

## Background

This past quarter, we've focused our attention on the third canon of rhetoric—style. We have discussed diction, detail, imagery, syntax, and tone. The purpose of this essay is to create an opportunity for you to bring all these elements of style together, solidify them in your mind, identify them in action, and analyze their effects—with the ultimate goals of making you, first, more attentive to style as you interpret what you read, and second, able to finesse your own style as you seek to persuade in speaking and writing.

## Assignment

You will analyze and interpret the style of the short stories of Flannery O'Connor. Your overarching questions will be:

- Why does O'Connor use the style she does?
- What does it add to the meaning and message of the story?

To write the essay, you must follow the procedure below:

1. Choose several (minimum 3) passages from the short stories which you believe either capture the author's style or are central to the story/message (a "passage" is a good chunky paragraph, or several paragraphs, amounting to at least ten sentences).
2. Analyze the style of the passages. This should be a similar process to your style analysis worksheets that you completed for each short story. Look back over each element of style worksheet and see Weebly for additional style analysis resources.
3. Consider your analyses and **interpret how the style affects the overall meaning of these passages and of the story as a whole**. For your essay, choose at least three stylistic elements to focus on that you think are most significant.
4. Write your essay following the specifications below. Remember, in each body paragraph, you will be identifying stylistic elements in the text, analyzing how they work, and commenting on how they help to develop the larger story/meaning. It will be easy to use quotations/examples from the passages you analyzed, but you can use other parts of the stories as well. You can organize the essay either by working through different aspects of the meaning, or by addressing each of the stylistic elements in turn.

## Requirements

- Length: 4-5 pages; MLA format
- Thesis: should include both the elements of style you will discuss (at least three!) and the effect/interpretation you believe these elements contribute to the short story as a whole.
- Introduction: should name the title and author and provide background information or context for your argument. You may find it necessary to give a brief summary of the story in a second paragraph (statement of facts) in order to establish context.
- Avoid plot summary except where necessary to establish context. Remember this is an analysis and not a book report.
- Support your interpretation or argument with evidence from the text, including in-text citations.
- If using a long quotation (four or more lines) or dialogue, use block quote format. Short quotations, however, are better because you want to be working on the detail-level.
- Write in literary present tense and avoid shifting tenses. Use 3<sup>rd</sup> person (no "I" or "we").
- As with any academic essay, please avoid the use of contractions and passive voice.
- **STYLE!!!** You are not only analyzing style, but you should also be writing with style.  
Use the elements of style and rhetorical devices!