thinking. Above all, the content and activities of this course seek to develop students' language skills, so that they can function at their full potential during their academic studies and in today's society.

The curriculum of the Advanced Level Course in English includes the following topics:

- Oral Communication and Grammar Skills
- Essays and Expository Writing
- Short Stories and Novels
- Poetry
- Drama

This guide serves to provide additional material for teachers and students who are participating in this program. It is a sample of different presentations various English professors have offered in recent years at the annual PNA workshop seminars. The titles and authors of the presentations have been conserved, though they have been edited from their original form. The presentations address the knowledge areas of grammar, expository writing, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, which are tested on the PNA exam. The materials below are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather focus on common problem areas—such as dangling modifiers—as well as overall approaches to poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. Exercises can be adapted by teachers and practiced by students.

If you would like more information about the rest of the topics, you can visit our website https://latam.collegeboard.org/pna/ and download the **Teacher's Guide** or the **Student's Guide**.

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Grammar Skills

I. Description

This subunit aims to improve students' grammatical skills and their knowledge of correct language usage in both oral and written communication. A strong foundation in grammar will improve students' understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of written texts. Students will be actively involved in the acquisition of grammar skills, which will always be presented and practiced in context. Interactive and collaborative grammar activities will help students acquire grammatical knowledge in an applied and contextual environment, which will enable them to use the English language correctly in oral and written discourse.

II. Objectives

A. General

Students will be able to

1. express their thoughts in grammatically correct sentences and phrases in both oral and written form.
2. understand the meaning of different verb tenses, modal auxiliaries, and word order in sentences, reported speech, questions, and phrases.
3. recognize grammatical modifications for stylistic reasons.
4. identify, analyze, and use diverse language structures in context.

B. Specific

More specifically, students will be able to use correctly and understand

1. the meaning of various verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, modal auxiliaries, active and passive voice sentences and verb structures, verbals, different types of questions and answers, and various ways of expressing negation in both oral and written form.
2. adjectives and adverbs in their basic, comparative, and superlative forms, and word order.
3. modifying phrases and clauses.
4. different types of nouns and pronouns as well as pronoun-antecedent agreement.
5. prepositions and prepositional phrases in context.
6. connecting words and expressions, especially in writing, to form different types of sentences (complex, compound, and compound-complex) for stylistic purposes and logical development.
7. parallel structures in written discourse.

Essay and Expository Writing

I. Description

This unit includes the reading, discussion, and analysis of nonfiction prose to improve the students' reading and critical thinking skills, which in turn will enable students to enhance their writing skills. Through guided practice in the writing process, students will compose well-developed essays.

II. Objectives

A. General

Students will be able to

1. improve their comprehension and analytical skills through the reading of nonfiction prose.
2. use models of expository writing as the basis for further development of their composition skills.
3. express themselves effectively in writing through ongoing practice.
4. write different types of essays in response to texts read in and out of class.
5. improve their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

B. Specific

More specifically, students will be able to

1. understand the meaning of an essay by grasping the main idea or thesis of an essay.
   a. following the development of the central idea.

2. recognize, understand, and explain the structural components of an essay and different expository patterns of development, such as narration, definition, analysis, comparison, contrast, and argumentation.

   a. recognize the basic organization of an essay (chronological, spatial, deductive, or inductive).

   b. recognize the different types of paragraphs (introductory, developmental, transitional, and summary).

   c. understand the use of punctuation, connectives, and other transitional devices used between phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs.

3. read a selection critically and respond to it orally and in writing.

4. use a variety of prewriting techniques, such as free-writing, outlining, clustering, brainstorming, and keeping a journal.

5. write, revise, and edit their drafts as well as engage in peer reviewing processes to develop clear and well-organized essays.

Short Stories and Novels

I. Description

This unit includes the study of the elements of fiction through the reading of selected short stories and novels. Oral and written analyses of these literary works will enable students to comprehend, interpret, and respond to fiction.

II. Objectives

A. General

Students will be able to

1. read, comprehend, and interpret short stories and novels.

2. analyze the elements of fiction in selected works.

3. read short stories and novels independently.

4. respond orally and in writing to short stories and novels.

5. think critically about literature.

B. Specific

More specifically, students will analyze the following elements of the short story and the novel

1. plot and method of presentation.

2. setting, mood, and atmosphere.

3. characterization.

4. theme, ideas, and purpose.

5. stylistic devices.

6. point of view.

Poetry

I. Description

This unit includes different types of poems and the study of the elements of poetry. Oral and written analyses of selected poems will enable students to comprehend, interpret, and appreciate this literary genre.

II. Objectives

A. General

Students will be able to

1. read, understand, and interpret the content of a poem.

2. recognize the various elements of a poem.

3. understand the similarities and differences between poetry and different types of prose.

4. react orally and in writing to selected poems.

5. appreciate poetry, including its particular use of sound.

B. Specific

More specifically, students will be able to

1. analyze, paraphrase, and explicate a poem orally and in writing.

2. analyze specific elements of a poem and explain how they relate to each other.

3. describe the effect of a poem on the reader.

EDITING FOR WRITTEN STYLE AND SENTENCE PROBLEMS: CLUTTER, PARALLELISM AND MODIFICATION

Madeleine A. Vala, Ph.D.

Most writing instruction focuses on structure and organization, polished grammar and mechanics, and evidence. Written style, however, is also essential. In addition, it

- should improve clarity and readability.

- should help persuade readers of the essay's content.

- is a powerful rhetorical tool, just like other components of the essay form.

- merits attention because it will improve students' ability to articulate their ideas.

- encourages students to push the limits of and expand their vocabulary.

