

# Unit #1: Beginning the Argument

AP Language and Composition

Mr. Coia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Since this is the first unit guide, let me explain a few items.

- ✓ Each unit guide will cover anywhere from one-four weeks. You'll have all the information in case you are absent. Share this with your parents immediately. Print off an extra copy to put on the refrigerator.
- ✓ The bulleted points show what we will try to do in class. If we don't get to it, I'll have you move/remove activities.
- ✓ HW=homework. It's due the next class period unless stated otherwise.
- ✓ Items in **bold** show larger items (papers, tests, etc.)
- ✓ Remember, while major tests will always be listed, quizzes can spring up anytime.
- ✓ Write your name on this, and put in your Handouts section of your notebook now.

## Mon 8/28

- Introduction to the course
- Name card with favorite movie & book
- How do we persuade? How are we persuaded? List ways for each
- Aristotle's definition of rhetoric: "The ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion."
- List how people persuade others (use politics, religion, health, charity, personal gain.)
- Marking text discussion (How? What do you mark?)
- Rhetorical Triangle--Logos, Ethos, Pathos
- Read "Composing Rhetorically" (*Writing America*, p. 49-52)

HW: Finish reading and marking text (49-55)

## Wed 8/30

- Name card presentations
- Read, mark "[AP Classes are a Scam](#)"
- Three appeals in the article?
- Discuss article on AP classes; share markings
- Read Trevor Packard's [response on NPR](#); mark
- Three appeals?
- **Writing:** What does the author use in order to persuade? (2-3 paragraphs; use text from either essay)
- SOAPS (Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Speaker). How are these seen in our two articles?
- Begin reading and marking: "Me Talk Pretty One Day" by David Sedaris and mark text

HW: Finish reading/marking "Me Talk..." questions on rhetoric and style 1-5, SOAPS; Read and initial rules sheet; Parent/student signature; class supplies

## Fri 9/1

- Quiz on reading--Practice AP Language test and review answers
- Discuss "Me Talk" and share answers. Essential questions: How does Sedaris use language to communicate his story? How does language add to the humor of the situation?
- Define: Schemes and Tropes
- Begin "Superman and Me" by Sherman Alexie; In these opening paragraphs, what do you notice about his use of language or syntax?

HW: Read, mark "Superman," SOAPS, answer questions 1-6; Read and initial rules sheet; Parent/student signature; class supplies

## Wed 9/6

- Discuss "Superman" and share answers.
- Regarding rhetoric, what do these two pieces have in common? How do they differ?
- Schemes and Tropes in the two pieces
- Discuss narrative essay
- Rhetorical Terms cards 1-5

HW: Notebook check/parent signature due next class

## Fri 9/8

- Rules sheet/parent signature due
- **Notebook/supply check**
- Discuss "Superman and Me" and share answers.
- Regarding rhetoric, what do these two pieces have in common? How do they differ?
- Schemes and Tropes in the two pieces
- Discuss narrative essay
- Rhetorical Terms cards 1-5

HW: Type narrative essay on first day of school, learning to do something, etc. This is in the style of Sedaris or Alexie; Rhetorical terms index cards 1-5 completed, *along with cover card*

## Tues 9/12

- **RT (Rhetorical Terms) Quiz 1-5**
- AP Practice Quiz: reading and questions. Grading and discussion (30 mins)
- Create writing portfolios in class
- Work on narrative essay

HW: Narrative essay due next class. Follow *How Do I Format My Paper?* Handout; see rubric in student examples

## Thurs 9/14

- **Narrative Paper Due**
- Reading student narratives. Discuss rhetorical devices in the student essays. Schemes and tropes?
- Reading student papers for three appeals and other rhetorical strategies
- Watch: "[In Defense of Rhetoric: It's No Longer Just for Liars](#)" (14 minutes). Create a chart with 3 different definitions of rhetoric gleaned from your viewing of the video. What does this offer the high school student?
- If time allows, work on rhetorical terms 1-10 cards

HW: Rhetorical terms index cards 1-10 completed

### Mon 9/18

- In-class writing: Answering an AP rhetorical analysis essay prompt (40 minutes). This is our first one. It's a new way to write, so give it your best attempt.
- Reading anchor papers to AP essay
- How does your essay compare to the anchors?

