

Creative Nonfiction Analysis Form

According to Bruce Hoffman, "creative nonfiction is that branch of writing which employs literary techniques and artistic vision usually associated with fiction or poetry to report on actual persons and events" (Dobler) Minot says creative nonfiction is "based on actual events, characters, and places; it is written with a special concern for language; and it tends to be more informal and personal than other types of nonfiction writing" (Scanlon).

Use this form to analyze the literary techniques and artistic vision in the selections we read. Complete this assignment for **three** of the essays we read in class. When you encounter more than one question in a category below, choose the one(s) that are most relevant to the essay you're responding to. You are not expected to answer each sub-question.

This analysis is meant to help you understand the types and qualities of creative nonfiction.

Title:

Author:

Type: (circle one or two that seem to fit) ► personal essay (any subject) | memoir (memories of a life) | literary journalism (using fictional elements to tell a news story) | narrative history (retelling an event in history) | travel journalism | nature/science essay | _____ (other)

Real life: What real life event is this essay about? What is going on? What is the story this writer tells?

Sense of place/setting: What does the setting look like? Feel like? Where is it? When is it?

Point of view: Who is telling the story? Why did the author choose him/her? What can he/she see or know that others might not or don't know?

Voice: Choose two or three of the following adjectives to describe the narrative voice in your essay and then explain your choices ► serious | casual/informal | instructive | sincere |sarcastic | cocky | reflective | young | old | indignant | optimistic | pessimistic | honest | _____ your own adjective

Character: Who is the dominant character or person in this essay? What do you know about him/her? Appearance? Personality? What is it that he/she wants/needs/cares about, etc.?

Language

What is the **tone** (emotional quality) of this essay? Use an emotion word for your answer.

How effectively does the author use any of the following: **dialog**, **figurative language** (metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, etc.), **imagery**. Choose one of these and give an example and say something about how it helps you understand the story.

Purpose/Theme/Impression: What does this essay reveal about life? About human relationships? About right and wrong? About what is important? Be specific.