Clutter

William Zinsser, a writer and editor, coined the term "clutter," arguing that "Clutter is the disease of American writing. We are a society strangling in unnecessary words, circular constructions, pompous frills and meaningless jargon."

Writing concisely is often difficult for students because they want to sound impressive, are not clear themselves on their points, or are afraid to be assertive in their writing. Students also lack the vocabulary, particularly with verbs, to avoid lengthy clauses.

Eliminating Clutter

- Avoid empty introductory phrases

- Favor active over passive voice

- Use the possessive instead of prepositional phrases

- Favor simple present over the present progressive

- Avoid "lazy" verbs: "to get," "to have," "to make," and "to be"

- Replace clauses with single verbs, nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.

Empty Introductory Phrases

We often write as we speak, which is why unnecessary introductory phrases plague our writing. Avoid beginning sentences with:

- "There is/are" or "It is"

- "An interesting example in the story is when"

- "One important detail I found when reading is"

- "An example of this can be seen in the part that says"

Each of these openers, while common to oral speech, render prose tedious. Such phrases set up examples without commenting on them in any way. Eliminate them and connect the remaining sentence fragment with the following sentence.

Example: An example in the story about this is when the narrator sees a woman across the avenue. He realizes he will have to take care of his wife Mala.

Revised: When the narrator sees a woman across the avenue, he realizes he will have to take care of his wife Mala.

(this eliminates having an empty sentence that simply indicates an example, and instead forces the writer to say something about the example)

Example: What the author is trying to show is that the husband does not treat his wife in a good way.

Revised: The author shows how the husband does not treat his wife well OR The author shows how the husband mistreats his wife.

Example: The story quotes "…walking past her children as if they were complete strangers" (588). This small meaningless sentence if analyzed closely shows that Mrs. Das is being apathetic towards her children.

Revised: Mrs. Das is apathetic towards her children, whom she "walk[s] past… as if they were complete strangers."

Notice that the above revision not only combines the two sentences, but uses the quotation to prove a point without announcing that it is proving the point. (showing not telling)

Favor Active Voice

Passive is important in scientific writing, but in all other academic contexts, active voice is much appreciated. Passive voice does have a function and is not inherently bad. It alters meaning subtly:

- Active voice: The car hit the squirrel (emphasizes cruelty of car)
- Passive voice: The squirrel was hit by the car (emphasizes pathos of the squirrel).

Often, however, writers slip into the passive without a specific reason.

Eliminate Passive Voice

Example: This poem, Goblin Market, which was written by Christina Rossetti, is about a woman who is saved by her sister.

Revised: Christina Rossetti's poem, Goblin Market, details a woman's rescue of her sister.

Example: As presented before, it can be observed the temperament of this young boy which defies everything that surrounds him.

Revised: Here again, the young boy defies everything that surrounds him. "Temperament" is a good word, but "defies" already implies the character's temperament.

The Possessive is Your Friend

Using the possessive form instead of a prepositional phrase will tighten sentences.

> **Example:** The crime that's been done by Armand Aubigny does not seem as he has provoked it.

> **Revised:** Armand Aubigny's crime seems unprovoked.

> **Example:** The situation of the brother in the story is very sad.

> **Revised:** The brother's situation is tragic. (better than "very sad.") It's probably obvious in the essay that the writer is discussing a story.

Favor Simple Present

Unless the writer wants to highlight that the action is occurring in the moment, s/he should simply use the simple present.

> **Example:** The story is showing the conflict between generations.

> **Revised:** The story shows the conflict between generations OR The story shows generational conflict.

Avoid "Lazy" Verbs

Lazy verbs don't convey much action, despite their frequent use. Avoid or minimize use of "to be," "to make," "to have," and "to get."

> **Example:** The woman has a face of satisfaction that looks at whoever sees the ad.

> **Revised:** The woman's satisfied face confronts whoever sees the ad.

> **Example:** "Rain made a bad effect on the photo"

> **Revised:** "Rain affected the photo badly."

Sentence Problems: Parallelism

Students often have trouble when writing complex sentences and fail to maintain parallelism in their sentences. Parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. This can happen at the word, phrase, or clause level.

Correct usage

> **Example:** Maria enjoys swimming, singing, and attending concerts.

> **Example:** For the workshop, Nestor was told that he should prepare four hours of material, that he should give practice exercises, and that he could stay at the hotel.

Parallelism in syntax may be likened to the distributive property in math:
$2(a + b) = 2a + 2b$. Just as the coefficient must be distributed to the variables, so must the grammatical structure be distributed to the parts of the sentence.

Incorrect usage or Faulty Parallelism

Example: For the workshop, Nestor was told that he should prepare four hours of material, to give practice exercises, and that he could stay at the hotel.

The infinitive "to give" is not parallel to the clauses that begin with "that."

Example: For dinner, George likes macaroni and to chop vegetables.

Corrected: For dinner, George likes macaroni and vegetables (two nouns) OR For dinner, George likes to cook macaroni and to chop vegetables (two infinitives)

Most of the descriptions and examples below are taken from William Strunk's *Elements of Style*, which is maintained online by the Bartleby Project at Columbia University:

Faulty Parallelism	Corrected
Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method, while now the laboratory method is employed.	Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method; now it is taught by the laboratory method.

Correlative expressions (both, and; not, but; not only, but also; either, or; first, second, third; and the like) should be followed by the same grammatical construction. Many violations of this rule can be corrected by rearranging the sentence.

Faulty Parallelism	Corrected
It was both a long ceremony and very tedious.	The ceremony was both long and tedious.
A time not for words, but action	A time not for words, but for action
Either you must grant his request or incur his ill will.	You must either grant his request or incur his ill will.
My objections are, first, the injustice of the measure; second, that it is unconstitutional.	My objections are, first, that the measure is unjust; second, that it is unconstitutional.

