



Paths into Excellence: Journal-Writing as Bedrock for Rhetoric

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Stand Still - An Introduction

My sister once told me that she would, if she were lost, rather find her own way out of the woods than be rescued and still not know her whereabouts or have acquired the skills to find home. This it has resonated in me some fifteen plus years, and now I share it with my students. I also read with them David Wagoner's poem, "Lost," which gives the advice to stand still and let the forest find you, that "wherever you are is called here." ¹ I want my students to know this but I further want them to realize that in standing still, they not only allow themselves to be found but they, more importantly, can find themselves to know their selves.

For students of today, it is increasingly easier, and perhaps more likely, to feel lost or become disconnected in this rapidly growing and ever changing society. While in some ways they can readily connect to, and participate in, society via technology, I believe those connections often take them away, superficially, from their immediate situations and conditions, and actually aggravate or perpetuate any alienation they may feel. It is difficult enough for adults, who presumably have the necessary skills and resources, to find their way in society and to have confidence in themselves, knowing who they are and what they believe. But for teens, being lost in society is even more distressing because they have yet to fully develop skills or the know-how for accessing and employing resources; and if they are not engaged in their own education or fail to establish a meaningful connection in the classroom, they easily find distractions that interfere with serious reflection and productive learning. Worse, though, this behavior hinders them, perhaps permanently, from actively and consciously seeking a truer sense of being. This condition leaves them vulnerable to the manipulations and persuasions of peers, politicians and advertising agencies that represent corporate interests, and not the interests of the students. Thus youth become subjects to be rescued or objects to be used, and rarely their own potential.

Walk with Persuasion - A Rationale

Becoming one's potential is not easy for anyone, and with all of today's technological conveniences and seeming lack of want, it's easy to not bother. Youth want to but do not necessarily know how. So, they look to, and follow the ways of, each other, not seeing that they have the potential within themselves and that they just need to harness it with their own discipline. But doing so demands hard work, dedication and an awareness that helps one see the lay of land and surrounding woods. Even more, it requires an active, thriving imagination that helps one make distinctions in the landscape and determine the best methods and routes to success. And still, this is not all. Students need tools that will help them traverse any terrain. Journal-writing and rhetoric are two means through which students can obtain these invaluable tools.

Imagine a school filled with students who truly are self-aware to the degree that brain development at their age allows. Then imagine these students empowered with the realization that they can change their circumstances by changing their mindset. Add to that a clear understanding of rhetoric and a regimented written and spoken practice of it, and we end up with students who are prepared to engage with the world. Fostering their realizations that Education is truly their own and that it actually can open doors for them will, one, reduce the need for argument and, two, strengthen their ability to argue. They will know their selves and how to persuade others, and also when and why there is a need to. This, I believe, provides paths for walking with persuasion into excellence.

Standing and Walking - Objectives and Subject Matter

The crux of this unit lies in the integration of rigorous journal-writing, a crucial approach to authentic writing, and the art of rhetoric with emphasis on the five steps for constructing a classical speech - Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory and Delivery. Journal-writing offers an incredible paths to self-exploration and consciousness that puts the onus on the writers to take responsibility for their own education. I offer my own TAO (Theorize, Associate and Observe) Method of journal-writing as a modern interpretation of the first step of speech writing, called Invention, that Cicero, the ancient Roman orator, described. I argue that Invention in academic writing is too often overlooked while Arrangement, the second step, is given disproportional preference, especially with regard to formulaic writing, i.e. the 5-paragraph essay. I also offer modern interpretations for the other four steps in writing that likewise find their impetus in journal-writing. I add to this a discussion of how journal-writing is the practice ground for dealing with audience and for appreciating *kairos*, the ancient Greek term for the right or opportune moment when something can happen. Practiced together, all these heuristic steps and processes become bedrock for rhetoric allowing for self-empowerment that all students need in order to comprehend their lives and navigate the world via persuasion. I include in this unit a brief discussion of the value in imitating Abraham Lincoln's writings and speeches, especially the Gettysburg and 2nd Inaugural Addresses, and suggestions for writing various types of speech writing based upon Lincoln's models and others, i.e. eulogies and formal addresses, and Ciceronian denunciations. Also included are examples from *Lord of the Flies* of embedded frames and conceptual metaphors. The general objectives for this unit are to engage students in reading texts, exploring ideas and thought, discovering frames and conceptual metaphors, writing journal reflections as well as informal and formal essays, attempting to persuade through written word and speech, and, ultimately, taking action to problem-solve by

changing their selves, their communities and the world for the better. This unit also attempts to cover aspects of all the major categories of the California Standards for ninth and tenth grades: Vocabulary, Reading, Literary Response and Analysis, Writing Strategies and Applications, Written and Oral English Language Conventions, Listening and Speaking and Speaking Applications. ²

About Persuasion

What are thoughts without words? What are ideas without thought? And, without words, could we even consider answers or begin to frame them in our minds? These questions touch upon the potential that words have, that the words of one person can influence the thoughts of another, making the other concede to agree with the former persons' words and the ideas they represent. That potential is power, and power yields possibilities. But one must perceive them, and frame them with words. What I'm teasing out, in my own words, is far better said, and explicitly defined, by a master framer of persuasion himself, Aristotle: "Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion." ³ The key word in Aristotle's definition is *observation*. A powerful persuader is only so because she first developed a keen sense of perception, not the five senses per se, but the faculties they trigger in her mind in relation to the issues or arguments and all the people, facts and opinions involved. Why persuasion? Subconsciously, every child knows the answer: because we want to know the truth, and then what to do with it. And *truth*, according to David Hume, "springs from argument among friends." ⁴ Children, however, do not always tell the truth; neither do adults. That's why it is vital to know how to ascertain, when in argument, what is true, and how to engage with and react to others with regard to it. And there is a system, an art, to achieving this, which allows for the sharpening of minds, like swords, through engaged thinking. Cicero, whom I will introduce below, says of it, "I think we must say something of the nature of the art itself; of its duty, of its end, of its materials, and of its divisions. For when we have ascertained those points, then each man's mind will, with the more ease and readiness, be able to comprehend the system itself, and the path which leads to excellence in it." ⁵ I agree, but I want to add that ascertaining those points is a process that works, reciprocally, on the person that applies them, and towards their own excellence in character.

