

## AP Language and Composition Summer Work 2019:

This course focuses on the authorial intention of language, word choice, purpose, audience and content. These ideas will be introduced in this first summer work assignment.

1. Read the two articles provided:

Harris Jr., Webb. "Teaching Huck Finn without Regret."

[www.tolerance.org/magazine/teaching-huckfinnwithout-regret](http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/teaching-huckfinnwithout-regret), April 16, 2013.

Buchanan, Kyle. New York Times: "With One Strong Word, 'The Hate U give' Couldn't Hold Its Tongue," October 18, 2018.

Consider this quoted material from the book Successful Writing:. Paragraphs separate ideas into logical manageable chunks. One paragraph focuses on only one main idea and presents coherent sentences to support that one point. Because all the sentences in one paragraph support the same point, a paragraph may stand on its own. To discuss more than one point writers group together paragraphs which can become essays, articles, treatises and books. Three elements shape the content of each paragraph: Purpose: The reason the writer composes the paragraph, Tone: The attitude the writer conveys about the paragraph's subject. Audience: The individual or group whom the writer intends to address.

Answer EACH of the following questions for BOTH articles with at least a paragraph each:

1. What is the purpose of the article?
2. What is the attitude the writer is conveying about the subject?
3. Who is the intended audience of this article?
4. Analyze the main points of this article, examine the individual points and identify how the points relate to one another. Use at least 2 quotes to demonstrate and support your analysis.

These answers can be hand written or typed.

FINAL Assignment: Consider what both articles have to say about the impact of language upon their intended audience(s). Using BOTH articles: Write an essay (minimum 5 maximum 15 paragraphs with a beginning, middle and end) discussing how language affects both the intended audience and the author's purpose of created material using information from these articles to prove your point.

This essay can be hand written or typed.

I have also included a general guide/outline to help you construct your essay if you are unsure or uncomfortable. It is certainly not the only way to organize an essay but works as a start.

5 paragraph essay: Does NOT need to ONLY be 5 paragraphs but must be a MINIMUM of 5.

Introduction: 1 paragraph minimum

Always begins with \_\_\_\_\_

Must do the following tasks:

1. Begin with some interesting eye catching \_\_\_\_\_
2. Narrow from introductory sentence
3. Include specific location, text with title, genre and author.
4. Specific topic of interest within the text
5. Thesis statement or POINT that gives three stated or implied reasons that this is plausible or provable.

Body: 3 paragraphs (either 3 areas of proof or 2 areas of proof and 1 counterclaim refuted) minimum.

Must complete the following tasks within each of 3 paragraphs:

1. State the point while including one stated area of proof
2. Explain the terminology and facts within task 1.
3. Give direct proof that proves your first point using a specific example or quotation from the text
4. Explain the details and any specialized knowledge needed to understand the example within task 3.
5. Explain WHY your explanation of your example (4) proves your point (1).
6. Re-state your point using different words and/or more details than you used in 1. For example if the term in 1 was cat the term in 6 is feline. If 1 is hard 6 is difficult.

Conclusion: 1 paragraph minimum

Must complete the following tasks:

1. Restate your complete point addressing all areas of proof from task 6 of each paragraph within the BODY of the essay
2. Explain the point and its relevance
3. Explain why the audience should care about this issue and/or information.
4. Provide the audience with a task, mission or advice that pertains to this issue and makes it relevant to their lives, job et cetera. In other words end with

WORDS of WISDOM

 TEACHING TOLERANCE

ARTICLE

# Teaching Huck Finn Without Regret

The joys of teaching Huck Finn to today's youth.

April 16, 2013 |

Topic: Race & Ethnicity

In 1994, against the advice of a fellow English teacher, I began teaching *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* to my 11th graders. I was alerted that embarrassment, offense and anger were inevitable. "Sooner or later," my colleague warned, "a student will protest, a parent will complain."