When making comparisons, the things you compare should be couched in parallel structures whenever that is possible and appropriate.

Faulty Parallelism	Corrected
My income is smaller than my wife.	My income is smaller than my wife's.

Modification

Proper modification is important to achieve the intended meaning.

Example: John went to the store yesterday.

Adding "only" to various positions in this sentence changes the meaning:

John went **only** to the store yesterday.

Only John went to the store yesterday.

John went to the **only** store yesterday.

John went to the store **only** yesterday.

Sentence Problems: Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

Misplaced modifiers occur when a word modifies an unintended word and creates confusion in meaning.

Ⓧ **Incorrect:** Crying on the examination table, the doctor gave the child his vaccine.

Crying" is intended to modify the child, but syntactically, it refers to the doctor. To fix the misplaced modifier, the sentence should read as follows:

✓ **Correct**: The doctor gave the child crying on the examination table his vaccine.

Dangling Modifiers

Similar to misplaced modifiers, dangling modifiers obscure the intended meaning of a sentence. Unlike misplaced modifiers, however, the intended modified word is absent from the sentence.

Ⓧ **Incorrect:** Driving south, the landscape became drier.

Syntactically, the sentence means that the landscape is driving south. Driving is intended to modify the person(s) driving, which is omitted from the sentence altogether.

✓ **Correct**: Driving south, we noticed the landscape became drier.

✓ **Correct**: As we drove south, the landscape became drier.

Fixing a dangling modifier entails adding words so that the correct agent is linked to the action that is unmodified.

Dangling Modifier	Corrected
After separating the students into groups, the first group was tested. [Who did the testing? The sentence does not specify this. Notice too that the first half of the sentence is active voice, and the second passive. Often this creates a dangling modifier.]	After separating the students into groups, the teacher tested the first group.
Captivated by its beauty, Monica's diamond ring stays on her finger for all to admire.	Captivated by its beauty, Monica keeps her diamond ring on her finger for all to admire.
[Who is captivated by the diamond ring? Monica? Her friends?]	Captivated by the gem's beauty, Monica's friends admire Monica's diamond ring.

Editing Exercise

Identify the problems with the following sentences; how would you fix them?

Parallel Sentence Structure

1. In "Cathedral," the narrator drinks heavily, is discriminating against his wife's friend, and feels jealous.

2. When Winterbourne talks to his aunt, Mrs. Costello, about introducing her to Daisy, she meets him with predispositions about her character, her place in the social structure, and he would be better off not making her acquaintance.

3. In O'Connor's "Everything That Rises Must Converge," Mrs. Chestny is convinced of her superiority, bragged about her son Julian, and how she loved wearing a hat and gloves to the YMCA.

4. To escape his reality on Cordelia Street, Paul attended the theater, or he also planned a trip to New York.

5. Paul's father disapproved of his hobbies and what he said to teachers.

6. Seamus Heaney describes his father's work digging potatoes and is wondering how he can follow this legacy.

Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers

1. Running from the law, the car and gun repeatedly help Thelma and Louise.

2. After hearing the original song, the remake remains unconvincing.

3. Actions considered inappropriate in Geneva, Daisy Miller did them without hesitating or realizing she was not behaving "lady like."

4. Shirley fed the chickens wearing boots.

5. Desiree confronted her husband leaving the bedroom.

6. Paul got a job with a theater that produced operas while he was a high school student.

THE PRAXIS OF POETRY: EXPLORING STYLISTIC DEVICES

Nelson Rivera Agosto, M. A.

Poetry is typically the most difficult genre for students because it does not have a narrative form and operates chiefly through images and suggestion. Poems work in an economy of space, with each word carefully chosen, that in turn forces the reader to wrestle with meaning. The best poems demand scrutiny to understand their craft and theme.

One of the pleasures of reading poetry of lyrical quality and thematic depth is discovering the stylistic devices employed by distinguished poets who excel as skilled wordsmiths in their craft. Stylistic devices include diction, sensory imagery, syntax, and figurative language.

1. **Diction** is the choice and use of words in speech or writing. Poetic Diction is the choice of words and figures in poetry. The term often refers to that specialized language which is peculiar to poetry in that it employs words and figures not normally found in common speech or prose. (Oxford University Press at Answers.com)

   Diction can be divided into denotation and connotation.

Denotation	Connotation
The literal meaning of a word, the "dictionary definition." For example, by looking up the word snake in a dictionary, you will discover that one of its denotative meanings is "any of numerous scaly, legless, sometimes venomous reptiles having a long, tapering, cylindrical body and found in most tropical and temperate regions."	The associations that are connected to a certain word or the emotional suggestions related to that word. The connotative meanings of a word exist together with the denotative meanings. The connotations for the word snake could include evil or danger.

   The teacher can make a list of key words from the poems to be discussed, and students can make a chart, as above, outlining the denotation and connotation of each. Students can write what they consider to be the positive and/or negative connotative meaning(s) to those words prior to reading the poems. Thus, the list can be used as points for comparison before and after the discussion and analysis of the poems.

2. **Imagery** in Poetry consist of words and phrases used specifically to help the reader to imagine each of the senses: smell, touch, sight, hearing, and taste.