A Bit About The Persuaders

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher (384-322 BCE) distinguished as a primary founding figure in Western Philosophy (along with his teacher, Plato, and Plato's teacher, Socrates), used words prolifically. He wrote with great wisdom upon an amazing array of topics, from physics to zoology, and his words, particularly as they relate to this unit, are quite influential. He developed concepts in ethics, logic, rhetoric, politics, and government, and established, in his rhetoric, the tools of persuasion (*Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*) considered most powerful: "...The first kind [*Ethos*] depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second [*Pathos*] on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third [*Logos*] on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself." ⁶ A further delineation of these tools is below, but first it is important to (re)introduce another great rhetorician: Cicero.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (born 106 BCE), like Aristotle, was a prolific writer and speaker who used his influential words in the capacity of philosopher, lawyer, political theorist, statesman and Roman constitutionalist. He worked with, and against, Julius Caesar, trying to guard the Republic from Caesar's tyranny. He uncovered a conspiracy led by Lucius Sergius Catalina (Cataline) against himself and the Roman Republic, and used his oratorical skills in four speeches, the Cataline Orations, to persuade the Senate, indirectly, to take fatal action against Cataline. Cicero's persuasive, verbal attacks, called Ciceronian Denunciations, are outstanding samples of his rhetorical style. It was his use of rhetoric that made him powerful, but it is his use and

recommendation of the classic five steps - Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery - for preparing speeches that are important here. These, too, are further delineated below.

About Persuading: How? *Ethos*, *Logos*, and *Pathos*. (H.E.L.P.)

Aristotle categorizes into thirds the persuasive effect that words have: *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*. A speaker's "character [*Ethos*] may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses." Jay Heinrichs, in his accessible and humorous book *Thank You For Arguing*, gives an illustrative anecdote in which he teaches his children that "lying isn't just wrong, it's unpersuasive." ⁷ The idea of this implies the importance of self-awareness, and teaches the need for establishing one's character in behavior, yes, but especially through words as one speaks them. Aristotle's second category for being persuasive is that it "may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions [*Pathos*]." He explains, "Our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile. It is towards producing these effects, as we maintain, that present-day writers on rhetoric direct the whole of their efforts... Thirdly," he continues, "persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question [*Logos*]." ⁸ This points out a teachable skill of problem solving by implying the need for focusing on a desired outcome and the logic or reasoning that will produce the outcome.

Cicero's Five Steps for Ordering a Speech

Do Persuasion's words need order? Yes, but an order that emanates from within, and not imposed from without. Cicero, who was a master of persuasion, and whose own speeches are well ordered, recommended the following steps: Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory and Delivery. I include my argument for writing journals daily, and in a highly structured manner, as a vehicle for finding inward order to match an outward order of words. With the other four steps, I include more arguments for empowering students.

Invention

Invention is the development of an idea for arguing. In *Thank You for Arguing*, Jay Heinrichs provides a clear exposition of a process for generating Invention. ⁹ In summary, he suggests starting with one's own wants and the goals for those wants: changing people's moods, minds or willingness to do something. Then determine the type of rhetoric needed for approaching the audience: Past, concerned with using forensics to identify blame; Present, involved with demonstrating peoples' values and belief systems; and Future, related to deliberating choices. Of course, the issue at hand must be clearly understood and noted as to its simplicity or complexity, and if the latter, identifying its simple components. Prepare one's self by knowing how to argue all sides of an issue, and how any opponents might approach it. Then, revisit all the parts of the issue and what one thinks of it, determining what is central to the argument, to any proposals and desired effects, and then narrow-down and focus one's argument and all its components.

The general thrust, and most important part, of Invention is about brainstorming all the rhetorical tools available in persuasion. Again, *Thank You For Arguing* does a thorough job of discussing them while providing relevant and humorous anecdotes. This section primarily focuses on *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*, the three types of proof that Aristotle taught. I write about them here as they might be used in the second step, Arrangement, but also with the directive that students can discover and develop them via their journals.

Begin with establishing one's *Ethos*, or character, for the audience. Convince them of one's credibility as a person, especially that one has goodwill, practical judgment and virtue. Remember that *Ethos* is about the

audience's perception of the speaker's character. Students need to be aware that an audience will be checking, often unconsciously, for their decency as a person and for shared commonalities. Thus, they need to appease the audience with their goodwill. They also need to convince the audience they possess good judgment, and that they have the audience's best interest at heart. This is to convey that one is virtuous.

Students can find their own character embedded, though usually concealed, in their journal responses, and also perceive places where their writing belies their true character, where they perhaps have given an account of the past that is biased in their favor. Of course their day-to-day actions also reveal their character. Examining both provides good introspection and a means for students to identify their own need for growth in character.

Logos comes next. It is the crux of the argument and the part where past, present and future, in the rhetorical sense, are applied. Moreover, it is the point in the argument where facts and logic take precedence. Students need to decide what they want their audience to do: whether to make a determined judgment about something from the *past*, i.e. guilt or innocence; to feel a particular way about themselves in the *present*, i.e. being part of a community or having a common enemy, or being proud or ashamed of successes or failures, etc.; or to make a decision or act upon something in the *future*, i.e. a particular way to vote or action to take, etc.

Once each student identifies their desired outcome, they must tailor their argument to the past, present or future. If the outcome is to illicit judgment, the speaker must articulate what happened, provide evidence about who or what was responsible, and elucidate why what happened was right or wrong. Justice is the primary principle for this type of argument. If the outcome is to generate a feeling in the audience with regard to the present, the speaker needs to clearly describe the current situation and how it came to be, explaining the significance of it and revealing what is honorable or shameful about us, especially in the eyes of the audience. If the outcome is for a decision or action, then the speaker must make their particulars clear to the audience, and show that the choice or act is possible. The speaker must also point out any likely effects the choice or act will have, and why that effect will be best for the audience. The latter point is the most important. The main criterion for this type of argument is benefit, or advantage.

Third in the basic order for an effective speech is *Pathos*. This is about inducing a particular feeling in the audience by the end of the speech, and in direct relations to what type of argument is chosen. Thus, students must be mindful of what emotions best suit the desired outcome. If, for example, a speaker establishes an argument in the past, where guilt is the judgment sought, then anger is what will help stir the audience to judge. If the opposite judgment is more important, then soothing or calming is the best approach. Creating fear in an audience against a common enemy will help unite them towards a cause. We have all witnessed this in propaganda during wartime. The Bush Administration used it to great effect in uniting Americans against terrorists, and other perceived enemies. Making an audience hopeful serves to move them towards success. Making them feel brave helps alleviate fear, and instilling resolve creates motivation.

Of course, for each argument there is likely more than one emotion that serves *Pathos*, but choosing the most effective one is key. For students, highly structured journal-writing that promotes self-awareness is a great way to get them to see how their own emotions have moved them. The one emotion that does not serve *Pathos* is despair. Aristotle considered anger, patriotism and emulation to be most effective. Patriotism was stirred after 9/11 with added help from fear. Emulation is a positive emotion where people are stirred by the character of others, i.e. firefighters and police officers who sacrificed their lives for others. Knowing whom an audience admires is not always easy to determine, though. There are some things to consider for *Pathos*.

Students will be more persuasive if they make it appear that the triggered emotions were naturally present in the audience, and not a product of manipulation. So, they need self-control of their own emotions, and should allow a slow building of affect in the audience that culminates at the end of the speech. *Pathos* delivered too soon in a speech smacks of insincerity.