Too foolishly stubborn to heed that veteran wisdom, I snatched every available copy of *Huck Finn* from our supply room and passed them out to my students. Together, we began reading. The experience proved such a pleasure, I taught the book again the following year. This is the truth: In the five years I taught American literature, from 1994 to 1999, my class's study of *Huck Finn* was always, by far, the most enjoyably authentic reading experience of the school year.

For a teacher to abandon *Huck Finn* out of fear and timidity is, in my view, a shame. The novel is a staple of American literature and, in its own right, of American history, too. This fact alone, however, is not what recommends the novel to the modern curriculum. *Huck Finn* is that rare classic which grabs modern students' attention and elicits a genuine response. I never had to explain to a student why she should be interested in the book. I never needed to pray that enough students had been paying attention to provide us with a bona fide discussion. With *Huck Finn*, interest was virtually automatic, and the lessons of the novel rose naturally from the reading.

## Welcome to realism!

At the time of its original publication in 1885, propriety's guardians condemned the novel because its title character was a rebellious child. Welcome to realism! Some modern critics scoff at the "realism" label, panning the book's "stereotypical caricatures." Yet careful readers discover wonderfully complex and realistic characters. Huck is rebellious, as all children, especially untutored ones, tend to be; Pap is revolting, as unfettered racist drunkards tend to be; Jim is illiterate, as

antebellum slaves tended to be. To depict Jim as professorial or Huck as a little sweetie-pie -- as some modern adaptations try to do -- is absurd.

An appreciation of this point is crucial to teaching *Huck Finn* effectively: Students must be allowed to enjoy the book as rollickingly realistic fiction, and the first element in achieving this enjoyment is the instructor's own appreciation of *Huck Finn* as story. When the novel is delivered simply as a vehicle for preaching the evils of racism, it is reduced to propaganda. American students never have shown, nor ever will show, a hearty interest in party-line propaganda. This, perhaps, was the concern behind Twain's famous "Notice" preceding Chapter One: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot will be shot." Of course, there is a plot, meandering as it may be, and, likewise, there is a moral or two. But, first and foremost, there is a darned entertaining story. A teacher who doesn't already enjoy the book as such probably shouldn't teach it. Be sure you genuinely like *Huck Finn* before sharing it with your students.

Because it is realistic, *Huck Finn* is, at times, quite painful. However, it is also quite funny. Here art mirrors life: The book's humor makes the journey bearable. Allow your students to revel in Twain's comedy. For instance, many students find Huck's dialect hilarious. How much of the book is read aloud is a teacher's prerogative, but the teacher, to allow students the opportunity to hear the speech patterns effectively performed must read the first portion of the book aloud. Be dramatic! Read with flair! Play Huck to the hilt! If you have an associate who can do it better, invite him into your classroom for a guest reading. You cannot overemphasize Huck's wretched grammar.

## **"Some teachers will be tempted to whitewash its ugliness. Don't."**

### **Poking fun at both characters**

This leads to a second crucial point: No fun can be poked at Jim that cannot be poked at Huck. The book's detractors have missed, or ignored, this fact. "Jim's speech patterns are so awfully ignorant, almost cartoonish," they cry. Goodness. Are Huck's speech patterns any more impressive? Are Pap's? Twain's eye for human inconsistency is the soul of his beautiful ironies. In *Huck Finn*, characters who mock Jim's ignorance are themselves awash in ignorance. Student readers must be made to grasp this.

For example, early in the novel, Jim manifests his superstitious nature through his declared belief in witches. However, this does not take place until after Chapter 1, wherein Huck already has revealed himself to be equally irrational; he frets over the bad luck that killing a spider surely must bring him and over the omens

inherent in the howling of dogs and the hootings of owls. These ironies are richly, though subtly, scattered throughout the novel. My African American students, especially, became adept at uncovering them. One such student took particular delight in pointing out Huck's ignorance of the trappings of European royalty in Chapter 14, the very chapter in which Huck declares the impossibility of teaching Jim anything at all. Discovering these dualities is your students' key to understanding the novel. Huck is much smarter than Jim ... or is he? Jim knows nothing about children and family life ... or does he? *Huck Finn* teaches us this: That which we're certain we know of others is, more often than not, as suspect as that which we're certain we know of ourselves.

