

## International College of Manitoba

### In-class Midterm Stylistic Analysis (1)

**DATE:** Thursday, October 19, 2017

**DURATION:** 3 hours in-class (open text only)

**COURSE TITLE:** Thematic Approaches to Literature 1400

**EXAMINER:** Kim Olynyk

Analyze **one (1)** of the following passages and write two **(2) paragraphs**, which take into account elements of the passage's structure and larger meaning. Refer to the techniques used for analyzing literature and film, for example dramatic structure, sentence structure, irony, figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification), foreshadowing, point-of-view, tone, setting, themes, and imagery to name only a few. A good paragraph is  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page. Balance paragraphs and double-space your work.

Choose any three **(3)** stylistic literary or rhetorical devices for your analysis. You can use more but remember to provide textual evidence and analysis for a minimum of **three (3)**. Do not just identify the devices but explain how they alter the work and our experience of its meaning and significance.

1. In your first paragraph provide the name of the author and the title of the work.
2. Then summarize in 1 or 2 sentences the important plot elements **from the selected passage** that contributes to the overall dramatic structure.
3. Briefly describe the general themes.
4. And at the end of the paragraph explain what devices you will cover in the body paragraph.
5. Use textual evidence from the passage to support your view of the use of the devices.
6. In the second paragraph analyze your literary or narrative devices by providing textual evidence and or quotes from the passage or scenes to support the author's use of each device and links to the deeper meaning or ask yourself what is at stake for the author.
7. Link each device back to the larger meaning or significance of the overall importance of the work or messages embodied in the text.
8. Conclude your analysis at the end of the second paragraph by going back to your introduction and restating the literary devices you explored.
9. Ensure you double-space your work and use the MLA format.
10. Provide a Work Cited.

### Passages

#### Passage 1

My father drinks pale moonshine whiskey and gambles recklessly at the garage,  
kicks dust between weeds in the evening,  
and dances a fake-feathered rain dance  
For tourists and a little cash.  
Even the snakes have left.  
Even the sun cannot stand to watch.

## Passage 2

DUNNE BEDROOM - EVENING

AMY and NICK on the bed. Between them is a gift-wrapped BOX.

NICK: I do not want another gift from you, ever.

AMY: Open it.

He opens it, slowly, dreading, and pulls out: A PREGNANCY STICK, with a BRIGHT BLUE POSITIVE SIGN.

NICK: I haven't touched you.

AMY: You didn't need to.

She waits for him to figure it out.

NICK: The notice of disposal. You threw it out.

AMY: The notice, yes.

She takes his hand and puts it on her belly.

AMY (CONT'D): Size of a lentil.

NICK: I want a blood test. I want a paternity test.

AMY: I love tests.

A long, sick moment.

NICK: You can't make me raise a child with you, Amy. I don't love you.

AMY: Because you stopped trying.

NICK: We are toxic. We complete each other in the sickest possible way.

AMY: You think you could ever be happy with a nice, normal woman? No, baby. I'm it. I complete you. I'm the only one who can.

NICK: Amy. No.

AMY Stay with me and I will make you happy. You know I can. I've killed for you.

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NICK has her by the throat. She stares calmly at him. They \* are eye to eye. BUT:  
Of course he can't kill her. Finally he unhands her. They both gasp for breath.

AMY (CONT'D): You can run away like a boy, or \* stay. Raise your child. Be the man  
\* you want to be. It's your choice, \* Nick.

### Passage 3

When your two children came in with their father, and went to the bridal chambers we slaves were glad, those of us who had been distressed before by your troubles. From ear to ear talk spread quickly that you and your husband had called a truce to your earlier quarrel. One kisses a hand, another the blond heads of the children. I was beside myself with joy and followed along to the women's quarters with the children. And our mistress, to whom we pay respect now instead of you, before she caught sight of your two children held her eyes fixed eagerly on Jason. But then she covered up her face and turned away her pale cheek, sickened by the approach of the children. But your husband was trying to assuage the rancor and venom of the young woman by telling her this: "Do not be angry at my family. Won't you stifle your rage and turn back your face. Hold your husband's loved ones as your own, take the gifts, and ask your father to revoke the sentence of exile from my children, for my sake?" And she, when she saw the fine garments did not resist but agreed with her husband in everything, and before father and children were far from the house, she scooped up the fine robe and put it on; then she fitted the golden crown around her curls and with a shimmering mirror arranged her hair, smiling at the lifeless image of her face. And then she gets up from her throne and walks through the room, stepping lightly on her delicate feet overjoyed with the gifts, again and again casting an eye upon her arched foot.