### Wed 9/20

- Reread the prompt from last class's rhetorical analysis essay. Discuss what made this difficult?
- Watch "[Coca-Cola Anthem 60s](#)" ad from Super Bowl 2016. How would you analyze the argument of this? Write a paragraph analyzing one part of it.
- Watch [Teach Argument's analysis](#) of the commercial
- **Discuss** what makes sense of this analysis. How could this help you in future analysis writing?

### Fri 9/20

- Begin "[I Know Why the Caged Bird Cannot Read](#)"). Read and mark text.
- Stop at end of p. 78 ("...is simply too frivolous, suspect, and elitist even to mention.")
- Triads: Discuss markings and Prose's argument. Possible rebuttal?

HW: Finish "Caged Bird" with marking via sticky notes; type responses to 2 "Questions for Discussion" and 3 "Questions for Rhetoric and Style." Your responses should be **college-level paragraphs**. (Follow format guide for heading, but responses can be single-spaced).

### Response Example:

5. Although the entire essay is not strictly chronological, Rodriguez structures it with signals to chronology. What are they? Why are they effective?

Rodriguez has set himself a complicated task as he recalls his childhood and develops an argument concurrently. One way to keep track of the shifting between these two is through his time markers. Examples of this include: "Many years later" (para. 5), "At the age of five, six" (para. 20), "Three months. Five. Half a year passed" (para. 29). By placing these markers at the start of paragraphs and sections, Rodriguez provides transition and reinforces that he is drawing from a lifetime of experience and rumination. One effect of these shifts is to remind us that the past is very much a part of Rodriguez's present, that he continues to reflect on these formative experiences. Time passes, and with each passing moment, Rodriguez learns and grows. These markers are important signposts to a life well lived.

### Tues 9/26

- RT 1-10 quiz
- Triads: Discuss markings and Prose's argument. Possible rebuttal?
- New Triads: Share your "Questions for Discussion" responses
- New Triads: Share your "Rhetoric and Style" responses
- Turn in your work
- Whole class discussion: How does Prose make her argument effective? (Whether or not you agree, how is it powerful?)

### Thurs 9/28

- **Practice AP Multiple-Choice 1/4**
- Begin discussion of syntax (sentence patterns/sentence types)
- SOAPS overview

HW: **Print at home** the complete text of MLK's "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (print copy from [mrcoia.com](#)); RT 1-15 cards

## Assignments for this Unit

**Non-Fiction Stories:** We'll use non-fiction pieces to begin to look at language and how it works to communicate a message. For each piece, you will actively read by making comments in the margins and underlining throughout.

**Narrative Essay:** After reading the two pieces, you will write a narrative about a first day of school, learning to do something new, or something similar. Try to mimic the aspects of writing that you noticed in Sedaris's or Alexie's story. This can be humorous or serious. Type about 500 words, following essay format sheet.

### Notebook and Supply Check

You'll need the following for our notebook check **Fri 9/8**. Remember, this is the first, and we'll add to this throughout the year to provide you with an orderly notebook. Therefore, you need ALL the pieces to receive credit. No partial credit offered on this.

You need two tabs with the following:

#### LA Handouts:

- Unit guide 1 (on top)
- Rhetorical Terms Packet
- Sedaris/Alexie Readings
- AP Scam readings
- Class Rules sheet, initialed

#### LA Classwork:

Notes from lectures, presentations, mini-lessons. Remember you should be taking notes each class period. You will also have at least 25 sheets of loose-leaf paper.