Sometimes, though, Twain's humor conceals nothing profound; it's simply comedy for comedy's sake. This is another reason the book works. Teenagers' television and movie choices testify to their love of silliness. Many of my students laughed out loud at my reading of the ridiculous conversations of Tom Sawyer's gang (Chapter 2) and Huck's female impersonation (Chapter 11). Affect a falsetto in the latter performance -- even if you're already a woman -- and let your students enjoy the parody.

### **Real learning takes place**

All is not fun and games, however, and *Huck Finn*'s more serious episodes provide the final arena wherein real learning will take place. Huck is sometimes a clown; he is at all times a rebel. This complaint of many of *Huck Finn*'s original readers strikes unwittingly at the heart of young Huck's journey to maturity. Huck's ultimate decision to assist Jim was a blatant rebellion against the mores and ethics of society. If allowed to admire Huck's rebel spirit, your students -- rebels themselves -- ultimately will share in his heroic victory.

I have found two of the book's more distressing episodes to be chief junctures that demand scrutiny as a class. The first is Pap's horrific "govment" speech in Chapter VI. Some teachers will be tempted to whitewash its ugliness. Don't. Pap's racist harangue more effectively reveals the evils Huck must overcome than do Twain's brief descriptions of slavery and Huck's constant use of the "n-word." After all, high school students likely have already studied Southern slavery in history class, and, unfortunately, they hear the "n-word" repeatedly in their music and movies. What they don't often hear are brutally honest revelations of the heart of hardcore racism. Sentiments like Pap's are not uncommon; the expression of them, in such straightforward fashion, often is. I read Pap's speech aloud to my students. I try to sound as indignant as Pap would have sounded if we could have heard him.

On one occasion, after I finished, a white girl said meekly, "Mr. Harris, those were the ugliest words I've ever heard." Her comment was followed by the voice of an otherwise very quiet African American boy in the back of the room. "Lots of people

feel that way, though," he said. Everyone nodded silently. It was a tough moment, yet a poignant one. An honest one.

Chapter 15, in which Huck takes advantage of Jim through a practical joke, and then -- seeing that Jim's feelings are hurt -- forces himself to apologize, is also a place to stop and talk. Make sure your students notice that Huck's growth has begun; in spite of what he continues to call Jim, Huck obviously has begun to see Jim in a different light. From this point onward, Huck is aware that Jim has feelings, too.

### **We Were All Along For the Ride**

Finally, it goes almost without saying that Chapter 31, as the book's moral climax, will provide the basis for your climactic class discussion. Huck discovers "you can't pray a lie" and that helping Jim is the right thing to do -- even if society's most pious and learned insist that aiding a runaway is perverted and wicked. However, if you've made it this far, this is a discussion you won't have to sweat. Everyone will be proud of Huck and eager to praise him. The rebel boy has come a long way by this point, and many of your students will have come a long way with him.

Every time I taught the novel, Huck's raft got awfully crowded. We were all of us along for the ride, through thick and thin, for better or for worse. And somewhere along that mighty river, we each, like Huck, did a lot of growing up.

*Webb Harris Jr., taught American literature at Apopka High School in central Florida for five years.*

