

Rhetorical Situation Worksheet

Your name:

Ashley Almazo Villanueva

Completing this worksheet may take more time than you think. It's worth the time. The information you gather will help you later when writing up assignments. But more importantly, the process of addressing each of the questions below will slowly work to change *how* you read texts. Keep in mind that some answers will not be obvious or even observable in the text, and so you may have to do some critical thinking and, at times, even some online research. Use full sentences. Take as much space as you need.

Context & Exigence: What topic/conversation is this text responding to? What year is the text published? What is the exigence--that is, what motivating occasion/issue/concern prompted the writing? The motivating occasion could be a current or historical event, a crisis, pending legislation, a recently published alternative view, or another ongoing problem.

The topic/conversation the text "Nobody Mean More to Me Than You And the Future Life of Willie Jordan" is responding to is racism and the importance of Black English in School . The text was published in 1988. The exigence is the unjust killing of Jordan's younger brother, when he was unarmed and killed by the police, which highlights the broader issue which has gone on in Black communities for a long time. While he shares his own personal experiences, this ongoing problem has affected many other people who face similar discrimination.

Author: Who is the author of this text? What are the author's credentials and what is their investment in the issue? Don't know? Look it up!

The author of this text is June Jordan. She attended Barnard College and the University of Chicago. Later she taught English and literature and African American studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Through being an author she investigated social and personal concerns through poetry, essays, and drama. Her investment in this issue is focused on fighting for the inclusion of black studies and third world studies in university curricula.

Text: What is the genre of the text (e.g., poem, personal essay, essay, news/academic article, blog, textbook chapter, etc.)? What is the original publication and what can you find out it? How might the genre and publication have influenced what the writer chose to do?

The genre of the text is a personal essay. The original publication date is 1985 in the text "On Call: Political Essays." The publication of this writing might have influenced what she chose to do by allowing her to be vulnerable with her own experiences, which likely reached an academic audience which lead her to continue writing and teaching.

Audience: Who is the author's intended audience? What can you infer about the audience (think about beliefs and political association but also age, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, profession, education, geographic location, religion, etc.)? Look for clues from the text (especially the original publication) to support your inference.

The authors intended audience are students who face discrimination because of their use of Black English. Not only Black students but other immigrant students who might use slang from their country or

anyone who might use different pronunciation based on where they live. There could be different audiences such as teachers who should learn this importance, therefore there is not one specific intended audience. Regarding beliefs, some individuals might be supportive while others might question black english and its importance

Purpose: What is the author trying to accomplish? To persuade, entertain, inform, educate, call to action, shock? How do you know?

The author is trying to inform others that Black English is its own language. There are many parts to the way Black people speak English, and it comes from a part of their history that's why it is important to recognize. Jordan uses her reflections as a call to action because of the many challenges that Black people face just because of the words they speak that eventually lead to worse outcomes therefore she uses this writing in order to get change.

Argument: What do you believe is the main claim/idea/argument that the author is trying to communicate? What stance does s/he take?

The main claim that the author is trying to communicate is that language is a part of one's identity therefore someone else, especially teachers within the education system, can not take or teach that away from someone. Language, or Black English is a part of culture and expressing oneself.

Evidence: How is the argument supported? Types of support include reasons and logical explanations as well as evidence. Types of evidence include anecdotes, examples, hypothetical situations, (expert) testimony, quotes, citing sources, statistics, charts/graphs, research the author or another source conducts, scientific or other facts, general knowledge, historical references, metaphors/analogies, etc.

“Nonetheless, White standards of English persist, supreme and unquestioned, in these United States. Despite our multi-lingual population, and despite the deepening Black and White cleavage within that conglomerate, White standards control our official and popular judgments of verbal proficiency and correct, or incorrect, language skills, including speech.”

“It was hard. For most of the students, learning Black English required a fallback to patterns and rhythms of speech that many of their parents had beaten out of Them.”

“There are three qualities of Black English—the presence of life, voice, and clarity that intensify to a distinctive Black value system that we became excited about and self-consciously tried to maintain.”

“After experiencing a situation like this and researching South Africa I believe that to a large degree, justice may only exist as rhetoric. I find it difficult to talk of true justice when the oppression of my people both at home and abroad attests to the fact that inequality and injustice are serious problems whereby Blacks and Third World people are perpetually short-changed by society.”

Citation: Add the correct MLA or APA bibliographic entry for this text. Use easybib.com if you prefer.

Jordan, June. "Nobody Mean More to Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan." *Harvard Educational Review*, Aug. 1988, engl110ccnyl.commons.gc.cuny.edu/content/iune_iordan/.

Notes: What do you want to remember about this text?

As a student Black English has completely gone over my head because I have gone to school for so long with people of color that it felt like the way any other normal person talked. After reading "Nobody Mean More to Me Than You And the Future Life of Willie Jordan" I want to remember how it is deeper than just a way of speaking. Like many of the people around me use slang, it is not simply that but its own language.