

English 104 Midterm Writing Assignment

Overview

For your first major writing assignment, you may choose to write an essay or a non-essay. Either choice should demonstrate your understanding of one of the elements of fiction we have discussed so far.

Non-essay option:

- A. Re-write a portion of one of the stories we have read from a different POV or with a different narrator, or both. This should be about 2-3 pages long (size 12 font, typed, double spaced). In addition to this creative task, you should write a 1-2 page reflection essay about why you chose to write the story the way you did and what changed about the way the story was told with a different narrator and/or POV. Consider the following questions: Did a different narrator/POV make the actual events of the story change? How did the tone change because of narrator/POV? What descriptions or events were different for the readers in your version of the story?

Note: If you do this “re-write” it’s important that you *don’t* just write the author’s words and change the pronouns (ex. don’t just change “The thousand injuries of Fortunato **I** had borne as best **I** could” to “ “The thousand injuries of Fortunato **he** had borne as best **he** could.”

Yes, this does effectively change the narration from first to third person; however, it still uses *the exact language of the character Montressor*. If someone else were telling the story, we assume they would tell it differently, using different language, emphasizing different points, maybe even starting at a different part of the story. Consider this: if you and someone close to you take the same class, what are the chances that you would use THE EXACT same language to summarize a lesson from class? Not a chance. This is the whole point of thinking about Point of View and Narrator. You’re thinking about how changing the person telling the story changes the story itself.

Student Example

Reflection

In the story "The Lesson" I decided to rewrite my story through Miss. Moore's perspective. In the original story we get to see it through the eyes of Sylvia. I wanted the story to come from Miss. Moore because she was coming from a good place. In the story I wanted to be inside her mind while the kids go through this experience. I was hoping that writing the story this way it would show her intentions more. She just wanted the kids to truly get a sense of the world outside of their own. I know it can be so hard to try and break free from all you know when you are so young. Having an adult figure help you and try and change your mind can make all the difference. Miss. Moore was able to educate herself and use her education to try and help others. So we see her test the kids throughout the story by putting them in scenarios she hopes they won't act in a typical way. The tone in the story changes by having Miss. Moore's point of view be more hopeful. We don't see much of the kids reactions in this story which can make Miss. Moore seem more helpful. In the original story she just seems like a know it all. Sylvia throughout the story talks about how much she hates how she is always talking about things like she is better. But in this version we see her true intentions. She just wants the kids to want better in their lives. She gets frustrated in moments of the story when they can't understand certain things. We didn't get to see that in the original story but in this version we do. Having the story written this way we see why Miss. Moore is the way she is and why she takes the kids to the store. She is ultimately doing all of these things for their best interest. She wants to see them one day being able to afford all these things and live like this. She even mentions in this story about the neighborhood they are growing up in and wants they to really understand how bad it is. In the original story we just hear her in the background as Sylvia tunes her out. I tried to make her voice be heard more when in the original story Sylvia doesn't get

a chance to listen to her. This way I wanted us to really hear her and have her point truly comes across more. Miss. Moore's intentions come out a lot more in this version and I want her to not be seen as just a pretentious person. She is still living in the same neighborhood as the kids and in this story she talks about how she grew up this way so she knows how the kids feel. Her goal is a bit more clear having written the story this way.

POV Rewrite

Material Things (Rewrite of "The Lesson" by Toni Cade Bambara)

It was the summer when I decided to move into a new neighborhood. I noticed all the children in the neighborhood and I knew I wanted to take them outside this world they knew. The kids thought of me differently since I would sometimes get certain looks from them. I didn't really like makeup since my complexion was darker than most. The kids probably talked about that as well since their mothers usually wore a lot of makeup. They knew me as Miss. Moore I never gave them the chance to know my first name. I

always noticed how some of the girls who would come with me on trips would put on their best clothes. It was probably some outfit they were forced to wear by their mothers. Especially since they knew they were going to be hanging out with me all day and thought I'd be taking them to fancy places. I decided the best thing I could do for myself was educate myself. So in my earlier years I got myself a college education. With my education I felt like it was my duty to take these kids out into a world they did not know. I was one of these kids once and I know what it is like to be so ignorant to the rest of the world. One day I decided to take them somewhere I felt they would benefit from and a place they would gain a lot of knowledge. I decided to bring Sylvia her cousin sugar, Ronald and Rosie, Sylvia called them by their nicknames but I always called them by their real names. While we all waited for our cabs I asked the kids if they knew anything about large amounts of money. I figured they would probably tell me yes but I knew coming from the neighborhoods they grew up in they probably didn't have much of an idea. I tried to explain to them the value of money and the cost of living. I wanted them to truly understand how much you needed in order to truly survive. I mentioned how their parents had to pay for rent and if they had any idea how much that was. I tried to get them to understand about the unfortunate part of town they lived in and if they could see how bad it was. I just wanted them to understand so they could one day want to have lots of money and be able to get out this life and want better for themselves. So I handed Sylvia a five

dollar bill and got into the other cab with the kids. As I get in the cab I tell Sylvia to tip the cab driver a 10 percent tip. I know she won't be able to do the math and will probably pocket the money, but I tell her anyways hoping she does the right thing. The kids don't know that we are headed to the fancy part of town somewhere I know they have not been to. Fifth Avenue is where we end up I noticed Sylvia immediately see this white lady in her large fur coat. I am hoping they notice all the people around them and how much different they look than they do. "This is the place" I manage to say to them. As we are all looking in the windows I hear Sugar in the distance as if they can steal. I simply roll my eyes and hope that once they are inside they can get a better outlook on life. Ronald found interest in this microscope and I wanted to know what he wanted to see with it. I was hoping he would be interested in all the organisms and forms of life you can see. I tried to explain to him about the real use of it but he didn't seem to

understand . So I felt that if I began to take them towards the more expensive items it would impact them more. We pass by this beautiful giraffe and this paperweight. I explain to them how you use it at home to keep your papers organized and not have things fly all over the place. The kids immediately tell me how they don't have anywhere in their home to even use this. They completely miss my point about how important it is for them to make a place in their home so that they can keep things organized and track the things they have. "I don't even have a home" I hear Ronald shout out. I know he

does but this is probably his story he likes to tell to get pity this is something I have seen kids do in order to not have to deal with adults asking them about anything serious.

“Handcrafted sailboat of fiberglass at one thousand one hundred ninety-five dollars” I hear all the kids repeat this number out-loud I hope the price of this sailboat makes they truly understand how they are living. They even begin to question the cost of a real life yacht which makes me get excited. I need them to understand how outside of their lives there is

so much more for them. They can have such amazing things in life and be one of these people in the store being able to afford these things and not be so sheltered. “Watcha bring us here for, Miss Moore?” I hear Sylvia ask me. I can sense her anger and I want to know what she has thought about the experience here. Instead I get the opposite reaction and she says she is bored. I wanted to break through to her so bad I truly wanted her to understand.