

CHOICE 1: Critical Response

Step 5: Argue.

Re-read the work you have produced thus far. Using your observations and analyses in the preceding steps, following the CRIT steps above, **write two pages that convey your interpretation of the passage.**

State the main thesis of your interpretation and then support that thesis by presenting the evidence you gathered in Steps 1 through 4. Note that your paragraph should integrate and build upon your responses to the Step 4 prompt; your observations and analyses should also add up to an interpretive conclusion about the passage as a whole.

Step 6: Reflect.

Now that you have advanced an argument, re-read the passage from our class text again. Then, **to yourself and not in the paper**, answer the following questions: What aspects of the passage do you still find confusing? What elements of the passage does your interpretation neglect or set aside? What parts of your argument now appear to you debatable or dubious—that is, what objections could a reasonable person raise to your interpretation of the passage?

Keep in mind: no interpretation is perfect or can account for every element of a text. Nonetheless, if these reflections have led you to think that your interpretation is less than compelling, **revise your close reading before turning it in.**

CHOICE 2: Creative Response

Step 5: Draft.

Re-read the work you have produced thus far. Using your observations and analyses, **choose 2-3 formal elements and features that you would like to attempt.** At the top of your page, write “Formal Elements and Features:” and identify the X, Y, and Z aspects you are focusing on.

Write a two-page creative nonfiction draft incorporating those elements and features. Make it appropriate to its specific context. It can be a standalone piece or part of a larger whole.

Step 6: Reflect.

Now that you have written a draft, re-read the passage from our class text again. Then, **to yourself and not in the paper**, answer the following questions: Did the aspects of the class text you focused on help you in your own writing? What formal elements emerged that you did not expect to utilize? In re-reading the passage again, what did you notice that you want to polish in your own writing? Is there a more effective way to communicate what you intended to in your draft?

Keep in mind: this is a draft, and therefore does not have to be perfect. Nonetheless, if these reflections have led you to notice something you would like to hone or elevate, **revise your creative writing before turning it in.**

** This tool designed at the University of Texas offers a systematic approach to literary interpretation, allowing students to practice the detailed, sustained, and careful analysis of text. CRIT was developed in the Department of English at The University of Texas at Austin by Professors Phillip Barrish, Evan Carton, Coleman Hutchison, and Frank*

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