A thorough explanation of journals is important at this point, for they are the best source of Invention and a requisite, if not essential, process for helping students develop the art of rhetoric. Student journals are filled with arguments of varying degrees of development. Nonetheless, it is imperative that they invent their own topics from their own ideas. These ideas are likely to be threadbare; so, it is fitting that teachers facilitate the process of discovery and development, but the ideas should be generated from something *they* are passionate about.

A Rationale for Journals: The journal is the means to writing authentically about experience and thought. It is a record and history of the student's learning. Classwork and homework are completed within it (long essays and class handouts excepted) and in chronological order. The journal becomes proof of one's participation and learning, and a tangible source of introspection. It further becomes a progressive resource where students develop their thinking and reasoning, their vocabulary and writing, and their sense of self and beliefs, albeit with some guidance. In a sense, it is a type of consecutive palimpsest where previous journal entries are often revisited for further inquiry into the mind of the writer, and the ideas and beliefs contained within.

My intent with this curriculum unit, is to guide students, via their journals, through a process that allows for self-discovery so they can "come to terms with who, and what, they really are," which, according to John J. Ratey in *A User's Guide to the Brain*, is necessary "before people can really begin to understand why they think, speak, love, laugh, cry, or see the world as they do."¹⁰ It is equally necessary, I believe, to provide students with the tools that will enable them to become the people they want to be, morally and professionally. Therefore, teaching them to recognize conceptual metaphors and how arguments and beliefs are framed, as elucidated by George Lakoff and explained further below, is fundamental to enabling students to transform themselves. Once they come to terms with themselves, they can begin to reframe their own thinking, if need be, turning self-imposed limits into confidence and freedom.

What is the Journal? Generally speaking, a student journal is a record of news and events that includes personal beliefs and insights on the topics at hand. Typically, the journal is considered more of a strategy for getting kids to write, but for this unit, and in my practice, it also becomes a primary, and increasing, document of content: the students' growing and conscious minds. Consciousness is the starting point for ideas and beliefs. It is the impetus for writing journal reflections, and then transforming them into essays and poems that will reflect the personal growth and foundational development of an educated mind. John Ratey illustrates the importance of consciousness and how to create it. Basically, he says that our understanding of things comes from paying close attention and being conscious, that through their interconnection we each get our individual sense of self.¹¹ Consciousness is repeated and developed attention to particulars.¹² Thus, once a significant number of daily writings have been completed, students will comb over their writings, with teacher guidance, examining their diction, syntax, beliefs, attitudes and feelings, looking for the frames and conceptual metaphors that shape their thoughts. This process creates awareness of their patterns of thinking and writing, and stimulates their consciousness. I will lead them with questions as to why those patterns may exist and how they, generally, came to be. This directs them back to their life experiences and an investigation into how those experiences shaped their beings. A more focused search into persuasive influences, such as media and family, and how knowing the art of persuasion can strengthen one's own being, especially with regard to achieving one's needs, will ensue.

Journal Responses Become Invention: Because I want my students to incorporate the art of rhetoric into their consciousness, and not just learn its elements, it is imperative that I direct them back to their journal responses to find potential for Invention already present in their lives, especially with issues that might be overwhelming and disconcerting to their wellbeing. I will lead my students through a close inspection of their own words and the frames and beliefs embedded in them. This is done, generally, by identifying specific diction that the students use to describe their situations and observations, and the verbs that reveal intensity. This process reveals the point of view that my students assume as they look upon their lives, making explicit their own emotions and fears, but more importantly, where in time they are figuratively standing: in the past, present or future.

In rhetoric, past, present and future refer to how one frames an argument: the past is about blame, the present is about virtues and the future is about decision making; but with knowing one's self, it relates to how one frames a mindset. An example: "My father used to play with me and my brothers and sisters, but now he's always stressed out about something. The first thing he does whenever he sees me is get angry because I haven't done my chores. Even if I had just gotten home!" What these words convey is the student's feeling of loss that a change has occurred in the relationship and that they do not fully understand why it has occurred or even why the father's disposition has apparently also changed. What becomes clear is that the student has placed not only her argument (blame) but herself in the past. The student may have felt victimized by the father's situation and behavior, but it is the student that keeps herself in the past by fostering the feelings. Her language makes it explicit that she misses a former relationship and the way her father appeared to act before, but it also implies that the student is not seeing from the present. She is ruled by the past. If this example were written in a future mindset it likely would be an argument of indecision framed by anxiety or fear: "I don't know how to deal with my father. He's always angry and upset about something..." A present mindset would, I believe, create the healthiest, and most objective, mindset (and *nonargument*): "My father is struggling with a lot of issues, and is often upset at home, but I'm doing my best to make things better." Teaching students, via their journal responses, to determine how they frame their mindset, and then how to alter their frames will make them more conscious of how they think and use language. I believe that the best place to frame one's mind is in the present. It is the only time that allows for objectivity and consciousness, and fluidity between the past and future. Standing in the Past connotes being ruled or driven by emotions, especially anger and such. Standing in the Future means to be imprisoned or agitated by emotions, especially fear and anxiety. Walking in the Present joins the two, progressively. Even the rhetorical definitions for Past, Present and Future imply this truth. The Past is about forensics, discerning systematically who or what is to blame. But blame is only the identifying of an incident or event that has passed, and which is no longer present. It is, quite literally, a dead argument and the least productive. The Future requires deliberation for things yet to come. While this is the most productive place to argue, it demands that the arguers know what they value and why, whether or not their deliberations are consistent with their values. The Present is about values, which are the most difficult to persuade others over, but when people know their selves as much as possible, given their circumstances and maturity, they will be demonstrative of their values, and will more likely have a greater, and apparent, *Ethos*.

Think of the Past as a merry-go-round. When we dwell in the Past, we are like a child playing on a merry-go-round. If a current situation triggers an emotion connected to a past experience, the merry-go-round is likely to begin spinning. In order to cope or hang on, we move to the center of that emotion, and thus anything we say or do is rooted in the emotion and magnified in intensity as it is hurled outward, and often at random. Think of the Future as an exercise-wheel. Dwelling in the Future creates anxiety as one strives or hopes for particular results but, regardless of effort, keeps one in place without effecting results. Think of the Present as freely walking. Walking in the Present allows an individual to turn in new directions and move forward in

setting goals. It also allows an open, and less defensive, discussion of one's values. I teach my students that being in the present, while free to revisit the past and speculate on the future, provides them the most freedom and objectivity. Moreover, it helps them view their issues and the people involved. Once they become aware of possible timeframes for thinking, and practice writing in each, especially the present, then engage them in the practice of rhetoric. Learning to think, write and speak in the present, but also in the past and future, empowers students to be able to free themselves from any mindset that is detrimental to their wellbeing. Students endure their adolescence seemingly ruled by their emotions, unable to focus on their own education. In fact, many students never opt into Education because they view and experience it as something outside of themselves, and understandably so. School systems more often than not are structured in a manner that reinforces the notion that adults possess the knowledge, which students need. When in fact, every human being innately has a wealth of knowledge and life experience that is too often underestimated and minimized. Journal writing and reflection that is balanced, academically and personally, is a fantastic way for students to develop their own character [*Ethos*], reasoning skills [*Logos*] and objectivity with regard to their own sense of self and others [*Pathos*]. Of course, teacher guidance or coaching is helpful in this process, but even students can, through open discussions, provide meaningful insight to help classmates navigate and overcome challenging issues.

