

AP English Language and Composition
Rhetorical Analysis of
***Crossing the Unknown Sea* by David Whyte**

Rhetoric is the **art** of using language to persuade an audience. Understanding how rhetors (writers and speakers) construct text to create meaning and achieve their purpose is the heartbeat of AP English Language and Composition. So, this work will begin to equip you with that vision.

In a new document (like a Google Doc), create four tables like the ones on the following pages. Assign each table one of the following labels.

- Form and Structure
- Purpose/Tone/Style
- Imagery and/or Detail
- Rhetorical Appeals

As you read the book, please cite at least five pieces of evidence for each category. (Passages must all be different.) Place these in the left column. (Quote them directly. Include page numbers.)

In the right column, analyze the quoted passage. Do not just summarize the passage. Examine the way Whyte uses language to create meaning. Use the examples in the first table and the explanations in each table to guide you.

Note: Two examples are provided for you in Form and Structure. For your own work, you must select five other passages in this category.

Form and Structure (at least 5 Passages for this category)

An author's form and structure encompass many things, two of which are plot structure and the organization of ideas throughout the entire text. But they also include an author's syntax, which is the way he or she arranges words within sentences and sentences within paragraphs. This is where real artistry emerges and where an author is able to manipulate meaning in various ways. Ultimately, the ways in which an author forms and structures sentences comprise his or her style.

<p style="text-align: center;">Important Excerpts/Passages from the Text</p> <p>Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by pages numbers in parentheses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Your Analysis</p> <p>How do the author's form and structure create meaning?</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The human approach to work can be naïve, fatalistic, power-mad, money-grubbing, unenthusiastic, cynical, detached, and obsessive. It can also be selflessly mature, revelatory, and life giving; mature in its long-reaching effects, and life giving in the way it gives back to an individual or society as much as it has taken" (3). 2. "At its worst, we are Sisyphus, pushing the boulder over the last incline, only to see it fall back and away, out of our grasp, to the very bottom of the slope, to be pushed back up with the same despairing effort the following Monday morning" (12). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whyte shows the dual nature of work in this passage. He first describes work's horrifying face by listing its many negative characteristics. However, this repugnant face is not work's <i>only</i> face; it is also possesses positive aspects. Whyte then lists these immediately after portraying work's ugliness in order to show not only its dichotomy, but also to place its life-affirming, life-giving characteristics in the spot of final power. These are the ones he wants to focus on and encourage. The repulsive qualities of work are the ones he hopes to leave behind. 2. Whyte is describing the most undesirable human relationship with work. The way Whyte constructs this sentence contributes to the point he's making about this type of work relationship. The sentence is long, and it moves around through many clauses separated by commas. This arrangement contributes to meaning because he's writing about a long, arduous process that is, at last, a futile one. The way the sentence moves helps create that sense. We are at the top of the hill (and the sentence), then the boulder falls beyond our reach (as the sentence keeps moving), at which point we must push the boulder back up the hill. The length and convolution of the sentence replicate the lengthy, ongoing futility of this relationship with work.

Purpose / Tone / Style (at least 5 passages for this category)

Important Excerpts/Passages from the Text	Your Analysis
Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by pages numbers in parentheses.	What is the author trying to accomplish? What argument(s) is he trying to make? What is the author's attitude toward the subject? How is tone (attitude) revealed through language choices ? Consider diction (word choice) and figurative language.

Imagery and/or Detail (at least 5 passages for this category)

Important Excerpts/Passages from the Text	Your Analysis
Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by pages numbers in parentheses.	The imagery of a literary work comprises the set of images that appeal to the senses. Look for recurring images. Identify details (facts/description) the author uses to support the argument. How are these images and/or details used? What emotions do they evoke? How do they contribute to the author's purpose?

Rhetorical Appeals (at least 5 passages for this category)

These are the elements of an argument that make it truly persuasive. Humans have minds, which is where appeals to logic are persuasive. Humans have feeling hearts, which is where appeals to emotion are persuasive. Humans have a sense of moral rightness, which is where appeals to ethics are persuasive.

Important Excerpts/Passages from the Text	Your Analysis
Use quotes from the text in quotation marks followed by pages numbers in parentheses.	Look for examples of logos (an appeal to the audience using logic), pathos (an appeal to the audience's emotions), and ethos (an appeal to the audience's ethical or moral beliefs)

Rubric for Dialectical Journal:

Critical Reader (detailed, elaborate responses): 90 – 100

- Extra effort is evident.
- Your quotes are relevant and thought provoking.
- You can “read between the lines” of the text.
- You consider meaning of the text in a universal sense.
- You deeply and thoughtfully analyze how the author’s language choices help him create meaning and achieve his purpose.
- Sentences are grammatically correct, and writing is vivid and dynamic.

Connected Reader (detailed responses): 80-89

- A solid effort is evident.
- You include an adequate number of legible entries.
- Your quotes are relevant and connect to the themes.
- Entries exhibit insight.
- You construct a thoughtful interpretation of the text.
- You show some ability to make meaning of what you read.
- You adequately analyze how the author’s language choices help him create meaning and achieve his purpose.

- You explain the general significance.
- Sentences are mostly grammatically correct, and writing is adequate.

Thoughtful Reader (somewhat detailed responses): 75-79

- Sentences are mostly correct with a few careless spelling and grammatical errors.
- You selected quotes that may be interesting to you but that don't necessarily connect to the themes of the text.
- Entries exhibit insight and thoughtful analysis at times, but thoughtful development is not sustained throughout.
- You make connections, but explain with little detail.
- You rarely make new meaning from the reading.

Literal Reader (simple, factual responses): 70-74

- Entries exhibit limited insight or none at all.
- You accept the text literally.
- You are reluctant to create meaning from the text.
- You make few connections which lack detail.
- You are sometimes confused by clear or difficult sections of the text.

Limited Reader (perfunctory responses): below 70

- Very little effort is evident.
- You find the text confusing but make no attempt to "figure it out."
- You create little or no meaning from the text.
- You make an occasional connection to the text, and the ideas lack development.
- Sentences contain numerous grammatical and spelling errors.