Sensory Imagery	Example
Visual Imagery stimulates the sense of sight.	From "The Widow's Lament in Springtime" masses of flowers load the cherry branches and color some bushes yellow and some red… (William Carlos Williams)

Sensory Imagery	Example
Auditory Imagery stimulates the sense of hearing	From "Dover Beach"' Listen! You hear the grating roar Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling, At their return, up the high strand, Begin, and cease, and then again begin, With tremulous cadence slow, and bring The eternal note of sadness in. (Matthew Arnold)
Gustatory Imagery stimulates the sense of taste.	Examples from Robert Frost's poetry: "To Earthward"–I craved strong sweets …now no joy but lacks salt "Blueberries"–the blueberries as big as your thumb… with the flavor of soot "A Record Stride"–the walking boots that taste of Atlantic and Pacific salt
Olfactory Imagery stimulates the sense of smell	Examples from Robert Frost's poetry: "After Apple-Picking"–Essence of winter sleep is on the night, the scent of apples "To Earthward"–musk from hidden grapevine springs "Unharvested"–A scent of ripeness from over a wall… So smelling their sweetness would be no theft.
Tactile Imagery stimulates the sense of touch **Examples**: hardness, softness, wetness, heat, cold	Examples from Robert Frost's poems "Moon Compasses"–So love will take between the hands a face… "The Death of the Hired Man"–She put out her hand among the harplike morning-glory strings, Taut with the dew… "On Going Unnoticed"–You grasp the bark by a rugged pleat, And look up small from the forest's feet.
Kinesthetic imagery recreates a feeling of physical action or natural bodily function (like a pulse, a heartbeat, or breathing).	From "Hyperion": At this, through all his bulk an agony Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown, Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular Making slow way, with head and neck convulsed From over-strained might… (John Keats)
Synaesthesia is imagery that involves the use of one sense to evoke another	Loud color, warm gesture

Imagery is the concrete expression of a poet's ideas. Therefore, imagery "works" on the basis of an analogy: something concrete is used to represent something conceptual. Bear in mind that a lot of poetic imagery appeals to the five senses. When reading a poem, students can identify the imagery and highlight some of its effects; determine the analogy between the concrete imagery and the concept or idea behind it; and evaluate if the imagery used is appropriate for and integral to the subject matter of the poem.

Figurative Devices	Example
Personification is a type of metaphor that gives living qualities to inanimate objects or abstract ideas; or human qualities (feelings, thoughts) to animals. It gives non-living things and animals the ability to think, feel emotions, or have human relationships.	"The Wind" The wind stood up, and gave a shout; He whistled on his fingers, and Kicked the withered leaves about, And thumped the branches with his hand, And said he'd kill, and kill, and kill; And so he will! And so he will! (by James Stephens)
Hyperbole (Overstatement) is an exaggeration; giving something more or less of a quality than it really has. This term is usually used as a put down, or to discredit what someone is saying.	"After so many years, he can still feel the sting of his mother's slap." He cannot literally feel the sting, but the hyperbole conveys that his mother's slap was a deeply damaging experience.
Understatement is saying something with an overly light tone; the speaker's words convey less emotion than he actually feels.	"I'm really glad that you have come to visit," said the spider to the fly.
Simile is a comparison that uses the words like or as, or a verb like seems or appears to draw two objects or images into a relationship.	"Harlem" What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore And then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over like a syrupy sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode? (Langston Hughes) Hughes uses five different similes in this poem. To what five things does he compare an unfulfilled dream?
Metaphor functions the same way simile does, except that the comparison is more implied and the words like or as are omitted. The verb to be is used.	"Fame is a Fickle Food" Fame is a fickle food Upon a shifting plate Whose table once a Guest but not The second time is set. Whose crumbs the crows inspect And with ironic caw Flap past it to the Famer's Corn-Men eat of it and die. (Emily Dickinson)

Figurative Devices	Example
Extended Metaphor, also called a conceit, is a metaphor that continues into the sentences that follow.	"The seeds of discontent have already been sown," an extension could be, "It remains to see whether weed or flower will spring forth."
Paradox is a statement that appears to be absurd, untrue, or contradictory, but may actually be true.* A paradox is not a contradiction, but a conciliatory combination of mutually-counterbalancing opposites.	"Death, Be Not Proud, … One short sleep past, we wake eternally, And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die. (John Donne)
Symbolism occurs when an author uses an object or idea to suggest more than its literal meaning. A person, place, or event stands for something other than it is, usually something broader or deeper than it is.	"The Sick Rose" O rose, thou art sick! The invisible worm That flies in the night, In the howling storm, Has found out thy bed Of crimson joy, And his dark secret love Does thy life destroy. (William Blake)
Synecdoche is a form of metaphor where one part stands for the whole, or the whole is substituted for one part.	"the hand that wrote the letter" hand = person
Metonymy is a play on words based on association. With metonymy, an object is referred to in terms of something closely related to it, yet not actually a part of it (i.e. not synecdoche). In other words, we comment on something by naming a separate object, but one that is closely associated with the original subject.	Queen Elizabeth controlled the crown for years. the crown = the monarchy
Apostrophe is a rhetorical figure in which the speaker addresses a dead or absent person, or an abstraction or inanimate object.	Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes Whom envy hath immured within your walls. Queen Elizabeth addresses the Tower of London in *Richard III*
Oxymoron is a form of paradox where two contradictory terms are combined in one phrase.	"cold fire," "honest thief," "darkly lit," "fearful joy"
Anaphora is a rhetorical figure of repetition in which the same word or phrase is repeated in (and usually at the beginning of) successive lines, clauses, or sentences. Used frequently in the free verse of Walt Whitman.	Mine—by the Right of the White Election! Mine—by the Royal Seal! Mine—by the Sign in the Scarlet prison Bars—cannot conceal! (Emily Dickinson)

Tone and Irony in Poetry

The tone of a poem is roughly equivalent to the mood it creates in the reader. Tone can be resigned, merciless, pessimistic, optimistic, playful, sarcastic, satirical, ironic, sad, melancholic, humorous, conversational, indignant, loving, compassionate, gloomy, excited, happy, serious.

Irony occurs when one meaning is stated, but another, antithetical (opposite and opposed) meaning is intended. Irony depends on the author's word choice.