# The New York Times

THE CARPETBAGGER

## With One Strong Word, 'The Hate U Give' Couldn't Hold Its Tongue

By Kyle Buchanan

Oct. 18, 2018

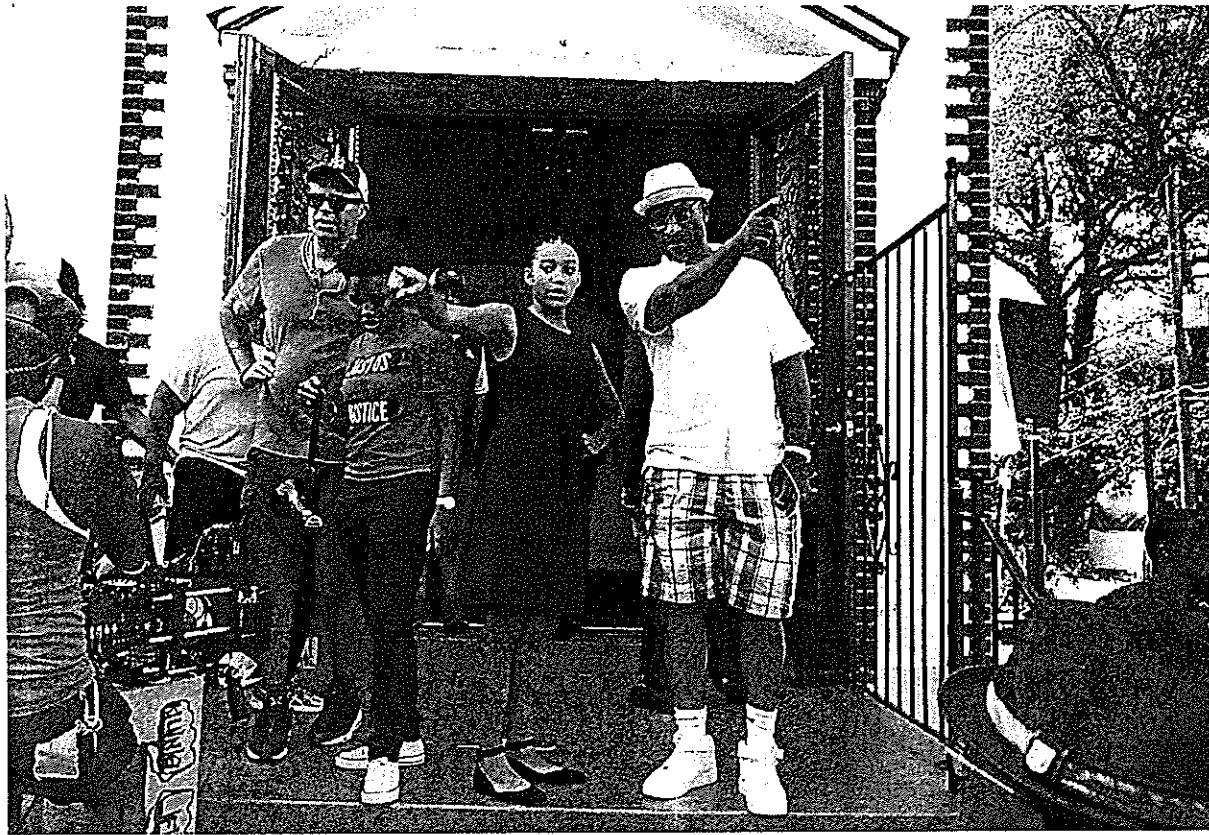
How do you make a movie about teenagers when the more authentic it sounds, the less likely it is that young people will be able to see it?

That was the dilemma facing George Tillman Jr., who directed “The Hate U Give.” Based on the best-selling young-adult novel by Angie Thomas, the film follows Starr Carter (Amandla Stenberg), a black student at a largely white prep school, who is galvanized into activism after she witnesses the police shooting of her childhood friend Khalil.

“The Hate U Give” takes its title and central philosophy from a concept espoused by Tupac Shakur: To the rapper, who had “THUG LIFE” tattooed in capital letters on his torso, that phrase was an acronym for a vicious cycle of societal violence. “THUG LIFE,” he explained, actually stands for “The Hate U Give Little Infants Effs Everybody.”

*[Read our movie review of “The Hate U Give.”]*

Of course, Shakur used a stronger word than “eff” — one that Thomas was able to print several times in her book but that Tillman could use only sparingly onscreen, lest he incur an R rating from the Motion Picture Association of America for strong language. (The Times has a similar restriction on the expletive, which your Carpetbagger has been known to utter from time to time.) If “The Hate U Give” featured more than one use of that word, the movie would be in jeopardy of losing the PG-13 rating that Tillman and his distributor, 20th Century Fox, had hoped to earn, and teenagers who treasured the book might be barred from seeing the adaptation.



