

These artifacts/texts are available on Moodle:

If your last name starts with A-E, analyze “Cherries for My Grandma”

If your last name starts with F-K, analyze “Testimony of Anna Doyle”

If your last name starts with L-R, analyze “Testimony of Michael J Fox”

If your last name starts with S-Z, analyze “Presidential Announcement Speech”

Lens

Use these questions, as well as the information in Chapter 5 of the Rowland textbook, to analyze the narratives that characterize your text. Use full sentences

**1. Choose an important story from your artifact. Answer the following...**

**a. Provide a quick summary of the story**

- i. Within the text “Cherries for My Grandma” by Geoffry Canada, one story that he narrates is about living with his grandparents while in high school. Canada grew up in poverty, and his mom was single-handedly raising him and his 3 brothers. His grandparents were in a similar economic situation as his mother, despite them all being hardworking and morally driven individuals. Within this story, he shares how over the summer his grandmother would splurge on cherries. Without his grandfather knowing, Canada would walk to the store to purchase cherries that he and his grandmother would secretly share. When Canada got to college, he dreamed of being able to buy his grandmother a whole crate of cherries with his first paycheck. However, his grandmother unfortunately passed away his second year of college.

**b. What is the plot of the story?**

- i. As a teenager, Canada lived with his grandparents. Every summer, he and his grandmother would secretly buy cherries as an indulgence without his grandfather knowing. Canada would walk to the store and would spend about an extra dollar (that his family did not have) so that he and his grandmother could enjoy the in-season cherries. Once Canada got to college, he wanted to graduate and get a job so that he could buy his

grandmother a whole crate of them. His grandmother died before he graduated, so he never got to fulfill his wish of being able to provide for her as she did for him.

**c. What is the scene of the story?**

- i. This story takes place when the speaker is in high school living at his grandparents' house. More specifically, he focuses on the summer months since that is when he and his grandmother would buy cherries

**d. Who are the characters?**

- i. The characters are Geoffery Canada, his grandmother, and his grandfather

**e. What themes are in the story?**

- i. It is difficult to climb out of poverty; people who are impoverished work hard; material things are not necessary to live a meaningful life

**f. Are all these formal elements of narrative fully spelled out in the story, or are they subtle and implied?**

- i. I think that all of the formal elements are fully spelled out in some way. The plot is laid out somewhat chronologically, as it starts by generally explaining that he lived with his grandparents while he was a teenager and then it gets more specific as he talks about his summers with his grandmother. The story ends with him in college when his grandmother died. The same goes for the scene. Through having a detailed plot, the time and place (especially when he is in college) are blatantly stated. Additionally, the three characters in this story (him, his grandmother, and his grandfather) are all listed through the storytelling aspect. The themes are also fully spelled out throughout. When the micro-narrative starts, he talks about how his grandmother taught him "how one could enjoy a deep spiritual love of life that was not tied to material things". Then, throughout the story, this theme is conveyed through him and his grandmother splurging on cherries. At the end of the entire article, he ties it back to poverty. He talks about how it is not simple to climb out of poverty, and hardworking people can still be impoverished. Instead of having the audience imply those messages, he comes out and says it clearly.

**2. Your textbook explores 6 functions of narrative rhetoric. Identify a story in your artifact, then discuss 2 or 3 of the narrative functions that it most clearly serves. Provide thorough explanations/justifications for these choices.**

- a. The first story mentioned in this artifact has to do with Canada's mother raising 4 boys alone in the Bronx. One of the main narrative functions in this portion of the artifact is creating identification between him and the audience. In order to show what his childhood was like, he has to explain his family's socioeconomic status. That is a key aspect to how he understands poverty firsthand. In the third paragraph, he says "People talk about poverty and the poor like it's so easy to not be poor. But I know a different story". He is able to accurately portray the effects of poverty since he lived through it. He is breaking down cultural barriers between him and audience members who did not grow up poor. Additionally, he is able to connect with audience members who grew up in poverty. It enables him to form some sort of relationship with the reader in order to better convey his message that people who are poor are still people.
- b. Another key narrative function found in the first micro-narrative is the author encapsulates a point. Instead of stating "poor people work hard" and leaving it at that, he paints a picture of his childhood and his mother's hard work. He discusses how his mom made clothes for the family, toys were constructed out of cereal boxes, and she gave him and his brothers haircuts at home. This not only humanizes Canada but also makes the point he is getting across more digestible. Anyone can list stats regarding poverty and the ways that those in poverty work hard, but it is completely different to tell a story of *how* those people are working hard to support their families.
- c. I also think that the first story regarding how he grew up is the power to break down barriers to understanding. Personally, this is the biggest narrative function of this piece. He starts the whole article with an analogy to the Cold War. Stemming off of that idea, he goes on to explain the animosity shown towards hardworking American people who are poor. There are a lot of negative stigmas surrounding poverty, and not a lot of people understand the ambition and drive of those who are poor. However, by using narrative and telling a story about his

hardworking mother, he is able to show the audience (not just tell them) that poor people are capable of working hard. It also outlines the fact that poverty is difficult to escape from. He talks about how when his mother did find work, she got paid so little that it hardly made a difference compared to the welfare they would receive. He is removing the audience from their own preconceived notions and bringing them into the realities of his childhood to outline the true effects of poverty.

**3. Overall, how would you evaluate the rhetor's use of narrative? In your opinion, does the story help them achieve their goals? More generally, what is your evaluation of the artifact? Is it persuasive? Is it ethical?**

- a. I think that the author successfully used narrative to stress his point. I think that the main message he was trying to get across was the fact that people who are poor are hard workers with strong morals. With the second story specifically talking about his relationship with his grandmother, he also stresses the importance of having a fulfilling life without regard to material possessions. Between both stories, I feel as if those messages got across even if he didn't specifically state them throughout the piece. While I liked the paragraphs of him describing his inherent message regarding poverty, they were not 100% necessary to still gather the gist of his argument. The stories enhanced his overall thematic points regarding those who are impoverished. I also think that this article is persuasive. While I already held the belief that people in poverty are hard workers and the socioeconomic ladder is a difficult one to climb, his appeal to emotion through the storytelling is very compelling. It is hard to argue with someone who has first-hand experience of growing up in poverty/ witnessing the strong and morally aligned people in his life struggle financially. Additionally, since he is sharing his own personal experience, I think that this piece is ethical. He is not engaging in any exploitative behavior since he is just recalling his childhood. If he were to tell someone else's story and almost falsify his understanding of poverty, I would be less inclined to think it ethical. However, these experiences are authentically his.