

#ret #inclass

1 | The bluest eye

In-class writing exercise *The Bluest Eye* Select one of the passages listed below and paraphrase it succinctly. Do not rewrite it word for word. Just briefly summarize the main point/idea of the passage.

Then note how Toni Morrison uses figurative language to convey her ideas. What is the effect of her descriptions? How does the language she uses operate? Passage choices:

- p.12. "But was it really"
- p.15 "Their conversation"
- Pp. 36-7 "You could hate a sofa"
- p.61 "My daddy's face"
- p.65 "They had extemporized"
- P.81 "They"
- p.82 "Meridian"
- p.83 "Wherever it erupts"

1.1 | passage

Wherever it erupts, this Funk, they wipe it away; where it crusts, they dissolve it; wherever it drips, flowers, or clings, they find it and fight it until it dies. They fight this battle all the way to the grave. The laugh that is a little too loud; the enunciation a little too round; the gesture a little too generous. They hold their behind in for fear of a sway too free; when they wear lipstick, they never cover the entire mouth for fear of lips too thick, and they worry, worry, worry about the edges of their hair.

1.2 | writing

In this paragraph, Toni Morrison is characterizing a category of woman she has created in describing what they do with "funk."

Wherever it erupts, < funk is "erupt[ing]." uncontrolled, violent.

this Funk, they wipe it away; < "wipe" about cleaning, foreshadowing! also, contrasting "erupt" with the almost trivial action of "wipe[ing]"

where it crusts, they dissolve it; wherever it drips, flowers, or clings, < no longer just wiping away. funk becomes not something that should be cleaned up, as it "flowers." funk is pervasive and across mediums they find it and fight it until it dies. < their job is to get rid of this funk, or maintain the status quo / dullness of life

They fight this battle all the way to the grave. < and it's all they do

The laugh that is a little too loud; the enunciation a little too round; the gesture a little too generous. < they operate a little above the status quo?

They hold their behind in for fear of a sway too free; when they wear lipstick, they never cover the entire mouth for fear of lips too thick, and they worry, worry, worry about the edges of their hair. <

Funk is unhappiness, restlessness. These woman that Morrison is describing provide value in remedying this restlessness, not by addressing it, but by hiding it and distracting from it. In order to be able to do this,