# How Do I Format My Paper?

## A Modified MLA Format for Kubasaki High School

Susan Harrison	←	Your name
Mr. Washington	←	Teacher name
LA 11 Period A4	←	Class name and period number
25 October 2015	←	Date paper is due in this format
635 words	←	Word count (not including title and heading)

Play-Dough Minds: Plato vs. Popular Teen Culture ←always have a creative title centered

In his *Republic*, Plato had a higher opinion of children and a higher purpose for childhood. Contrary to producers, advertisers, and performers, Plato saw boys and girls as “young and tender thing[s],” and believed that this part of life is the “most important part.” Childhood, according to Plato, is not important because it presents a lucrative demographic; rather, it is vital because it is the formation of the character of a future man or woman in society.

←Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks

do not → skip an extra line between paragraphs

It is important because Plato implies that who we are when we are forty begins when we are four. This is the time in which character is planted and watered. Plato commented that childhood is “a time when character is being formed and the desired impression is more readily taken.” What, then, is the “desired impression” in these times? For advertising conglomerates, it is to sing an annoying jingle, stamp an impressive logo, or a showcase a tanned body for the sole and unscrupulous purpose of selling products. The desired impression occurring on Madison Avenue is fueled by product placement and the bottom line. Plato, however, seems to desire a more virtuous impression for these young minds. [essay not complete]

### Formatting Tips:

- Double-spaced. Poems are single-spaced lines, and double-spaced stanzas
- No “floating paragraphs” (blank lines between paragraphs). If your Word automatically adds blank lines, fix it by going to Format→Paragraph→change *Spacing* to 0 in the Before and After columns.
- 12-point font, standard font (Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, Calibri, or Helvetica)
- No more than 1-inch margins all around (In Word, go to File→Page Setup→Margins)
- Includes a creative title related to your writing. This is your first introduction to the reader. Make it clever and interesting, and not just the assignment title.
- **Save this sheet and put in your binder. We’ll use this for the entire year.**

## **In-Text Citations**

When you use an idea from an author or directly quote an author in your paper, you must acknowledge the author. Usually, the author-page number method is used. **Ex.** (Jones 22).

### **Examples:**

**Direct Quote** - She stated, "Students often have difficulty using MLA style" (Jones 2).

**Direct Quote** - Jones found "students often have difficulty using MLA style" (2).

If the *direct quote is more than 4 lines of text*: omit quotes, start the quote on a new line, and indent

**Ex.** Jones' (2009) study found the following:

Students often have difficulty using MLA style, especially when it was their first time citing sources. This difficulty could be attributed to the fact that many students failed to purchase a style manual or to ask their teacher for help (2).

**Paraphrase** - According to Jones (2), MLA style can be hard for students.

**Two or three authors:** (Last Name, Last Name, and Last Name p#)

**Four or more authors:** (Last Name of First Author et al. p#)

**No author** of article, chapter, brochure or short work: ("Title", p#)

**No Author** of book, entire website, or long work: (*Title*, p#.)

## **Works Cited Page**

All sources that were cited in the paper appear at the end of your paper. Write the word "Works Cited" on the first line in the center of the page (no quotes). List your sources flush left. Alphabetize your sources (A-Z) by last name.

References longer than one line should be formatted with hanging indentation. (*In Microsoft Word: go to paragraph →special indentation →hanging*)

- **Periodical** (journals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters): Last Name, First Name, and First Name Last Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title*. Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium. Date of Access (if retrieved online).
- **Website:** Contributor's Name(s) (same format as above). "Title of Resource." *Title of Web Site*. Sponsor, Last Edited Date. Web. Date of Access.  
Note: The contributor can be an author, editor, or organization.
- **Book:** Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Medium.

