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Mr. Hall

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Week 1 Participation Reflection

This first week in AP Literature, I read a variety of different short stories and literature. Some of the short stories opened my eyes to “less modern” works because I previously believed them to be less interesting than something like a young adult fantasy novel. The first one I read was “Volar” by Judith Ortiz Cofer. At first I wasn’t really sure what kind of annotations were expected for this class because it is quite different from APEL in not annotating rhetorical devices. But after seeing some of the example annotations that Mr. Hall shared, I started to understand what to do. After reading “Volar'' a second time and going back through to [annotate,](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1e7YUZ-l6Od924YRkfUKqd__NEIEvvSXt/view?usp=sharing) I started better perceiving the overall message and different connections made throughout the passage. For example, the first time through I completely ignored the detail that the girl is twelve years old and simply thought of that as a piece of side information. But in my annotations I mentioned how at this age, young girls may be more vulnerable to outside influences and insecurities. They may be more prone to identity struggles as they try to figure out who they are. I noted in my annotations that her insecurities are reflected later in the passage when she grows to be stronger and her tight curls turn to straight blond hair, which is more characteristic of a white girl and not a hispanic one. Through “Volar” I learned that when annotating, focusing on things other than rhetorical strategies and the author’s experiences can reveal a lot of different things about the piece.

Two other short stories I read this week were “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid and “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe. A [speaker analysis](https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1VBts59M1lYrp4KWGV7Mm5yO3-9VxjbnyxRi7blyeP-0/edit) I did on these two pieces changed my perspective about how a point of view can influence the way a story affects the audience. This chart also reminded me of the difference between flat and round characters because I had previously forgotten. In “Girl”, the POV is second person so the audience is directly being told different chores to do and different things they have to remember to be a proper lady. There really isn’t anything else in the passage besides that. This better communicates to the audience and may cause them to feel the pressure that the girl is feeling. In “The Tell-Tale Heart”, the first person point of view increases how insane the main character seems. Because you only experience his thoughts and no one else's, it increases the paranoia that both the reader and the character feels. Neither of you know if the officers have caught on to the character this way the way the character acts is better explained. The character also often has an internal monologue, “Ha!—would a madman have been so wise as this?”. We are able to experience these thoughts because of the first person POV, and now the audience knows that the man is indeed mad because no sane person constantly is trying to convince himself that he isn’t. Through these two short stories, I learned that authors can use different POVs to reveal more things about each character and increase the effect the character has on readers.

Two other short stories that I read this week that taught me something were “LUSUS Naturae” by Margaret Atwood and “ Interpreter of Maladies” by Jhumpa Lahiri. Through a [character analysis](https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1cljSjRtAmgKekhVcazOnY_7_bIwqgfP2WgFFA4Dqqpo/edit) I learned additional things about the short stories that I didn’t catch the first time reading. For example in the “Interpreter of Maladies” I originally didn’t realize why Mr. Kapasi just decided to stop being interested. But then through discussion I learned and added to my chart that after Mr. Kapasi realized that Mina and her relationship with her family was not as perfect as it seemed, he lost interest. For “LUSUS Naturae” I got to revisit what flat and round characters were because I learned that the girl in LUSUS Naturae is a round character. She possibly could be a round character because she went from being innocent and hidden from society to roaming around on her own, scaring people away from her old house and accepting her own death.