Example:

From "Of Alphus"

No egg on Friday
Alph will eat,
But drunken will he be
On Friday still.
Oh, what a pure
Religious man is he!

(Anonymous, 16th Century)

Suggestions for Teaching Poetry

1. Students can memorize a poem, which is one of the oldest methods to teach poetry. Students learn to appreciate the sound, craft, and meaning of the poem more richly.

2. Students should understand that in a poem every line is related to every other line, and that even punctuation is read and produces meaning. Students should read poems aloud, remembering that most poems were meant to be read orally. Reading the poem aloud allows the student to savor the sonorous quality of the verses, and also become aware of such elements as tone and irony.

3. Survey a variety of poetic forms to narrative, lyrical, dramatic, and satire. Include a thorough discussion of key poetic terms and imagery, but always in connection with the actual reading of poems.

4. Another helpful method for analyzing poetry is the TPCASTT chart. This is a recognized tool for teachers of poetry in secondary school, and helpfully directs students to both specific and holistic elements of a poem.

Using TPCASTT for Analysis of Poetry

T	**Title**	What do the words of the title suggest to you? What denotations are presented in the title? What connotations or associations do the words possess?
P	**Paraphrase**	Translate the poem in your own words. What is the poem about?
C	**Connotation**	What meaning does the poem have beyond the literal meaning? Fill in the chart

Form	Diction	Imagery
Point of view	**Details**	**Allusions**
Symbolism	**Figurative language**	**Other devices** (antithesis, apostrophe, sound, devices, irony, oxymoron, paradox, pun, sarcasm, understatement)

A	**Attitude**	What is the speaker's attitude? How does the speaker feel about himself, about others, and about the subject? What is the author's attitude? How does the author feel about the speaker, about other characters, about the subject, and the reader?
S	**Shifts**	Where do the shifts in tone, setting, voice, etc. occur? Look for time and place, keywords, punctuation, stanza divisions, changes in length or rhyme, and sentence structure. What is the purpose of each shift? How do they contribute to effect and meaning?
T	**Title**	Reanalyze the title on an interpretive level. What part does the title play in the overall interpretation of the poem?
T	**Theme**	List the subjects and the abstract ideas in the poem. Then determine the overall theme. The theme must be written in a complete sentence.

BETWEEN THE LINES: READING FICTION AND NONFICTION

Enrique Olivares, M. A.

LITERARY COMPETENCIES

Reading is only one aspect of the literary competencies that are an essential part of our lives, of how we receive and produce information. Together they are essential tools that help us to both understand and act in the world. Literary competencies include:

- **Reading Comprehension**–the ability to identify and understand the main elements of a text.

- **Critical Thinking**–the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment. The ability to format original ideas.

- **Oral Competencies**–the ability to express ideas clearly and effectively through speaking.

- **Technical/Argumentative writing**–the ability to express ideas clearly and effectively through writing.

Reading has changed and become more "difficult" in contemporary society as Nicholas Carr said:

> *"I can feel it, too. Over the past few years I've had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. My mind isn't going—so far as I can tell—but it's changing. I'm not thinking the way I used to think. I can feel it most strongly when I'm reading. Immersing myself in a book or a lengthy article used to be easy. My mind would get caught up in the narrative or the turns of the argument, and I'd spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That's rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration often starts to drift after two or three pages. I get fidgety, lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do. I feel as if I'm always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come naturally has become a struggle."*

> –*"Is Google Making Us Stupid?" Nicholas Carr*

The change in the reading medium (from print to screen) affects how we approach the task. This movement from print to screen means that readers are more susceptible to distractions from the medium, like Instant Messaging, pop-ups, advertising, phone calls, notifications.

Reading has become difficult because it is hard to distinguish main ideas/arguments in text; modern readers have become accustomed to simple and clear ("boiled down") statements. Moreover, it is difficult to distinguish valid sources of information from erroneous/unfounded/useless ones online, such as "fake news" or clickbait. These factors all contribute to misreading and misinterpreting information and texts. We read in two ways, distant reading or close reading.

Distant Reading (Superficial/"Light Reading")

- Pays attention to the structure of the essay.

- Skips/scans passages in a superficial manner.

- Focuses on the writer's general idea.

- It is meant to survey the text for what is being said, not meant.

- It is meant to economize time. Allows you to read quickly to get a sense of the text, to get to the essence.

Close Reading

- Critical analysis of a text that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep, precise understanding of the text's form, craft, meanings, etc.

- Carefully considers aspects such as diction and vocabulary.

- Treats the text as a "self-contained" universe.

- Concerned with reproducing/arriving at meaning as well as expanding the critical debate.

- Is meant to develop critical thinking competencies.

Prewriting

Prewriting and thinking techniques include brainstorming–to produce an idea or a way of solving a problem by holding a spontaneous group discussion, and clustering–to produce a collection of ideas that are closely related to each other in hopes of developing a topic.

Cluster Diagram Example

The following is a cluster diagram which is a type of graphic organizer used to facilitate the brainstorming and prewriting processes.