**For more information on Works Cited formatting, please go to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01> or refer to *Holt Handbook***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

## "Me Talk Pretty One Day" by David Sedaris

At the age of forty-one, I am returning to school and having to think of myself as what my French textbook calls "a true debutant." After paying my tuition, I was issued a student ID, which allows me a discounted entry fee at movie theaters, puppet shows, and Festyland, a far-flung amusement park that advertises with billboards picturing a cartoon stegosaurus sitting in a canoe and eating what appears to be a ham sandwich.

I've moved to Paris in order to learn the language. My school is the Alliance Française, and on the first day of class, I arrived early, watching as the returning students greeted one another in the school lobby. Vacations were recounted, and questions were raised concerning mutual friends with names like Kang and Vlatnya. Regardless of their nationalities, everyone spoke what sounded to me like excellent French. Some accents were better than others, but the students exhibited an ease and confidence I found intimidating. As an added discomfort, they were all young, attractive, and well dressed, causing me to feel not unlike Pa Kettle trapped backstage after a fashion show.

I remind myself that I am now a full-grown man. No one will ever again card me for a drink or demand that I weave a floor mat out of newspapers. At my age, a reasonable person should have completed his sentence in the prison of the nervous and the insecure--isn't that the great promise of adulthood? I can't help but think that, somewhere along the way, I made a wrong turn. My fears have not vanished. Rather, they have seasoned and multiplied with age. I am now twice as frightened as I was when, at the age of twenty, I allowed a failed nursing student to inject me with a horse tranquilizer, and eight times more anxious than I was the day my kindergarten teacher pried my fingers off my mother's ankle and led me screaming toward my desk. "You'll get used to it," the woman had said.

I'm still waiting.

The first day of class was nerve-racking, because I knew I'd be expected to perform. That's the way they do it here--everyone into the language pool, sink or swim. The teacher marched in, deeply tanned from a recent vacation, and rattled off a series of administrative announcements. I've spent some time in Normandy, and I took a monthlong French class last summer in New York. I'm not completely in the dark, yet I understood only half of what this teacher was saying.

"If you have not *meismslsxp* by this time, you should not be in this room. Has everybody *apzkiubjxow*? Everyone? Good, we shall proceed." She spread out her lesson plan and sighed, saying, "All right, then, who knows the alphabet?"

It was startling, because a) I hadn't been asked that question in a while, and b) I realized, while laughing, that I myself did *not* know the alphabet. They're the same letters, but they're pronounced differently.

"Ahh." The teacher went to the board and sketched the letter *a*. "Do we have anyone in the room whose first name commences with an *ahh*?"

Two Polish Annas raised their hands, and the teacher instructed them to present themselves, giving their names, nationalities, occupations, and a list of things they liked and disliked in this world. The first Anna hailed from an industrial town outside of Warsaw and had front teeth the size of tombstones. She worked as a seamstress, enjoyed quiet times with friends, and hated the mosquito.

"Oh, really," the teacher said. "How very interesting. I thought that everyone loved the mosquito, but here, in front of all the world, you claim to detest him. How is it that we've been blessed with someone as unique and original as you? Tell us, please."

The seamstress did not understand what was being said, but she knew that this was an occasion for shame. Her rabbit mouth huffed for breath, and she stared down at her lap as though the appropriate comeback were stitched somewhere alongside the zipper of her slacks.

The second Anna learned from the first and claimed to love sunshine and detest lies. It sounded like a translation of one of those Playmate of the Month data sheets, the answers always written in the same loopy handwriting: "Turn-ons: Mom's famous five-alarm chili! Turnoffs: Insincerity and guys who come on too strong!!!"

The two Polish women surely had clear notions of what they liked and disliked, but, like the rest of us, they were limited in terms of vocabulary, and this made them appear less than sophisticated. The teacher forged on, and we learned that Carlos, the Argentine bandonion player, loved wine, music, and, in his words, "Making \_\_\_ with the women of the world." Next came a beautiful young Yugoslavian who identified herself as an optimist, saying that she loved everything life had to offer.