Stenberg and her director, George Tillman Jr., on the “Hate U Give” set.  
Erika Doss/20th Century Fox

“Young kids today are very smart,” Tillman said. “They watch adult films, they get things very quickly, and they’re very sophisticated.” But that posed its own problem: If Tillman tried to sanitize the language, his target audience would know. And given that two crucial scenes in “The Hate U Give” require Shakur’s “THUG LIFE” concept to be explained in full, there were no easy write-arounds.

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“I felt like if I didn’t say what Tupac was trying to say, it would not feel authentic,” the director said. A different, less penalized expletive wouldn’t work either: “The audience that was familiar with Tupac and his philosophy would think, ‘Oh, they’re just trying to make it mainstream,’” Tillman said.

*[Amandla Stenberg, George Tillman Jr. and Angie Thomas recall the microaggressions they experienced in school.]*



Another filmmaker, Bo Burnham, faced a similar dilemma this year with his movie "Eighth Grade." The M.P.A.A. slapped the junior-high dramedy with an R rating for strong language, though its curse words would hardly scandalize teenagers. Burnham refused to cut his film for a wider audience: "I just wanted to portray the way kids' lives are," he told *Variety* in July. "I would love kids to be living in a PG-13 world. They just aren't."

For Tillman, whose previous films like "Soul Food" and "Men of Honor" have been mostly rated R, reaching a general audience was paramount. "If we're following this young girl's point of view, I just felt like it really made it more universal to walk that line and make it for anyone under 13," he said. "As a filmmaker, you really want to be organic, but you also want people to see the film as much as possible."

To make it work, then, Tillman strategized. In one early scene, Starr's father (Russell Hornsby) was supposed to use the expletive; Tillman changed it to "eff," reasoning that a father might want to soften his language around his daughter. Tillman wanted to save his single usage of the full-blown word for a different first-act scene, in which Starr listens to Shakur as Khalil explains the rapper's message. "If Khalil was saying 'eff' or bouncing around that word," Tillman said, "it just wouldn't have been authentic."

Still, that scene with Khalil was meant to be mirrored later in the film, when a newly self-actualized Starr is the one who must explain Shakur's intent to others. Since Starr had spent the bulk of "The Hate U Give" finding her voice, how would it look for her to lose it at this pivotal moment?

Tillman shot the climactic scene a number of different ways, but when it came time to submit his cut to the M.P.A.A. for a rating, he used a take with Stenberg saying "eff" instead of the expletive, and only Khalil's earlier use of the full word remained. "Historically, you only get one," Tillman reasoned.

As predicted, the M.P.A.A. granted "The Hate U Give" a PG-13 rating, but what Tillman didn't foresee is how miserable that would make him.

After rewatching his movie, "I felt like it was compromised," he said. "Why didn't I just go with my instinct from the beginning and not worry about it? I didn't give them the second F-word because I didn't think I would get it, and I never got it before. But something in my heart was telling me it wasn't authentic to what we were trying to say."

And so, with the release date fast approaching, Tillman persuaded Fox to do something nearly unprecedented: resubmit "The Hate U Give" to the M.P.A.A. with an unbowdlerized version of Starr's big moment. Tillman would write the ratings board a letter pleading for the added expletive, which he argued was essential to the film and his lead character's journey.

Surprisingly, the M.P.A.A. granted his request: "The Hate U Give" would be the rare PG-13 film to contain two instances of the board's most penalized curse word.

“Sometimes the M.P.A.A. gets a tough rap about ratings, but here’s a chance where it really worked to our benefit,” Tillman said. “They knew that the language was not just used as language, it was used to educate and inform.”

Ultimately, Starr learns over the course of the movie to put a premium on keeping it real, and the language in “The Hate U Give” had to follow suit. In other words, if the film wanted to walk the walk when it came to teenage verisimilitude, it also had to talk the talk.

“I felt like it wouldn’t be truth without it,” Tillman said.

*Follow Kyle Buchanan on Twitter: @kylebuchanan.*

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