Enter your sub headline here
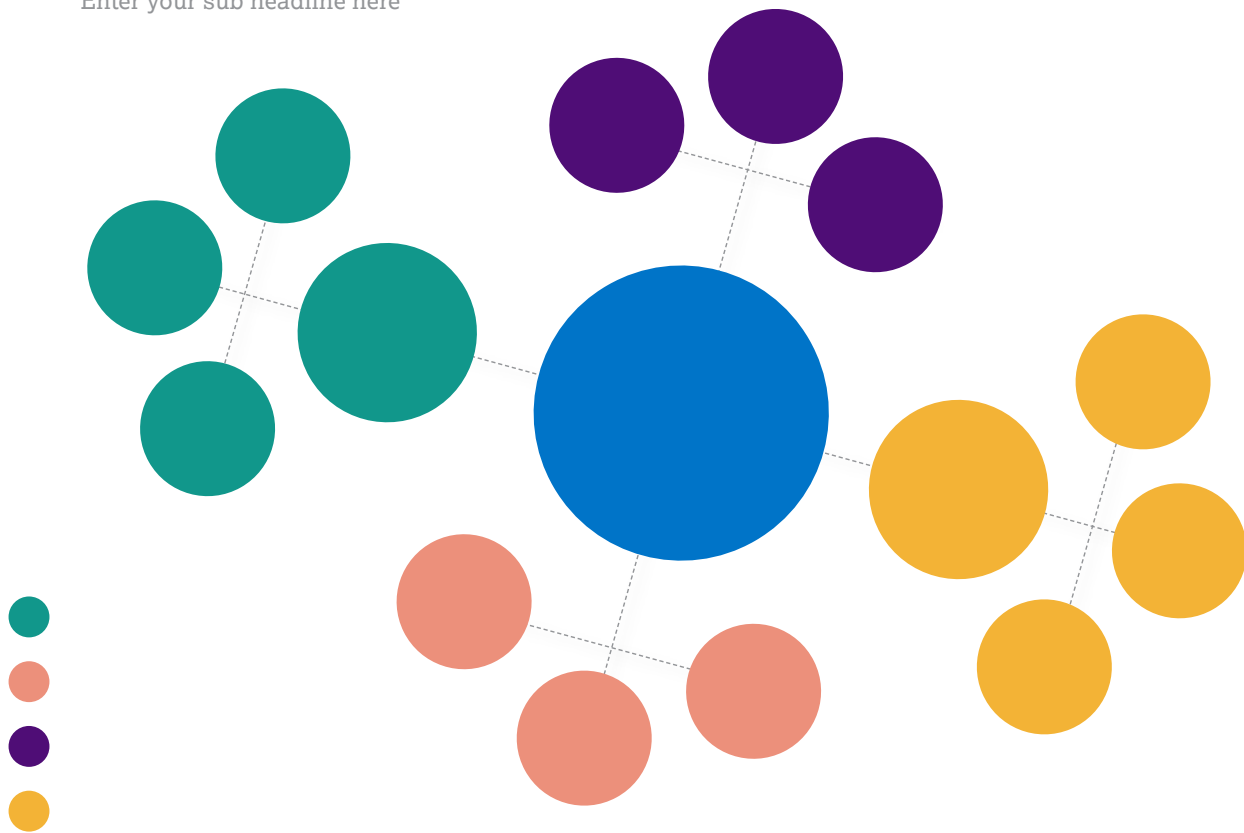
Writing Exercise

Read the following short short story by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and then complete the exercise following the narrative.

"A woman is sitting in her old, shuttered house. She knows she is alone in the whole world: every other thing is dead. The doorbell rings."
–Thomas Bailey Aldrich

1. Make a cluster diagram of what you consider to be the key elements of Bailey Aldrich's text. What words/ideas would you use to describe the story?

2. How would you make a cluster diagram for defining the word "literature"? How is this story "literary"?

Fiction

Fiction comes from the Latin "fictio," meaning "a shaping or counterfeiting." It is prose writing inspired by the imagination. Some types of fiction are short stories, novels, films, and television. Literary examples include *Cien Años de Soledad* by Gabriel García Márquez and "The Tell Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe.

Kinds of Fiction

1. **Novel:** a prose narrative of extended length. It traditionally aims to recreate or represent a character and events as realistically as possible.

2. **Short story:** a prose narrative of a brief length (never book-length). The short story is usually a focused narrative that presents one or two characters involved in a single compelling action.
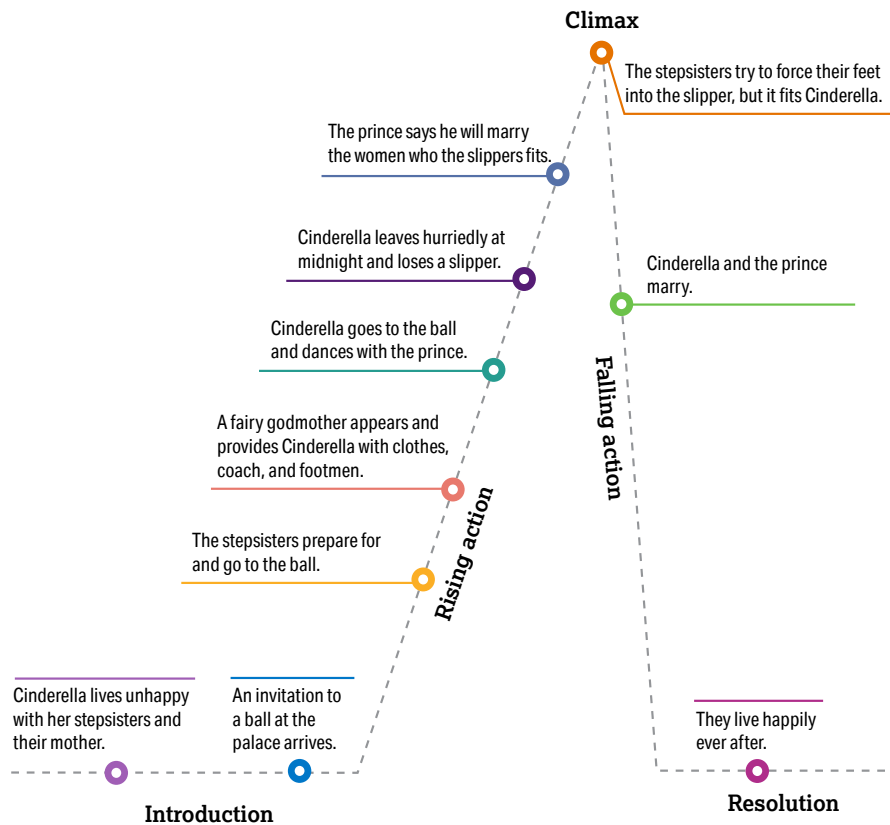
Julio Cortázar famously stated that fiction is like a boxing match. A novel has to last the twelve rounds, but a short story has to be a knock-out.

