Patterns for College Writing

A RHETORICAL READER AND GUIDE

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    "Being only a daughter for my father meant my destiny would lead me to
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  MAYA ANGELOU, Finishing School  75
    "It went without saying that all girls could iron and wash, but the fine
    touches around the home, like setting a table with real silver, baking
    roasts and cooking vegetables without meat, had to be learned elsewhere.
    . . . During my tenth year, a white woman’s kitchen became my finishing
    school."

  DONNA SMITH-YACKEL, My Mother Never Worked  81
    "From her wheelchair she canned pickles, baked bread, ironed clothes,
    wrote dozens of letters weekly to her friends and her ‘half dozen or more
    kids,’ and made three patchwork housecoats and one quilt."

  MARTIN GANSBERG, Thirty-Eight Who Saw Murder Didn’t Call
    the Police  86
    "For more than half an hour 38 respectable, law-abiding citizens in Queens
    watched a killer stalk and stab a woman in three separate attacks . . .
    Not one person telephoned the police during the assault; one witness
    called after the woman was dead."
GEORGE ORWELL, *Shooting an Elephant* 91

"But I did not want to shoot the elephant. I watched him beating his bunch of grass against his knees, with that preoccupied grandmotherly air that elephants have. It seemed to me that it would be murder to shoot him."

(Fiction) SAKI (H. H. MUNRO), *The Open Window* 100

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon. . . ."

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LEAH HAGER COHEN, *Words Left Unspoken* 121

"My earliest memories of Sam Cohen are of his chin, which I remember as fiercely hard and pointy."

MARK TWAIN, *Reading the River* 126

"I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home."

ANNIE DILLARD, *In the Jungle* 130

"The point of going somewhere like the Napo River in Ecuador is not to see the most spectacular anything. It is simply to see what is there."

N. SCOTT MOMADAY, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* 136

"A single knoll rises out of the plain in Oklahoma, north and west of the Wichita Range. For my people, the Kiowas, it is an old landmark, and they gave it the name Rainy Mountain."

E. B. WHITE, *Once More to the Lake* 142

"Summertime, oh summertime, patterns of life indelible, the fadeproof lake, the woods unshatterable, the pasture with the sweetfern and the juniper forever and ever."

(Fiction) KATHERINE ANNE PORTER, *The Grave* 149

"Miranda leaped into the pit that had held her grandfather’s bones. Scratching around aimlessly and pleasurably as any young animal, she scooped up a lump of earth and weighed it in her palm."
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“‘They don’t come out to see a tea party,’ he said evenly. ‘They come out to see the knockout. They come out to see a man hurt. If they think of anything else, they’re kidding themselves.’”

MARIE WINN, Television: The Plug-In Drug 274
“Television’s contribution to family life has been an equivocal one. For while it has, indeed, kept the members of the family from dispersing, it has not served to bring them together.”

LAWRENCE OTIS GRAHAM, The “Black Table” Is Still There 284
“What did the table say about the integration that was supposedly going on in home rooms and gym classes? What did it say about the black kids? The white kids? What did it say about me when I refused to sit there, day after day, for three years?”

MELANIE SCHELLER, On the Meaning of Plumbing and Poverty 288
“But like an alcoholic who believes no one will know he has a problem as long as he doesn’t drink in public, I convinced myself that no one knew my family’s little secret.”

CALVIN TRILLIN, It’s Just Too Late 294
“Was there a way that Leo and JoAnn Cooper could have prevented FaNee from choosing the path she chose? Would she still be alive if Leo Cooper had not jumped into his car and driven to the end of the driveway to investigate?”

(Poetry) JANICE MIRIKITANI, Suicide Note 305
“I apologize.
Tasks do not come easily.
Each failure, a glacier.
Each disapproval, a bootprint.
Each disappointment,
ice above my river.”

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(POETRY) JOHN UPDIKE, Ex-Basketball Player 364

"He never learned a trade, he just sells gas,
Checks oil, and changes flats. Once in a while,
As a gag, he dribbles an inner tube,
But most of us remember anyway.
His hands are fine and nervous on the lug wrench,
It makes no difference to the lug wrench, though."

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WILLIAM ZINSSER, College Pressures 378
"What I wish for all my students is some release from the clammy grip of the future. I wish them a chance to savor each segment of their education as an experience in itself and not as a grim preparation for the next step. I wish them the right to experiment, to trip and fall, to learn that defeat is as instructive as victory and is not the end of the world."

SCOTT RUSSELL SANDERS, The Men We Carry in Our Minds 387
"So I was baffled when the women at college accused me and my sex of having cornered the world’s pleasures. I think something like my bafflement has been felt by other boys (and by girls as well) who grew up in dirt-poor farm country, in mining country, in black ghettos, in Hispanic barrios, in the shadows of factories, in Third World nations—any place where the fate of men is as grim and bleak as the fate of women."

AMY TAN, Mother Tongue 393
"I spend a great deal of my time thinking about the power of language—the way it can evoke an emotion, a visual image, a complex idea, or a simple truth. Language is the tool of my trade. And I use them all—all the Englishes I grew up with."

ALLEEN PACE NILSEN, Sexism in English: A 1990s Update 401
"What these incidents show is that sexism is not something existing independently in American English or in the particular dictionary that I happened to read. Rather, it exists in people’s minds."
"We lie. We all do. We exaggerate, we minimize, we avoid confrontation, we spare people's feelings, we conveniently forget, we keep secrets, we justify lying to the big-guy institutions."