I am aware that mastering the art of rhetoric is independent of any search for, or even awareness of, one's self. Even Jay Heinrichs points out that it is not necessary to be true to one's self to be persuasive; but while conceding his point, I argue that knowing one's self to the fullest extent possible at any given moment, better serves one in discerning what is worth arguing over in the first place.¹³ And, examining one's own rhetoric (in journals) is the means to examining one's own character and being. It is also instrumental in identifying how and when to apply the art of rhetoric; but walking in the present while arguing in the past, present or future is the place from which true rhetorical power emanates. Both arts, in effect, still work in conjunction within the mind to make a person better. Together, they mutually strengthen the self and the self's use of rhetoric, making the application of all the varied tools within Rhetoric a more intuitive skill.

Arrangement

Arrangement requires a conscious ordering of Invention. It is a structuring not only of the argument but one's *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos* in a way designed to influence an audience. Our students' audiences are primarily their families, their peers and their teachers, but also can include literary characters such as Ralph and Jack in *Lord of the Flies*. Arrangement, then, is a needed process for the students to consciously improve or redefine their own character as discovered via the journals in Invention, to better serve their argument in the face of their audience. Essentially, an argument should be arranged according to *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos*, and in that order. For students, the classical order practiced by the greatest orators, including Cicero, illustrates a more structured approach to preparing and giving a persuasive speech, and it parallels the basic order of *Ethos*, *Logos* and *Pathos* developed in Invention.

Classical Order: Introduction, Narration, Division, Proof, Refutation and Conclusion

The six segments for the classical order, noted above, create an easy-to-follow structure that allows for students to form their own argument/speech by incorporating their own Invention. In the first segment, Introduction, students engage in establishing their *ethos*, their credibility in regards to goodwill, practical judgment and virtue. It is the place to establish the audience's interest in the speaker, and in what he has to say. Narration is the segment for clearly delineating the facts in a chronological order so that the audience hears a natural and expected explanation. The facts should be cogent and relevant. Following this, in Division,

the speaker lists the points where he and his audience agree and disagree. It is helpful, at this point, to establish or define exactly what the issues in the argument are, whether ethical, practical, biological, etc. The fourth segment, Proof, is the heart of the argument. This is where the speaker sets out the crux of the argument and any relevant examples. It is the place for *Logos*. Refutation follows this. It is the direct attack upon the opponent's argument. The speaker should be confident of their own Proof and even more so of their ability to refute their opponent's. Naturally, Conclusion brings closure. It is the place for employing *Pathos* in order to skillfully manipulate the audience toward feelings that benefit the speaker's argument.

I familiarize my students, and myself, with the classical order by studying the speeches of great orators such as Cicero and Lincoln, as well as other political speeches and models of persuasion. Even modern documentaries, such as *The Yes Men Fix the World*, are worth examining to determine how they build their *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*. But having an open discussion with the students as they make Arrangement their own, by mulling over their journal writings and sample speeches, is, I think, the most effective way because it allows them to develop their own speech organically and authentically, as well as determine how they will organize them. I allow students to identify the argument they want to make from their own Invention. Then through repeated general class discussions and one-to-one or one-to-three student conferences, I will help them begin to form their arguments, keeping the classical order in mind while allowing their ideas to demand their own form. Their journal writings will already exhibit their own sense of order. Viewing their own will help them see how to reshape it into the classical order. I have found that too much emphasis on Arrangement or form without ample time for Invention runs the risk of producing superficial structures. Thus, essays that rely too much on predetermined structure, i.e. the five-paragraph essay, become a formula rather than a nurturing of a thought into a persuasive piece. Of course, structure has its value, and all things need it, but to each its own. Invention and Arrangement work together in tandem. One informs the other, and the latter should encourage a speaker to revisit, as many times as necessary, the former. The process is reciprocal, and sometimes Arrangement does deserve precedence. I would rather have my students write extremely focused and relevant short-pieces than aimless, unfocused or clichéd ramblings. I do believe, though, that using predetermined forms is most effective in the act of copying, where students consider particular excerpts of great writings and speeches.

Style

Style, in the rhetorical sense, has five virtues/vices: proper language, clarity, vividness, decorum and ornament. Proper language is the suiting of words to the occasion and the audience. Clarity is the quality of coherence and intelligibility, making one's ideas transparent in words. Vividness is about bringing ideas to life through details and narration, as in a brief story or anecdote. Decorum regards the speaker's fitting-in naturally by speaking authentically but in a similar manner as the audience. And ornament refers to the speaker's rhythm in speaking and the application of appropriate but clever usage of words and phrase. These are what that the ancient rhetoricians developed and propagated. They have to do with the speaker's word choice, their diction. Choosing the right words is essential to being persuasive. The ancients argued that style is not the words that make the speaker stand out but rather the words that make the speaker fit in with the audience. Style is the employment of words to make the speaker and the speaker's purposes appealing to the audience. It demands that the speaker consider how the audience will hear and perceive their words. The development of style is also a major part of the writing process. It gets added to the cyclical and reciprocal mix of Invention and Arrangement but usually in later drafts. As with Arrangement to Invention, Style follows Arrangement in tandem, making the writer reconsider how Invention is expressed.

Memory

Memory, perhaps, is the step of writing and giving a speech that most relies on imagination. In the ancient practice of Memory, rhetoricians literally structured their thoughts within an imaginary house or building. The idea is that an inner house allows the speaker to move as comfortably through their speech as though they were moving through their own home. Parts of the speech get equated with rooms in the house, and facts or particulars become pieces of furniture and decorations. The speaker might imagine their Introduction as the front porch or entryway. Their Narration might be a particular room or rooms off the hallway while details within the Narration might be paintings and curtains, etc. The practice of Memory might take years to fully mature, and the imagined structures may change over time, but Memory serves to strengthen one's awareness of self and thought and becomes a sort of palimpsest of the mind where new writings and speeches can inhabit the spaces of old ones. Within the journals, students can develop descriptive pieces of their own memory houses, and will repeatedly return to their writings and imagined houses to sharpen their mental images and reorganize the layout as needed. To the discussion of Memory, I will add the idea that they can also organize their friends and family into the same, or a similar, house as their speeches. In other words, they can practice seeing that one area of their lives, their family for instance, actually and naturally connects to another, their friends. Students can practice imagining interactions between their families and friends in their house, not in a romanticized way but with the intent of empowering themselves to freely flow between their social groupings as confidently as they would in the house of their self. This imaginary house becomes for each of us whatever we wish or need it to be.