Elements of fiction

1. **Character** is an imagined person that inhabits/forms part of the story.

    a. Flat characters: characters with only one outstanding feature.

    b. Round characters: a complex character that is presented in depth in a narrative.

    When evaluating characters it is important to consider: What are the motivations of this character? How clear are they?

2. **Plot** is the artistic/intentional arrangement of the events in the story

    a. Conflict: central struggle between two or more forces. (subject vs nature, subject vs. society, subject vs. self)

    b. Protagonist: main/central character in a narrative.

    c. Antagonist: force/character that opposes the protagonist.

    d. Climax: the moment of greatest intensity.

    e. Resolution: end/outcome of the events of the story.

Plot Diagram and Modifiers for Cinderella

Climax

The stepsisters try to force their feet
into the slipper, but it fits Cinderella.

The prince says he will marry
the women who the slippers fits.

Cinderella leaves hurriedly at
midnight and loses a slipper.

Cinderella and the prince
marry.

Cinderella goes to the ball
and dances with the prince.

Falling action

A fairy godmother appears and
provides Cinderella with clothes,
coach, and footmen.

Rising action

The stepsisters prepare for
and go to the ball.

Cinderella lives unhappy
with her stepsisters and
their mother.

An invitation to
a ball at the
palace arrives.

They live happily
ever after.

Introduction

Resolution

3. **Point of View** is the narrator, or speaker who tells the story.

   a. Omniscient narrator: narrator has ability to move freely through the consciousness of any character.

   b. Participant/first-person: narrator is an active participant in the text. Often refers to himself/herself as "I". Could be major/minor character.

   c. Observer: first person narrator that is relatively detached from or plays a minor role in the events.

   d. Non-participant/third person: does not appear in the story as a character but is able to comment on the actions of the text/reveal thoughts and motives of other characters.

   e. Unreliable narrator: A narrator who relates events in a subjective/distorted manner.

   When evaluating the point of view it is important to consider: Who is telling the story and why?

4. **Setting** is the time and place of the story.

   a. When does the story happen? (moment in historical time)

   b. What is the duration of the story? (how long do the events take to unfold)

   c. Where does the story happen? (physical space and cultural/historical context)

   d. Atmosphere: what is the mood of the story?

   When evaluating the setting it is important to consider: How does the setting of the story affect the characters and their motivations?

5. **Tone** is the attitude toward a subject conveyed in a literary work.

6. **Style** is the distinctive way in which a writer uses language.

7. **Diction** is word choice or vocabulary. When evaluating diction it is important to consider: What does the writer's use of words reveal about the story? What does diction reveal about characters? (education, class, culture, personality, etc.)

Literary Devices

1. **Irony** is a literary device in which what is meant is different from how it is said or expressed. This is the most frequently used literary device within the tradition because of its symbolic character: to say one thing and in reality mean another.

2. **Theme** is the main idea or larger meaning of a work of literature. (What is the story/text about?) It is not plot, nor summary, nor subject. It tells more than what happens in the story. "The theme you identify should be a general idea that extends beyond the story and applies to the world outside fiction." (Kirszner and Mandel, 225)

3. **Symbol** is a person, place, or thing that suggests more than its literal meaning. (Ex. The whale in Moby Dick, the ring in Lord of the Rings)

   a. Though the text might call attention to a symbol, it will not explicitly give you its meaning. Meaning is created through context and interpretation.

   When evaluating symbolism it is important to consider the following questions: Why does the text highlight/focus so much on a particular object? What could it mean within the context of the story?

4. **Allegory** is a story in which persons, places, and things form a system of clearly labeled equivalents. The text explicitly gives you the meaning (Ex. The Divine Comedy, Animal Farm). Allegories communicate messages, or moral principles by making them into narratives in which the characters personify ideas, concepts, qualities, or other abstractions (Kriszner and Mandell, 194).

Useful Writing Techniques

1. Summary–a brief statement or account of the main arguments/events of the text. It serves to economize space and gauges reading comprehension.

   Example: "In James Cameron's Titanic, the namesake ship sinks."

2. Paraphrase–to restate a particular passage/excerpt from the text using your own words. This gauges critical thinking/analysis of the text.

   Example: When Rose tells Jack, "paint me like one of your French girls," she is telling him that she wants to be perceived as an erotic and sensual person worthy of love.

Writing Exercise

1. Summarize the events of a short story, such as "Cat in the Rain" by Ernest Hemingway, then paraphrase what you consider to be the most important passage of the text.

ANALYZING THE ELEMENTS OF FICTION THROUGH OLLER'S *EL VELORIO*

Craig Graham, Ph.D.

Using an image is an effective way to teach elements of fiction, with the advantage that students immediately have the source in front of them, and essentially have completed the reading by just looking at the image. Thus, it is an effective classroom exercise before assigning fiction. Moreover, today's visual culture connects well with students.

Reading *El Velorio* as a Novel

The following exercise uses Francisco Oller's El Velorio, an iconic Puerto Rican painting, and asks students to imagine a narrative from the image. Students creatively write their versions of plot, setting, and characters. Asking students to create these elements of the narrative sharpens their critical thinking before they are asked to read short stories and novels.

