

AP Language and Composition
Presentation on your assigned Flannery O'Connor story

You have been assigned one of the following stories:

- “Good Country People”
- “The Life You Save May Be Your Own”
- “The Lame Shall Enter First”
- “A Good Man Is Hard to Find”
- “Parker’s Back”

In your presentation, your task is twofold. You will discuss the argument of the story, and you will answer three of the following questions, inspired by the *Spiritual Writings*, in terms of your story.

I. The story’s argument

You are responsible only for your own story but should have a good, memorable way of presenting the information below:

A. Summarize the story. Introduce the main characters, situation, setting, and plot in a clear and concise way.

B. What is the story’s argument? Be as specific as you can while still keeping your statement universal. Be sure your statement of argument touches on the main themes we have encountered in O’Connor’s writing. Each group has at least one person who has read the *Spiritual Writings* book; the themes suggested there give us insight into O’Connor’s ideas as well.

C. How does the story support the argument? Give 3-5 categories in which you can provide evidence for the argument. If the group members have supported a common argument statement in different ways, make that clear. If the results are divergent, just be clear about your findings.

As we have discussed, categories for evidence may come from the elements of fiction, from a SOAPSTone analysis (or a partial analysis of this kind), or from the rhetorical appeals.

II. Questions to answer, using your story

Choose three of the following questions to answer, using your story for evidence, in your presentation.

Introduction

1. Giannone posits, “Everything she wrote has ... [a] double momentum of hope and faith and their counterparts of exile and unbelief” (21). How does your assigned story correspond or fail to correspond with this idea?

2. “I am really only interested in a fiction of miracles” (30). Apply this passage to your assigned story.

3. “In showing how the inner and outer world impinge on each other, she makes the vocation of the spirit visible and concrete” (33). Apply this passage to your assigned story.

4. “O’Connor advocates a transformation of self from a condition of self-hatred masked as love through an intervention of grace that renews us through repentance” (48). Apply this passage to your assigned story.

Truth and Love

5. Consider your assigned text and O’Connor’s ideas about Thomas Aquinas. What Thomism do you see in your piece?

6. Read the included quotation from St. Cyril of Jerusalem (63). Connect the passage to your assigned story.

A Reason to Write

7. Consider in your assigned story the degree to which “the subject...is the action of grace in territory held largely by the devil” (129).

Moments of Grace

***8. Use your assigned story to support, refute, or qualify the assertion that the story is “about the action of grace on a character who is not very willing to support it” (135).

The Cost of Faith

***9. “I don’t think you should write something ... around anything that is not of the gravest concern to you and everybody else and for me this is always the conflict between an attraction to the Holy and the disbelief in it that we breathe in with the air of the times” (152). To what degree does your assigned story support, refute, or qualify this assertion?

Presentation

Presentations should be well organized, well presented, and interesting. Classmates should be able to take good notes on what you offer because the structure should be clear. You may offer a PowerPoint or a short, well organized handout to support your ideas.

You should use no time for set-up; any PowerPoint should be emailed to me the night before. We cannot wait for students to write on a board, though writing while talking is fine.

Practice and time your presentation. Presentations should be about 10 minutes long.