Delivery

On a daily basis I have two to three of my students read aloud to the class parts or all of one of their journal responses. I do this for many reasons, one of which is for Delivery. Delivery is the manner in which the speaker presents the speech. Is their volume enough to meet the ears of the audience? Is their voice practiced enough for stability, and is it exercised in flexibility, being able to rise and fall, intensify and abate, etc.? Do they use appropriate or meaningful body language and hand gestures? Can they improve upon their breathing and rhythms of speaking? When my students read aloud, I work with them on Delivery. Sometimes I move to stand at a distance behind them or make them project towards the furthest peer in the room. Other times I have them practice speaking/reading with confidence, teaching them that they must seem to believe what they say, and to say it with conviction. I also let them know that they are free to change their mind about anything they speak with confidence since life will provide them with experiences, anyway, that challenge their ways of seeing and their belief systems.

Audience and Kairos

Just as a speaker looks to an audience for ways to develop *pathos*, the audience looks to the speaker for their *ethos*. It is a serious exchange of sympathy and judgment, derived reciprocally through the art of rhetoric. Audiences will vary in age, gender and culture, as well as in practice of beliefs, religion, politics, etc., but the successful speaker will be well aware of her audience and what they are expecting and wanting to hear, if anything at all. The successful speaker will also be able to read her audience and determine their stance in the argument because she has previously and regularly studied herself to learn who and how and why she is. By knowing herself, she is better able to know other people and perceive whom she is more likely to be able to persuade and how. Audiences, however, are people, too. So, persuade with caution because a successful speaker knows that the audience wants her to be virtuous in matching their value system. *Kairos* is the Greek term that represents the awareness of appropriate timing and proper medium, whether through spoken or

written word and in person or not, or whether through text, email or telephone, radio or television, etc. Kairos is needed at seemingly insignificant points in an argument and in determining when and how to go about delivering one's argument. Mastery of kairos demands its own time in repeated practice. One does not simply have kairos but develops it through conversations and arguments.

The cyclical process of self-exploration and discovery that journal-writing provides is necessary, I argue, in order for students to know themselves (though not necessarily to be true to one's self), especially their own character which is a primary component of rhetoric (*Ethos*). Also, it is important to point out that this intense focus on the self is what will lead students to develop a keener sense of others, still another primary component (*Pathos*). Once a student starts to see their way of perceiving more objectively, it follows that they will better be able, with some guidance, to see the perspectives and motives of others. This will then provide them better perspective of the issues, some of which actually dissipate in the process. And having that clarity of vision fosters the ability to then think with reasoning, a third primary component (*Logos*). Objectivity, to whatever point it can be achieved, even further allows for individuals to recognize, develop and understand their own morals and those of others. Aristotle's reasoning in this, as it relates to *Ethos*, is "It follows that any one who is thought to have all three of these good qualities* will inspire trust in his audience. The way to make ourselves thought to be sensible and morally good must be gathered from the analysis of goodness already given: the way to establish your goodness is the same as the way to establish that of others." ¹⁴ Thus, study of the self becomes understanding of others [*Pathos*], which becomes an understanding of relationships. Communication is vital in relationships. What better way to communicate than through the application of rhetorical tools? *The three qualities Aristotle speaks of are goodwill, practical judgment and virtue. Goodwill is the setting aside of one's own interests for those of the audience. Rhetoric only requires that the speaker have an appearance of goodwill to win over an audience. Practical judgment is about creating a good record of wise choices that impress an audience. Virtue, in the rhetorical sense, is about the audience seeing one as mutually virtuous. I believe, though, that being present-minded naturally aligns one's actual virtues with the audiences' conjectures of one's virtues. [See discussion above in *Invention*]

Effective Stances - Strategies for Excellence

I offer a few strategies that have, in my own practices, proven to be effective in facilitating student growth. The main strategy for this unit, of course, is journal-writing about which much has already been said. Still, more explanation follows. Other strategies include work-shopping student paragraphs and imitating great writers and speakers, which is also part of the daily journal-writings. These strategies reinforce one another and cover a vast array of writing and reading techniques.

The TAO Method of Journal-Writing

The TAO Method is a daily, structured writing practice that requires students to engage in thinking through three modes of writing: theorization, association and observation. Theorize, the first section, is the more formal of the three. Its primary concern is having students write short expositions or arguments about current readings (i.e. *Lord of the Flies*) as prompted by a thematically related poem or quote at the start of each class. The second section, Associate, is about expanding their horizons, making new connections to meaning via imitating other writers and acquiring new and relevant words for their vocabulary. The third and more personal section, Observe, directs students to a fuller awareness of their world by having them describe and

narrate a variety of personal perceptions of their life experiences. All three parts comprise the daily journal-writings.

Theorize: At the heart of this section is the principle that every student must develop their own voice and come to terms with their ways of seeing and, in particular, their ways of perceiving and asserting truths. For this section, which includes quizzes, I teach students to write about the deepest truth(s) they can perceive between the daily prompt and the current readings and class discussions. Most often, I briefly discuss the prompt, a poem or quote, with the students, leading them to see ways in which the prompt connects to the current reading or discussion topic, plus any class activities and school or world news. Everything potentially connects. But sometimes I make them work out the connections on their own or as a class without my assistance. I quiz them the same way.

For quizzes, students must first write a one sentence summary statement of a particular, assigned reading. Their summary statement must include key elements of the reading. After their summary statement, students write a best paragraph that asserts the deepest truth(s) they can perceive from the readings. Doing quizzes in this manner allows students to develop their voice, prove their abilities and, ultimately, be responsible for their own learning. It also is a direct practice of exposition and argument. Every student becomes accountable to his or her own estimate of truth, and perhaps become more open to other people's perspectives. This process further, and more importantly, inverts traditional quizzes that likely only reveal the teacher's perceptions, interests and concerns. Quizzes are written in section one of the daily journal-writings. They can start with or without a prompt. See Classroom Activities below for Class Quizzes.

Associate: The second section is more practical in its approach. It is basically the section for copying excerpts of great writings, as well as sections from a dictionary or thesaurus that address the finding and usage of the right word. Anything goes for this section, as long as it thematically relates or provides further and particular study. I might include scientific or biographical writings, and descriptive writings of art. I find Sister Wendy's writings of famous works of art quite illuminating. I will likely also include some directions for correct grammar usage but in response to the problems in student writings. Whatever is to be copied must be manageable in length. It should only take 10-15 minutes to copy into the journal, and it can be done in class or for homework.