Suddenly there was a terrible sight to see: the color drains from her face; her step unsteady, she tries to go back, trembling from head to foot, and barely manages to stumble into her seat and avoid falling on the ground. Then an old woman, one of her slaves, thinking a fit from Pan or one of the gods had seized her, let out a wail, before she saw white foam streaming from her mouth and from her eyes the pupils turned back; and the blood was drained from her skin. Then there came a terrible cry in answer to the wail. At once one slave ran to her father's rooms, another to her new husband, to tell them what was happening to the bride. The whole house reverberated with the sound of running feet. By now a fast walker turning the last lap of the course would be reaching his goal. And the poor woman, her eyes glazed over, stirred from her silence and with a deep groan was trying to get up. But a twofold trouble was warring against her: the crown of gold around her head was spewing out an eerie stream of ravenous fire, and the fine robes, gifts from your children, were eating away the poor girl's beautiful flesh. She stands up and tries to escape, but she is on fire. She shakes her head this way and that, trying to throw off the crown, but all the more tightly the gold holds its bonds; and the fire — when she shook her head — burned twice as bright. Overcome by the disaster she falls to the floor, unrecognizable to the sight of anyone but a parent. The condition of her eyes and her once lovely face were murky, and blood dripped from the top of her head with fire mixed in, and the flesh was dripping from her bones like sap from a pine, through the hidden gnawing of the poisons, a terrible sight. We were all afraid to touch the body. We had her fate to teach us. But her poor father in ignorance of the tragedy suddenly bursts into the room and throws himself on the body. He cries out and enfolding her in his arms he kisses her and speaks to her, "My poor child, which of the gods has mangled you so horribly? Who has made me an aged tomb, to grieve for you. Ah me let me die with you, my child." And when he stopped his weeping and wailing he wanted to raise up his old limbs but was held back by the fine robes like ivy by the shoots of laurel. The struggle was hair-raising. He wanted to get up on his feet but she held him fast. If he tried to use force she tore the aged flesh from his bones. After a time he was exhausted and the poor man let go of life. He was not strong enough to fight the disaster. They lie dead together, child and aged father beside her. A tragedy that makes you want to cry.

In my view your part is beyond my telling. You will know how to escape punishment. Not for the first time I find our lives are a shadow, and I am not afraid to say that people who think they have everything figured out and are masters of logic — they are responsible for the greatest folly. No human being is happy. Strike it rich and you are luckier than your neighbor — but happy, never. *Exit messenger.*

#### Passage 4

August 13th, 17—

My affection for my guest increases every day. He excites at once my admiration and my pity to an astonishing degree. How can I see so noble a creature destroyed by misery without feeling the most poignant grief? He is so gentle, yet so wise; his mind is so cultivated, and when he speaks, although his words are culled with the choicest art, yet they bow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence.

He is now much recovered from his illness and is continually on the deck, apparently watching for the sledge that preceded his own. Yet, although unhappy, he is not so utterly occupied by his own misery but that he interests himself deeply in the projects of others. He has frequently conversed with me on mine, which I have communicated to him without disguise. He entered attentively into all my arguments in favour of my eventual success and into every minute detail of the measures I had taken to secure it. I was easily led by the sympathy which he evinced to use the language of my heart, to give utterance to the burning ardour of my soul, and to say, with all the fervour that warmed me, how gladly I would sacrifice my fortune, my existence, my every hope, to the furtherance of my enterprise. One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought, for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race. As I spoke, a dark gloom spread over my listener's countenance. At last I perceived that he tried to suppress his emotion; he placed his hands before his eyes, and my voice quivered and failed me as I beheld tears trickle fast from between his fingers; a groan burst from his heaving breast. I paused; at length he spoke, in broken accents: 'Un- happy man! Do you share my madness? Have you drunk also of the intoxicating draught? Hear me; let me reveal my tale, and you will dash the cup from your lips!'