

Short Writing Exercise 3: Ong and Orality (43.75 points)

Due Sept 30 in class.

Length ~500 - 600 words

Where to Hand in: compose your draft in your class Google Drive folder named "Short Writing Exercises," then post a link to Canvas.

OPTION 1: Use Ong's Concepts to Analyze [Sundiata](#)

Show how, where, and to what extent [Sundiata](#) reveals characteristics of oral composition, as defined by Ong.

[Ong](#) argues that "orally composed texts" have distinctive characteristics. For example, they are often repetitious, redundant, participatory, formulaic, agonistic, and focused on narrative rather than analysis. They often feature formulas or "prefabricated" phrases and stories, chainlike structures, associational logic and topic shifts, short, relatively simple (syntactically and semantically) units, and elements that "appeal to the ear," and are thus memorable. Note that the "[Sundiata](#)" text has been translated, so your analysis will involve some guesswork. Give it your best shot, and don't be afraid to speculate.

OPTION 2: Use Secondary Orality Handout to Analyze a Trump Speech

[Sacacas](#) extends Ong's ideas, suggesting that social media remixes writing and speech in ways that invite particular communicative styles. The distinctiveness and effectiveness of President Trump's use of language may derive in part from his mastery of such styles of communication. Use this [handout on secondary orality to analyze Trump's CPAC speech](#). Support your interpretation with quotations from both the handout material and the President's speech.