The teacher licked her lips, revealing a hint of the sadist we would later come to know. She crouched low for her attack, placed her hands on the young woman's desk, and said, "Oh, yeah? And do you love your little war?"

While the optimist struggled to defend herself, I scrambled to think of an answer to what had obviously become a trick question. How often are you asked what you love in this world? More important, how often are you asked and then publicly ridiculed for your answer? I recalled my mother, flushed with wine, pounding the table late one night, saying, "Love? I love a good steak cooked rare. I love my cat, and I love . . ." My sisters and I leaned forward, waiting to hear our names. "Tums," our mother said. "I love Tums."

The teacher killed some time accusing the Yugoslavian girl of masterminding a program of genocide, and I jotted frantic notes in the margins of my pad. While I can honestly say that I love leafing through medical textbooks devoted to severe dermatological conditions, it is beyond the reach of my French vocabulary, and acting it out would only have invited unwanted attention.

When called upon, I delivered an effortless list of things I detest: blood sausage, intestinal pâté, brain pudding. I'd learned these words the hard way. Having given it some thought, I then declared my love for IBM typewriters, the French word for "bruise," and my electric floor waxer. It was a short list, but still I managed to mispronounce IBM and afford the wrong gender to both the floor waxer and the typewriter. Her reaction led me to believe that these mistakes were capital crimes in the country of France.

"Were you always this *palicmkrexjs*?" she asked. "Even a *fiuscrzsws tociwegixp* knows that a typewriter is feminine."

I absorbed as much of her abuse as I could understand, thinking, but not saying, that I find it ridiculous to assign a gender to an inanimate object incapable of disrobing and making an occasional fool of itself. Why refer to Lady Flesh Wound or Good Sir Dishrag when these things could never deliver in the sack?

The teacher proceeded to belittle everyone from German Eva, who hated laziness, to Japanese Yukari, who loved paintbrushes and soap. Italian, Thai, Dutch, Korean, Chinese--we all left class foolishly believing that the worst was over. We didn't know it then, but the coming months would teach us what it is like to spend time in the presence of a wild animal. We soon learned to dodge chalk and to cover our heads and stomachs whenever she approached us with a question. She hadn't yet punched anyone, but it seemed wise to prepare ourselves against the inevitable.

Though we were forbidden to speak anything but French, the teacher would occasionally use us to practice any of her five fluent languages.

"I hate you," she said to me one afternoon. Her English was flawless. "I really, really hate you." Call me sensitive, but I couldn't help taking it personally.

Learning French is a lot like joining a gang in that it involves a long and intensive period of hazing. And it wasn't just my teacher; the entire population seemed to be in on it. Following brutal encounters with my local butcher and the concierge of my building, I'd head off to class, where the teacher would hold my corrected paperwork high above her head, shouting, "Here's proof that David is an ignorant and uninspired *ensigiejsokhix*."

Refusing to stand convicted on the teacher's charges of laziness, I'd spend four hours a night on my homework, working even longer whenever we were assigned an essay. I suppose I could have gotten by with less, but I was determined to create some sort of an identity for myself. We'd have one of those "complete the sentence" exercises, and I'd fool with the thing for hours, invariably settling on something like, "A quick run around the lake? I'd love to. Just give me a minute to strap on my wooden leg." The teacher, through word and action, conveyed the message that, if this was my idea of an identity, she wanted nothing to do with it.

My fear and discomfort crept beyond the borders of my classroom and accompanied me out onto the wide boulevards, where, no matter how hard I tried, there was no escaping the feeling of terror I felt whenever anyone asked me a question. I was safe in any kind of a store, as, at least in my neighborhood, one can stand beside the cash register for hours on end without being asked something so trivial as, "May I help you?" or "How would you like to pay for that?"

My only comfort was the knowledge that I was not alone. Huddled in the smoky hallways and making the most of our pathetic French, my fellow students and I engaged in the sort of conversation commonly overheard in refugee camps.