The following is an example of this exercise:

1. Plot–The wake of a child born to parents of modest means brings out the best in the townspeople.

2. Setting–After a heavy rain, the townspeople trickled into the large white wooden shack to celebrate the baquiné. There he laid, a child of about two years of age, in a makeshift manger, dressed in white amidst a bed of flowers, the smell of roasting meat, and raucous chatter.

3. Characters–As he entered the room, the well-worn burlap smock that he religiously wore to chop and bind sugar cane under the unforgiving sun announced his arrival. He bowed his head in reverence as he made his way towards the manger where he stood immersed in the memory of the young child he had lost to cholera just weeks before.

4. Style, tone, language–Barrels of aged rum kept melancholy sentiments at bay and removed the inhibitions of those present. Even the Galician priest imbibed with carnal abandon, for the death of a child was cause for celebration, a call to rejoice. As the night proceeded, the solemn eyes of the grief stricken mother slowly brightened and then sparkled as she watched the ironsmith reach for the machete used to carve the roasted pig. The time to eat had finally come!

Another approach is to ask students to analyze a brief fragment of narrative based on a detail of the image, as in this example:

Consider the previous elements of fiction in the following excerpt:

"Abdul, the Arabian night oil lamp vendor who had recently arrived in P.R. with his wife would never have agreed to play his guitar for the baquiné had he known that the sacred tunes of Maghreb that he dexterously played would be eclipsed by the filth of the earth that hung from the ceiling! He asked himself, what had he done to deserve such vile abuse?! When no answer came, he turned away from the lowly creature, set his sights on the green rolling hills outside the house and strung his instrument like a soulless corpse."

- Where is Abdul located in the painting?

- What do we know about him?

- What figurative language in the paragraph supports your assessment of him?

- What symbols are present in this paragraph?

- What is the tone of this paragraph and why? What words/phrases support your answer?

Other Approaches to Analysis

What type of figurative language can be used in each sentence?

- Endless chatter filled the air. Hyperbole

- Some attendees drank like fish. Simile

- Even the dog asked for a slice of roast pork. Personification

- The priest was so close to the attendees yet so far. Paradox

What is the theme of the painting?

- To identify a theme, we require the use of all previous elements of fiction.

- Use evidence from the text to support your point.

- Avoid simplistic one-word descriptions. Ex: Lamentation, Respect, Power, Greed, Love

- Developed Theme: The slave respects and laments the loss of human life in the painting in the most heartfelt way.

Strategies for analyzing a novel

Establish relationships between the aforementioned elements of fiction:

- How does the setting affect the character and plot?

- What tone does the story have? Is there an atmosphere?

- What kind of language does the author use?

- What kind of symbols are present in the story? Look up the ones you don't recognize.

- What sort of comparisons are being drawn using metaphors and similes?

- What themes does the story suggest? How are these present in the story?

READING NONFICTION

Enrique Olivares, M. A.

Nonfiction is prose writing that is based on facts, real events, and real people.

Common types of nonfiction include essays, journalism, biography, documentary, memoir, and history. Some examples include "Noticia de un secuestro," by Gabriel García Márquez, and "Letter from Birmingham Jail," by Martin Luther King Jr.

The essay comes from the French "essayer" which means to "attempt" (Michel de Montaigne's Essais , 16th Century). It is a piece of writing that presents the author's argument/perspective; strives to formulate arguments in a clear and intelligible manner; and is the genre of choice for addressing ideas and polemics.

Types of essays include

- Meditative–the writer is concerned with exploring an idea or a feeling.

- Narrative–the writer recounts a particular or personal event. In the style of a meditative essay.

- Informative–the writer is concerned with giving facts. (News articles, journalism)

- Argumentative–the writer attempts to appeal to the reader's reason as a means of persuasion. (The academic essay)

Essay Structure

- Introduction–the first paragraph of the essay; it presents the topic of the essay and the writer's argument/thesis.

- Body–develops/explains the writer's thesis, and uses data, reason, and analysis.

- Conclusion–summarizes the main arguments of the essay. It does not present any new information or arguments. Ending comments/reflection/suggestions.

Elements of the Essay

- Topic–the subject or issue that is discussed.

- Hook–an introductory sentence meant to grab a reader's attention. It can be an interesting fact/statistic, definition, question, etc.

- Thesis Statement–the writer's main argument for the essay. It should be clear and concise (one sentence) and occur in the last sentence of the introduction.

    Ex. "Racism in Puerto Rico is not only a class-based prejudice, but a cultural one as well."

- Persona–the writer's attitude and style when discussing the topic. A good writer of nonfiction strives for clarity when making arguments. While some texts might include some elements of fiction (or a more literary writing style), the writer is ultimately at a degree of transparency.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN NONFICTION

1. What is the focus of the topic? Is it identifying the causes and/or effects? Is it about providing a solution?

2. What is the big idea? How do we arrive there in the text?

3. How does the writer discuss the topic? Does the writer compare and contrast or define a problem?

4. Identify all of the writer's main ideas and arrange them in order of how persuasive they are.

5. Which are stronger? Which are weaker? Why?

Fiction	Nonfiction
Based on imagination	**Based on fact**
Purpose to stimulate ("entertain")	Purpose to inform
Uses rhetorical devices such as irony, point of view, and plot	Uses facts, data, and arguments

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ Read every day.

☐ Read everything you can get your hands and eyes on: novels, newspapers, gossip magazines.

☐ Always keep guided questions in mind while reading.

☐ Highlight passages that you believe to be important.

☐ Jot down relevant ideas in the margins of the text or in a notebook.

☐ Look up definitions and historical background on words or concepts that you are unfamiliar with.

NOTAS:

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