Observe: The third section is where students get to explore their personal, social and school issues to find their selves and determine what makes them who they are and why. Plutarch, the ancient Greek historian and essayist, said, "In words are seen the state of mind and character and disposition of the speaker." A major purpose, for this section, is that students determine their own states of mind, their own character and dispositions as evidenced in their writings. I want them to realize their ways of seeing their selves and others in particular life circumstances. One day they may write about family dynamics and who is most persuasive in their household, and why. Another day, they might assume the mindset of a family member and try to reason as they do. This section will follow sections 1 and 2 thematically. Prompts for Observe will vary accordingly, allowing for students to freely adjust any prompt to their way of seeing as long as they maintain the prescribed standards (asserting deepest truths) for journal-writing. Still, the prompts will relate to class readings and discussions, and particular content instruction such as rhetoric and persuasion.

Frames and Conceptual Metaphors

During the establishment of the journals, I will instruct students about the ideas of framing and conceptual metaphors, as explicated by George Lakoff in his on-line book, *Thinking points*. Briefly, framing is the way words construct argument, ex. tax relief is framed by relief, implying that taxes are a burden. Lakoff explains that the argument for taxes can be reframed by contextualizing them as *dues* for being a citizen in a

democratic society/country. But framing also includes the way *we conceive*. They are, according to Lakoff, "mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality—and sometimes to create what we take to be reality." ¹⁵ Conceptual metaphors are the ways in which our brains *perceive* ideas and beliefs. He uses the example of up = good, down = bad. Neither is necessarily true but we base meaning and understanding upon their concepts. Generally speaking, we hear or believe that Heaven is up and Hell is down. Our ways of perceiving are rampant with conceptual metaphors. Thus, making our use of them explicit to students and having them discover conceptual metaphors in their own writing is invaluable and exciting, and the ramifications of understanding them in context of, and applying them towards, the art of rhetoric is immeasurable.

Four Directives for Journal-Writings

Finally, it is important to address four important directives that have arisen from assessing the practice of journal-writing. The first is creating thematic relevance - make the journal components (prompts, class-work, homework) *thematically relevant* to the current text and classroom discussions/activities. The second directive is establishing *progressive standards* - increase the standards of academic excellence as the journal writing progresses through the unit/year. Making *full inclusiveness* is the third directive - devise the journals so as to include as much class and home work possible, i.e. vocabulary, text-copying, personal reflections and descriptive narratives, etc. The fourth is keeping *manageable checks* - hold the students accountable by establishing a rigorous (bi-monthly) and impromptu (daily) schedule of checks. The latter directive must also serve the teacher because of the workload. For *thematic relevance*, I suggest that teachers search for prompts that address a particular aspect of persuasion as it relates to the studied text, i.e. "Character / may almost be called / the most effective means / of persuasion." (line breaks are my own) "- Aristotle (384-322 BCE). His words relate to when they boys, in *Lord of the Flies*, are deciding whom should be chief: "'I ought to be chief,' said Jack with simple arrogance, 'because I'm chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp.'" ¹⁶ From this follows a discussion of character: what words in the text create evidence of his, and what are the characteristics of a good chief? Is he persuasive? For *progressive standards* of excellence, I have 2-3 students read a recent selection from their responses aloud to the class, and then I give them direct feedback (always praise, first, then constructive criticism) regarding anything related to their writing (diction, grammar, syntax, etc.), their ideas (point of view, logic, comprehension, etc.) and their content (contextualization, accuracy, and execution, etc.), etc. After this concise interchange, all the students must write, at the top of the next journal page, a brief statement of intent regarding what they will improve and/or practice in the next journal response. Statements of intent are also derived from direct instruction. As the year progresses, so do my expectations for their writings, their persuasions and their assertions of truth. For *full inclusiveness* of class and home work, I incorporate quizzes, new vocabulary, copying of texts, etc. For example, I require that students copy a portion of text, paragraph length, considered masterful or classic. It also must be thematically related to the prompt, the texts and/or content instruction and class discussion, i.e. an excerpt about self-control and savagery in ancient Rome, from Edith Hamilton's *The Roman Way*¹⁷ is thematically related to Aristotle's quote on character. For the third section of the journal, Observe, students can write about a time they experienced, witnessed or perpetrated savagery. For establishing rigorous and impromptu, *manageable checks* (I recommend credit/non-credit), collect the scores of the journals at the completion of every 10 (+/-, as you see fit, and having the students tally/score each other's work for credit), mark or stamp, at random (and per class) each day, various student's previous day's journal to keep them accountable (no work = no credit, or partial credit when made-up), and read about 15 daily writes per day for quality checks and to write concise and meaningful remarks. It will take time to develop all these directives and habits (and they can be an exhausting endeavor, especially with finding prompts and excerpts), but they produce amazing results in

the student's writings!

A bit more regarding how I structure the journal: for writing instruction, which I believe must be organic and not formulaic (i.e. 5-paragraph essay), I teach students the value of *fluency* in expressing one's ideas, of *form* for shaping those ideas into clear and cohesive structures, and of *correctness* in complying with 'rules' of grammar and spelling, etc. Fluency is the most important, though form sometimes trumps it, and correctness is a matter of editing. For the first third of the entire daily journals, fluency is primary. Form and correctness are taught, but fluency reigns. For the second third of the year, form is emphasized, though fluency is not deemphasized. By the final third of all the journals, correctness is required for credit.

Paragraph Packets

Every few weeks, I have my students email to me a best paragraph they have recently written, usually for a draft of an essay. I copy and paste each student's paragraph into one document, removing their names for anonymity and numbering the paragraphs for easy reference. To save myself some time, I insist that students make their paragraphs part of the email text and not an attachment, otherwise I double my time in opening and closing documents. Once I have all the paragraphs (late paragraphs can be added as an addendum), I select all and adjust them to the font and line-spacing (1.5 or 2, depending) that I prefer, allowing space for commenting and editing. For economy, I shrink the font and the margins of the document to a minimum, turn the layout to landscape, and use the front and back of the paper to make a packet, and class set, of each class's paragraphs. These packets become a workbook for writing and editing, and developing thought. And the paragraphs are theirs (not prefabricated)! For credit, students must fully participate in taking notes and editing all the paragraphs, mostly in class but also for homework. There are unlimited assignments that can be derived from these packets. Here are a few: Have students practice sentence combining; work with dictionaries and thesauruses to improve diction and practice using the right word; edit, revise and improve paragraphs, paying special attention to any issues of fluency, form and correctness, etc.