"Sometimes at night when she couldn't go to sleep, Mrs. Turpin would occupy herself with the question of who she would have chosen to be if she couldn't have been herself. If Jesus had said to her before he made her, 'There's only two places available for you. You can either be a nigger or white-trash,' what would she have said?"

"Whether a public function or service or regulation is or is not a burden depends on the income of the individual so helped or favored."

"My earliest memory of tortillas is my Mamá telling me not to play with them. I had bitten eyeholes in one and was wearing it as a mask at the dinner table."

"My God, who wouldn't want a wife?"

"He worked six days a week, five of them until eight or nine at night, during a time when his own company had begun the four-day week for everyone but the executives. He worked like the Important People."

"Talking about 'the holocaust' permits us to manage it intellectually where the raw facts, when given their ordinary names, would overwhelm us emotionally. . . ."

"It was just a week to the day since Mr. Martin had decided to rub out Mrs. Ulgine Barrows."

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JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH, Our Forked Tongue 453

"Whether a public function or service or regulation is or is not a burden depends on the income of the individual so helped or favored."

JOSÉ ANTONIO BURCIAGA, Tortillas 457

"My earliest memory of tortillas is my Mamá telling me not to play with them. I had bitten eyeholes in one and was wearing it as a mask at the dinner table."

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"My God, who wouldn't want a wife?"

ELLEN GOODMAN, The Company Man 465

"He worked six days a week, five of them until eight or nine at night, during a time when his own company had begun the four-day week for everyone but the executives. He worked like the Important People."

BRUNO BETTELHEIM, The Holocaust 469

"Talking about 'the holocaust' permits us to manage it intellectually where the raw facts, when given their ordinary names, would overwhelm us emotionally. . . ."

(FICTION) JAMES THURBER, The Catbird Seat 474

"It was just a week to the day since Mr. Martin had decided to rub out Mrs. Ulgine Barrows."
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Choosing a Topic  
Taking a Stand  
Analyzing Your Audience  
Gathering and Documenting Evidence  
Dealing with the Opposition  
Using Rogerian Argument  

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Using Deductive Arguments  
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STRUCTURING AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY  

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SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAY: MATT DANIELS, An Argument against the Anna Todd Jennings Scholarship  

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THOMAS JEFFERSON, The Declaration of Independence,  

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., Letter from Birmingham Jail  

"For years now I have heard the word 'Wait!' It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.' We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that 'justice too long delayed is justice denied.'"

DEBATE: IMMIGRATION  

PETER BRIMELOW, What, Then, Is to Be Done?  

"It may be time to face the fact that the United States is no longer an 'immigrant country.'"

DAVID COLE, Five Myths about Immigration  

"In the interest of advancing beyond know-nothingism, let's look at the five current myths that distort public debate and government policy relating to immigrants."

DEBATE: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION  

TRUDY RUBIN, Multiculturalism Is Misguided  

"Many of the academic backers of multiculturalism seem to believe that Western liberal thought has spawned only imperialism, racism, and sexism. They ignore the fact that much of the rest of the world is looking West for something very different."
JI-YEON MARY YUHFILL, Let's Tell the Story of All America's Cultures 552

"I grew up hearing, seeing, and almost believing that America was white—albeit with a little black tinged here and there—and that white was best."

DEBATE: DATE RAPE 557

CAMILLE PAGLIA, It's a Jungle Out There 558

"Rape is an outrage that cannot be tolerated in civilized society. Yet feminism, which has waged a crusade for rape to be taken more seriously, has put young women in danger by hiding the truth about sex from them."

SUSAN JACOBY, Common Decency, 564

"Most date rapes do not happen because a man honestly mistakes a woman's 'no' for a 'yes' or a 'maybe.' They occur because a minority of men—an ugly minority, to be sure—can't stand to take 'no' for an answer."

DEBATE CASEBOOK: MEDIA VIOLENCE 569

JOHN GRISHAM, Unnatural Killers 570

"I can think of only two ways to curb the excessive violence of a film like Natural Born Killers. Both involve large sums of money—the only medium understood by Hollywood."

OLIVER STONE, Memo to John Grisham: What's Next—"A Movie Made Me Do It"? 580

"It gives me a shiver of fear when an influential lawyer and writer argues, as Grisham does, that a particular work of art should never have been allowed to be made."

MICHAEL ZIMECKI, Violent Films Cry "Fire" in Crowded Theaters 585

"Film-inspired violence may not be 'imminent' in the constitutional sense, but the constitutional difference between 'I will kill you now' and 'I will kill you later' is cold comfort to the victims of movie-modeled murder."

BRIAN SIANO, Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed: Chasing the Monster of TV Violence 591

"I don't enjoy bad television with lots of violence, but I'd rather not lose decent shows that use violence for good reason."

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Lars Eighner, *On Dumpster Diving* 609
"I have learned much as a scavenger. I mean to put some of what I have learned down here, beginning with the practical art of Dumpster diving and proceeding to the abstract."

Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal* 625
"I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in fricasee or a ragout."

Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* 635
"Who were these Saints? These crazy, loony, pitiful women? Some of them, without a doubt, were our mothers and grandmothers."

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