"Sometimes me cry alone at night."

"That is common for me also, but be more strong, you. Much work, and someday you talk pretty. People stop hate you soon. Maybe tomorrow, okay?"

Unlike other classes I have taken, here there was no sense of competition. When the teacher poked a shy Korean woman in the eyelid with a freshly sharpened pencil, we took no comfort in the fact that, unlike Hyeyoon Cho, we all knew the irregular past tense of the verb "to defeat." In all fairness, the teacher hadn't meant to hurt the woman, but neither did she spend much time apologizing, saying only, "Well, you should have been paying more attention."

Over time, it became impossible to believe that any of us would ever improve. Fall arrived, and it rained every day. It was mid-October when the teacher singled me out, saying, "Every day spent with you is like having a cesarean section." And it struck me that, for the first time since arriving in France, I could understand every word that someone was saying.

Understanding doesn't mean that you can suddenly speak the language. Far from it. It's a small step, nothing more, yet its rewards are intoxicating and deceptive. The teacher continued her diatribe, and I settled back, bathing in the subtle beauty of each new curse and insult.

"You exhaust me with your foolishness and reward my efforts with nothing but pain, do you understand me?"

The world opened up, and it was with great joy that I responded, "I know the thing what you speak exact now. Talk me more, plus, please, plus."

**STUDENT EXAMPLES: Narrative on First Day**

Susan Harrison  
Mr. Coia  
AP Lang Period A4  
30 August 2015  
650 words

“You’re All Going to Fail”  
*My First Day of 11<sup>th</sup> Grade*

Finally, the supposed monster awaiting us all had arrived. The night before, Facebook statuses revealed quite the spectrum of emotion, ranging from relieved seniors happy to start their last year, to angry sophomores realizing that they're stuck in high school for three more years, to the stereotypical freshmen who, of course, were not sure whether to pee their pants in excitement or hide under the bed and never come out. However, there were few status updates from the juniors, since most of them were busy finishing AP summer work and praying to their deity that they could get through the year without crying in public, failing their classes, passing out from exhaustion, or all three. I was among those juniors.

The day began with AP Biology. I plan to major in biology someday, and the college I want to go to will closely examine my performance in this class in order to make a decision that will affect my whole life, so there's a tiny bit of pressure involved here. The teacher started class by facing us and clearly announcing, "You are all going to fail every test." We all looked around, checking to see if anyone was going to do what we all wanted to do at that moment, which was to promptly get up and leave the room. No one did. The rest of the class was spent being told that we were going to fail often, and then having a huge lab assignment dumped on us. We were all a little apprehensive after A1, as we should have been, because the rest of the day went almost exactly the same.

Next period was AP US History. Based on her name, Nikki Summers, I was expecting a 20-something blonde with a 1970's haircut and a large set of white teeth. Upon arriving to class, I found that my expectation may have been true back in 1970, but was now completely wrong. Ms. Summers was a middle-aged woman with an average haircut and ordinary teeth. She started class by explaining that there were going to be many essays that we were going to be incapable of writing, as well as thirty chapters of reading that we were going to be incapable of comprehending. After that rousing introduction, we were told to go around the room and look at the documents on the walls and analyze them. During that time, three complete strangers came up to me with a panicked look in their eyes, asking me how in the world we were supposed to do this. Apparently, I looked like I knew what I was doing- I didn't. I made up something about how you had to find key phrases, and watched each person walk away with the same look they had when they approached me.

After lunch, I had Japanese IV. It was exactly like David Sedaris' *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, except that the teacher did not stab anyone in the eye with a pencil, and I was one of about three of the seventeen students who were

not fluent in the language. The entire period was spent trying my hardest to comprehend even single words of the torrential outpouring of foreign coming from the teacher's mouth. The only thing I understood out of the whole class was that we were allowed to go to the bathroom sometimes.