I have a protocol that I teach to my students, and regularly repeat to them as needed. I insist that paragraphs remain anonymous and that no one is to guess or reveal an a paragraph's author. It is about establishing safety for all students. We work together on any paragraph they choose. After the primary rule is understood, the next is that we always praise a writer first, and genuinely, for anything they have done well. For struggling writers, especially for English-language learners, I praise them for taking great strides in learning a second or third language. This becomes an opportunity for discussing all levels of writing as they are just that, and can and will be improved upon. After sufficient praise, usually good spelling or ideas, we begin providing constructive criticism to improve the fluency, form and/or correctness of the paragraph. As issues in the paragraphs reveal themselves, the class adds to a list of things to be mindful of and make better, for their essays and in their journals, too. Some common issues in student writing are shifts in train-of-thought, lack of development, ambiguity or vagueness, spelling and syntax errors, and factual mistakes. In this process, students become teachers.

Imitating Great Authors - i.e. Abraham Lincoln

The journals already establish the practice of imitating authors but this strategy is augmented with a case study of Lincoln's two most effective and famous speeches, his Gettysburg and the 2nd Inaugural Addresses, plus several excerpts from other speeches provided in Garry Wills' excellent book, *Lincoln at Gettysburg - the Words that Remade America*. We will pay special attention to Lincoln's development of style. For the 2nd Inaugural Address, I refer to Ronald C. White's book, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech - The Second Inaugural*. Part of

imitating an author is simply copying their work. I have my students copy the Gettysburg Address into their journals, and also memorize it. Copying the 2nd Inaugural will be an extended assignment, or chunked for the journal. The second step, after copying, is to have students adapt the Gettysburg Address, line by line, into an Address for Ralph and Jack, and the other boys, in *Lord of the Flies*. Their division into groups is analogous, for this exercise, to the division of states in the Civil War. Students will work in groups for this exercise, and can assume the voice of an adult speaking to the boys, like Lincoln spoke to the people in Gettysburg. This adaptation is a precursor to students then writing their own, original Address. After the copying of the 2nd Inaugural speech, students will also then develop a second Address, modeled on Lincoln's, where they assume the role of a student-leader, teacher or administrator trying to unify the divided boys and bring about healing and forgiveness once they have returned home. The act of copying or imitating great authors is based on the principle of emulation, where skills and insights are assumed through close and repeated inspection of another's work. Varying the works, i.e. copying sections of *Lord of the Flies*, help students to realize how workable are words and sentence structures, that they too can, through emulation and practice, begin to shape words their own way, for their own style.

Meaningful Explorations - Classroom Activities

Rather than lay the activities out on a calendar suggesting when they should be used, I arranged them into categories, or stores, of provisions – Sample Journal Prompts, Writing Speeches, and Close-Readings. This way, any teacher can freely return to them each year, altering them or adding new ones as they see fit, and reassess how they want to incorporate them in the new school year with new students.

Sample Journal Prompts

I begin each year, and every class, with the same journal prompt, from the Talmud, "We see things not as they are but as we are." This is not an endorsement of any religion but rather the first of many attempts to teach my students, and to remind myself, that what and how we perceive in life is as telling of ourselves as it is of the things we perceive. It is to make students aware of the lenses or filters we have within ourselves. I have two posters that I use with this prompt, Michael Schofield's *Midsummer's Search* and a Photomosaic of Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, for the purpose of getting students to see the illusions that light, color and form, etc., create. I ask them to consider how their own experiences in life might affect how they perceive the images and, more importantly, other people, as in *American Gothic*. I also have them consider the metaphorical nature of Schofield's painting that depicts a bend in a path that cuts through a vibrant, wooded area. Is the road a journey in life? What is around the bend? Is it safe to leave the path? Etc. This discussion becomes, naturally, an introduction to David Wagoner's poem, "Lost," that the students copy into their journal in the Associate section after they have written a response to the above prompt. For the Observe section of the first journal, I ask students to write about a time they misperceived something or someone, and what they later learned, or I allow them to write about a place or mindset in which they felt lost, and how they found home or themselves. Finally, I ask them to consider all three parts of the daily journal and that they try to synthesize them as they reflect on themselves.

For a latter journal prompt, sometime during the teaching of Persuasion and this unit, I will use Ann Darr's *The Formula*,¹⁸ a brief but striking poem that suggests that if one is too rigid in their view of life, or if students believe in someone else's formula for living, that they begin to disappear from life. The point I make to my

students is that *there is no formula* for life, at least that no one knows it. This also connects back to David Wagoner's "Lost." For part 2, Associate, I refer to Fred White's *The Daily Reader* for the excerpt from R.D. Laing's *The Politics of Experience* that addresses "our intolerance of different fundamental structures of experience." ¹⁹ I will have already had students copy excerpts of classic and great speeches from history, i.e. Frederick Douglass' "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro" and John F. Kennedy's 1961 "Inaugural Address," and will certainly include other speeches that reveal intolerances or address our need to overcome them, as in Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream." For the third section, Observe, students can provide a detailed account of a personal experience with another culture or way of living different than their own. I ask them to consider what shapes their view of others.

This last sample fits the study of Lincoln's speeches and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. I want my students to become aware that the difficulty of finding the right words to suit an occasion is not only their own. The prompt for the day is from Pericles' Funeral Oration, "It is, in fact, hard to fit words exactly to events whose verisimilitude is in question, since the informed and well-disposed man may want more than the speaker makes him feel, or know more than he brings to mind, while the uninformed man resents as overstatement any praise that goes beyond what he feels capable of." ²⁰ This leads to a continued discussion of how Lincoln practiced finding the right word. I then have my students copy the second to last paragraph in "A View to a Death," the ninth chapter in *Lord of the Flies*, starting with "Along the shoreward edge..." and ending with "Then it turned gently in the water." ²¹ This is a moving passage of nature seemingly paying tribute to Simon who was mistaken for the beast, "The strange attendant creatures, with their fiery eyes and trailing vapors, busied themselves round his head." I want my students to consider William Golding's mastery of words. For their personal reflections, in Observe, I have them write a descriptive piece in honor of someone or something sacred to them. This will be prep work for writing a Eulogy (activity 4 below) and longer speeches.