The last period, thankfully, was easy. In pre-calculus we simply plotted some points and made a pretty picture on graph paper. This was above many people's ability, but I understood alright. During the twenty minutes of mindless coloring, I realized that I was expected to fail everything. With that in mind, I finished coloring and decided that I was going to go home and update my Facebook status to say that this year was going to be a long one, and watch as all the other AP juniors "liked" it.

.....

Andrea Paloschavez  
Mr. Coia  
LA 11 Period A4  
10 September 2015  
553 words

### Elastigirl

You could say that I'm a problem child, a freak of nature, or an angel. I learned to walk just like everyone else – tripping, flopping, and swaying all around. Once past that wobbly toddler stage, most people never give the skill another thought. Especially not at fifteen.

Throughout elementary and middle school, I swam in a competitive swim team. Two hours a day, six days a week. I had goals. During a routine check up, my physician noticed all my joints were hyperextended. After tossing out phrases like “multisystem disorder of connective tissue” and “musculoskeletal problems... dysautonomia,” he diagnosed me with joint hypermobility syndrome. In my childish mind, hypermobility equated to “Elastigirl” from the Incredibles. I completely disregarded the diagnosis, as I felt perfectly normal and pain-free. Unluckily, JHS isn't exactly incredible. As I got older, the symptoms (pain and stiffness in the joints and muscles, clicking joints, joints that dislocate, fatigue, recurrent injuries, dizziness, and fainting) continued to advance. I was a perfectly healthy child given a bad hand of cards, in terms of genetics.

Flash forward to freshman year, and I was taking my required P.E. course. It was fitness testing day, and my worst enemy – pushups – was up. I did one, and it was my last. Immediately, my shoulder popped out of its socket with a horrible grinding sound of bone-on-bone. I didn't make a sound. With tears welling, I excused myself and walked to the nurse, arm dangling limply from its socket. After that hospital visit, I taught myself how to reset my shoulder.

Sophomore year my physician noticed the bones in my feet were twisting, and he recommended me to podiatry. They explained that if I did not treat the symptoms now, the bones would progressively become more

deformed until I could no longer walk. Naturally, I opted for surgery, and metal plates and screws were added to my feet. March, April, May, June, July, August -- I did not walk for six months.

During this time, I was still going to school. Following a regression from using crutches, I became wheelchair bound. I had goals, but they were almost out of reach. I became focused on the things I could not do, rather than the things I could. No hanging out, no sports, and worst of all, I had to rely on others. Once, during a fire drill, my class evacuated and left me stranded on the second floor of a building with no elevators. I was fortunate enough that my best friend remembered where I was and wheeled me out.

I was very unhappy with the hand of cards I had been dealt. Depression is the kind of thing that slowly creeps up on you. I lost a lot of weight, friends, and cheerfulness. But, I was sick of being sick. I couldn't stay this way forever. I was Elastigirl, and I was determined to bounce back. I threw myself into physical therapy two weeks early, and have been going religiously ever since. I began walking far sooner than expected, and running is just around the corner. I *have* goals. Now, I can walk into class on my own two feet. I can walk the path to reach my goals, however big or small. I'm a human Elastigirl made of scars, metal plates, screws, and happiness.

**Rubric:**

**Narrative Essay Grading Rubric**

*This is a short account on learning something in the style of Sedaris or Alexie*

--Creative, original ideas/details	0	1	2	3	4
--Creative word choice	0	1	2	3	4
--Format (margins, spacing, font, header, title, length)	0	1	2	3	
--Conventions (grammar/usage/punctuation)	0	1	2		
--Antithesis is interesting and underlined	0	1			
--Anaphora is interesting and underlined	0	1			
--Reflects the style of Sedaris/Alexie	0	1			
				<b>Total:</b>	<b>_____ /15</b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Me Talk Pretty One Day” by David Sedaris**

**Questions on Rhetoric and Style**

1. How does Sedaris’s selection of detail in the first paragraph establish a humorous tone?

---

---

---

2. Find at least one example of hyperbole in the essay. What is the effect created through exaggeration?

---

---

---

3. Describe the way in which Sedaris presents the dialogue of the students as they attempt to speak French. What effect does this achieve?

---

---

---

4. Identify examples of Sedaris’s ethnic references. What is their effect?

---

---

---

5. Identify an instance each of irony and understatement. How do they help to create humor?

---

---

---

6. Give one example of a sentence with especially clever or unique syntax (the structure of the sentence).

---

---

---

**Simulated AP Essay Question:** (Just for an example; do not complete this)

Read “Me Talk Pretty One Day” and then write a well-organized essay in which you explain how the author uses rhetorical devices to achieve a comic effect.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Superman and Me” by Sherman Alexie**

**Questions on Rhetoric and Style**

1. What is the effect of Alexie’s analogy of a paragraph to a fence (para. 3)?

---

---

---

2. What does Alexie mean when he describes “an Indian boy” who “grows into a man who often speaks of his childhood in the third-person” (para. 5)?

---

---

---

3. In paragraph 7, Alexie deliberately uses a number of short, simple sentences. What effect is he trying to achieve?

---

---

---

4. This eight-paragraph essay is divided into two distinct sections. Why? How would you describe the arrangement of material? How does it suit Alexie’s overall purpose?

---

---

---

5. Discuss Alexie’s use of parallel structure and repetition in the last two paragraphs.

---

---

---

6. Who is the audience for this essay? Cite specific passages to support your response.

---

---

---

**Possible AP Essay Question:**

Read “Superman and Me” and then write a well-organized essay in which you explain how the \_\_\_\_\_ uses \_\_\_\_\_ to achieve \_\_\_\_\_.

## SOAPS—An Acronym for Analyzing Texts for Point of View

**S**ubject: The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. This can be stated in a few words or a phrase.

**O**ccasion: Where and when did the story take place? In what context? What is the rhetorical occasion of the text? Is it a memory, a description, an observation, a valedictory, an argument, a diatribe, an elegy, a declaration, a critique, etc.? Note the larger occasion, that is, the *broad* issue which is the center of ideas and emotions. Also note the immediate occasion, that is, the issue that catches the writer's attention and triggers a response.

**A**udience: Toward whom is the text directed? Does the author identify an audience? Is it one individual, a group, many groups? What assumptions can you make about the intended audience? Are they educated? Are they familiar with the subject? Sympathetic or antagonistic?

**P**urpose: What is the speaker's reason for writing the text? Considering the purpose is important so that the reader can examine the writer's argument and the logic of it. In what ways does the author convey the message of the purpose? What is the message? How does the speaker try to spark a reaction in the audience? How is the text supposed to make the audience feel? What is its intended effect?

**S**peaker: (The voice telling the story). Is someone identified as the speaker? What assumptions can you make about the speaker? (e.g., age, gender, class, emotional state, etc.)

The author and the speaker are not necessarily the same. The author may tell the story from many different points of view. So who is telling the story? How do you know this? How does the writer present his/her narration? Assess the character of the speaker. These are crucial considerations. Are the author and speaker a different gender? Do not be confused by the gender of the author and assume the speaker must be the same. Let the facts lead you to the speaker. What does the speaker believe? Do not assume that the author believes what the speaker believes.

If the text is non-fiction, do not simply identify the speaker/author by name. Include important facts about the speaker that will help the reader (the audience) make judgments about the speaker's position (the speaker's point of view).

**Tone: What is the author's attitude toward the subject?** What emotional sense do you take from the piece? The *spoken word* can convey the speaker's attitude and help impart meaning through tone of voice. However, with the *written word*, tone extends meaning past the literal. How does the diction (choice of words), point to tone? How does syntax (sentence construction) point to tone? Finally, how does imagery (vivid descriptions that appeal to the senses) point to tone?