Writing Speeches

I include six activities for practice in writing speeches. They are derived from Lincoln's writings, found in Garry Wills' *Lincoln at Gettysburg*, and geared towards a closer reading of *Lord of the Flies*. The first activity is for students to write short but effective persuasive speeches following Cicero's five steps discussed above. At least one of these speeches will be as if they are characters in *Lord of the Flies* and are participating in the decision-making, but others will be as if they are confronting a group of friends or family regarding an issue they want to address or resolve. These latter ones will happen before we actually start *Lord of the Flies* when I first teach them the five steps of writing a persuasive speech. The second activity relates to the paragraph packets described above but focuses on how Lincoln edited William Seward's suggested conclusion to Lincoln's First Inaugural. ²² My students will work in groups of three to rephrase Seward's words, making them clearer and more effective. Then they will share their revisions and compare. Afterwards, we will examine and discuss Lincoln's revision. The third activity is to write a brief Ciceronian denunciation of a character from *Lord of the Flies*. This is similar to Shakespearian insults, a common classroom activity where students get to play at being verbally abusive by using Shakespearian language and phrases. In this case, we will read Cicero's first speech against Catiline to see how he undermines Cataline's character in front of the Roman Senate, "When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience?" ²³ The fourth is for students to write a eulogy, a high praise of someone who has died, for Simon or Piggy, characters in *Lord of the Flies*. These are brief exercises in writing, but a great place to practice finding the right word to suit the occasion. The *fifth* is a brief speech-writing activity, but one that also requires clear and effective diction: write an Island Address, like the Gettysburg Address, to pay tribute to the fallen. See pages 59-62 of *Lincoln at Gettysburg* for a breakdown of the structure for this type of speech. This is practice for the final speech, the Inaugural Address. The sixth

writing activity, the Inaugural Address, is modeled after Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural in which he addresses the nation as it concludes its Civil War. This is the culminating activity and speech for this unit. The students are to write their own Inaugural speech for all the surviving boys in *Lord of the Flies* as if they have returned to school for the following year. Their speech is to be modeled after Lincoln's and designed to bring healing to the boys and lead them forward into the new school year.

Close-Readings

For all the close-readings I do with my students, I teach them to consider each word, to ponder their denotations and connotations, and context. This is a tedious process for the students but its value far exceeds any discomfort or boredom. I also have them consider their own lives and how the literature connects to it. For my students, any connection is a worthwhile one. It helps them begin to see that literature is reflective of human experience, and studying it potentially helps anyone begin to see distinctions in life.

Class Quizzes

Class quizzes are an amazing way for students to practice close-readings and to assert their character and voice into a search for deeper meaning. For this activity, I assign a poem or paragraph, chapter or scene from a movie, etc., as the focus for the quiz. I review quiz directions and how I assess their assertions. They are basic: the class arrives at a deepest assertion of truth for the assigned reading or film scene; the teacher keeps track of who speaks and participates, and to what degree; students use any means necessary (dictionaries, thesauruses, white-boards, etc.), at the discretion of the teacher, to arrive at their deepest assertion; the teacher reviews the class discussion at the end of the period and makes assertions and justifications for the class' quiz grade; students who do not participate in the discussion are allowed to write, for partial credit, a one page synopsis of the discussion, due the following day. For the best results, give basic directions and set high expectations, and do not participate in the discussion.

Pre-Reading and Lord of the Flies

Before *Lord of the Flies*, I actually have my students read Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* as an introduction to the need for reading and thinking, and for the power of rhetoric – consider how both Clarisse McClellan and Captain Beatty influence and persuade the non-thinking Montag. Directly before reading *Lord of the Flies*, I have my students read a few poems and fables that set them up for the study of rhetoric and for reading the book. Aesop's Fable *The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey* and John Godfrey Saxe's *The Blind Men and the Elephant* are complimentary to each other and help students see that everyone's perspectives vary, and that one needs to know one's own first. For a discussion of moderation and determination, we will take a brief look at Pieter Breughel's *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, plus read the Ekphrastic poems it inspired, William Carlos Williams's poem of the same name and W.H. Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts," respectively. These last three actually dove-tail into *Lord of the Flies* quite well. Ralph and Piggy literally descend from the sky, like Icarus, following a swath of destruction cut by the crashing plane.

Ralph and Piggy are the first, and most familiar, of many boys that the students will encounter as they read the novel. Ralph seems to be the boy-next-door and Piggy the obnoxious know-it-all. Their contrasting characters are what help establish Ralph as the likeable protagonist and hero. We immediately are drawn to his affable personality, even as he begins to insult Piggy. We want to be friends with him and not Piggy, although we do sympathize with Piggy. This is where I have my students look closely at Piggy. First of all, Piggy is introduced as an echo to the phoenix-like "bird, a vision of red and yellow." ²⁴ "Hi!" it said. "Wait a minute!" Already a bit burdensome, Piggy begins to talk, not of his own accord but echoing his auntie, and

often. And soon, Piggy gives away his power of self-identity to Ralph, trusting that Ralph will be his friend. He tells Ralph, "I don't care what they call me... so long as they don't call me what they used to call me at school." This is very much like George Lakoff's argument embedded in the title of his book, *Don't Think of an Elephant*. Once the word is said, the thought is done. And Piggy adds, "They used to call me 'Piggy.'" ²⁵ No one would have known to call him by the one moniker he supposedly did not like except that he himself brings it to Ralph's attention. And Ralph, being a boy, takes pleasure in calling Piggy 'Piggy.' This relinquishment of power happens quite a bit with Piggy. We see it again when "Jack had meant to leave him in doubt, as an assertion of power; but Piggy by advertising his omission made more cruelty necessary." ²⁶ I warn my students not to give away their power but to think, before they speak, of what their speaking might do.

In *Thinking Points*, by George Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute, the Nation-as-Family metaphor is explained as our tendency to think structurally of our governments as our family. Our rulers are our parents, we as citizens are siblings, and our homeland is home. They break this metaphor further into frames of how we perceive our selves in our family/government: strict-father frame and nurturing-parent frame. Though these frames are discussed specifically with American politics in mind, it's pretty easy to find parallel examples in *Lord of the Flies* (consider the twins, Samneric, whose combined names suggest America). There is far more discussion of these frames on their website than I can give justice to here, but several of the boys' words and actions suggest they are of one or the other. Jack's behavior and decision-making seems to be of the strict-father frame. He displays a strong authority that is not to be questioned. He serves to protect the other boys, even if it is from their own, or his, savagery. Anyone who goes against Jack's view or rules is considered to be immoral. Contrarily, Piggy seems to embody the nurturing-parent frame, but to an emasculating fault. He is too protected and cannot think or act for himself. Still, he is nurturing of others, at least in thought. He is a sort of conscience to Ralph. Ralph, though, seems to shift at times between the strict-father frame and the nurturing-parent frame. He loses much of his own power, though, in shifting back and forth between the two. He loses himself, at times, to indecision until it is nearly too late. I teach these frames to my students and challenge them, as we read the novel, to look for evidence of them within the characters. We look for actions that reveal the boys' attempts and struggles to maintain the norms of society instilled in them, i.e. Ralph's conch supplanting the man with the megaphone, and the desire and call for freedom that the island offers, and which Jack abuses. This practice of close-reading is, again, for the purpose of reflecting upon one's self in the real world. I want my students to consider how they would have fared on this island with the boys, or even with their own friends, classmates and peers. Would they merely follow or would they stand still, letting the island find them? Would they stay true to their perception of themselves or would they allow others to persuade them? Would they seek the low road to savagery or the high road to excellence?

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