

## **Sentence Portfolio Assignment Instructions**

For this assignment, you will be crafting sentences using the specific rhetorical devices and sentence types we examined in lecture. The sentences will work together to create a focused, rhetorically powerful text.

### **Purpose**

The point of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to focus on sentence craft. Practicing how to craft a variety of sentence types and structures and use rhetorical devices will strengthen your writing in any genre. Although the content of any given written text is important, the way the content is presented and articulated at the level-of-the-sentence has significant impact on how it is received. Writing has the potential to persuade readers and elicit a wide-range of emotional and intellectual reactions.

Readers cannot see you, hear you, or know what you are thinking and feeling—they have only your writing; it is through thoughtful and strategic use of your writerly tools that you will reach your audience. Therefore, always be conscious of how you want your audience to react to your writing and topic. Sentence craft isn't just about grammatical correctness; it's about investing your writing with rhetorical power.

### **Creating a Generic Context**

Your sentences will work together within a single text, so you will need to decide what kind of text you want to create. Your writing should have an intended audience you are trying to reach in some way. What kind of text you want to create and who your intended audience is will inform the way you write. If, for example, you are writing a short story for fiction readers, you will make different writing choices than if you are writing a political commentary.

Select from the following genres:

- A very short story
- A piece of fan fiction
- A letter (to a specific reader)
- A blog post or short essay on a particular topic (the topic might range from a travel-blog to a political commentary)
- A profile of a particular person or place
- If you have another idea for your chosen genre, please run it past your Tutorial Instructor before committing yourself.

## Sentence and Submission Requirements

- Below is a list of sentence types and rhetorical devices. Each of these types and devices will be demonstrated in at least one sentence. Unless otherwise noted, you cannot use one sentence to fulfill two requirements, although you may use more than one technique at a time. For example, if the requirement is to use parataxis but you also use alliteration, the sentence will only count for the parataxis. It is common to use more than one rhetorical device in a sentence, but each sentence will count for only one. There are two exceptions to this as noted in the list of requirements below.
- Write your text (see options above) in paragraph-form.
- In your text, **you do not have to order your sentences in the same order as the list below.** You can use the devices in any order you wish that works for your purpose.
- **However, you must also provide a complete list of your sentences. Download the "Sentence Chart" Word Doc. below and cut and paste your sentences into the chart.**
- **Add the chart at the end of your text.**
- Submit your work as a **Word file, not a PDF or other file-type.** Upload your assignment to the submission link on or by the due date.

## Assessment

The criteria will be the basis for assessment:

- All of the required sentences are included
- The sentences and paragraphs are grammatically correct
- The sentences do not contain unnecessary or redundant words or phrases
- The sentences and paragraphs work together to create a coherent, connected whole. (Your sentences will be organized into paragraphs that follow one another logically. Each paragraph should have its own focus and the ordering of content in each paragraph should work to convey your ideas clearly.)
- Sentences reflect creativity and originality: it would be fairly simple to construct sentences according to the specific requirements, but it is harder, and more useful, to strive to create sentences which fulfill the

requirements and reflect the author's efforts to craft interesting and rhetorically compelling sentences free of clichés, empty phrasing and unspecific and vague diction.

## Sentence Types and Rhetorical Devices

- 3 imperative sentences that do not condescend to the reader
- 1 interrogative sentence
- 1 exclamatory sentence
- 2 cumulative sentences of at least 15 words each (most sentences are cumulative, so try to create ones that use the structure in an effective way)
- 2 periodic sentences of a least 25 words each
- A group of 3 clauses or sentences using anaphora
- 1 sentence for each of the following devices:
  - Juxtaposition
  - Chiasmus
  - Hypophora
  - Parataxis
  - Hypotaxis
- 2 sentences for each of the following:
  - Alliteration
  - Assonance
  - Antithesis
  - Asyndeton
  - Polysyndeton
  - Running Style/Freight train style
- 2 groups of 3 phrases, clauses or sentences using parallelism
- 2 sentences using a simile each
- 3 different instances of distinctive description in 3 different sentences (no clichés or stock images). A description can be short or long and can span more than one sentence, but be sure to have **3 different descriptions of 3 different things (things include people, settings/landscapes and objects) in 3 different sentences.**

## The Door

You see, driving a Honda Civic in 2019 on a pretty paved road with air conditioning infused with some sweet smelling Febreze is quite normal. It's so normal. You would think it was a right - yet, a right is not always a right. If I told you that there is a place with a people that have never seen a car on four wheels, not even a Honda Civic, in 2019, would you believe me? But such a place exists. Do not be fooled by the apparent peace and quiet that grips you like a vice at Gorée island. This place is marred by a history of incomparable human cruelty. When I first toured this historic city-island, the words, "Never forget where you've come from," came to my mind, hitting me slowly and hard, churning my insides. You see, the people who left this island between the 16th and 19th centuries to the new lands - the Americas - had only one way to never forget about home: to hold for as long as possible, the soon-to-be-forgotten memories of 'home.'

Come with me to *Île de Gorée*, french for Gorée island. Tucked south of the Cape Verde peninsula in Senegal, this enclave was one of the earliest European settlements in western Africa and for three centuries served as a post for the slave trade in the name of making a living, served as a post for murder in the name of keeping the law and order, served as a post for plunder in the name of returning taxes to the European "masters." In 1815, with the hopes that he would not deprive blacks of the freedom and liberty that had been finally granted to them, Napoleon abolished slavery and the slave trade in all French colonies. This declaration must have taken a long detour before it finally got to Gorée island, for it wasn't until 1848 that the chains of slavery were finally broken and the business books of the island's booming slave trade closed.

On a visit to the island, you have to make a stop at the 'Maison des Escalves,' slave house. If only they could speak, the walls, floors and ceiling of the maison; they conceal untold stories of the men, women and children who were kept here, caged like a travelling circus'

animals, before being sold to the trade's middlemen. The captives' thoughts were the only true witness of their sad predicament. The Maison's rooms were divided into several small cubicles each measuring two and a half metres – a measurement deliberately chosen - to pack fifteen slaves. As if that was not squalid enough, it was not uncommon for the kind traders to cram twenty-five slaves 'instead of thirty' in this little space.

The captors separated the strongest men and most beautiful women from the rest of the pack; These were given special treatment as they made the greatest profit, but it's sad to think that the traders' profits meant slavery, nonetheless, for the captive. The slaves were fed only once a day and could answer nature calls only once - at night. What if all you wanted was to empty your bladder just once more? If you had to go again, all you had was the floor. And sick slaves were bound and thrown into the waters of the Atlantic so as not to infect the rest of the breed. Since the human food was available superfluously, sharks began infesting the waters around the island earning it the title 'Shark Island.' Life was hard, hygiene poor, and nobody really cared; this was just the beginning of the future for these poor souls.

Market days were set every few weeks apart and the captives were auctioned to the highest bidder and when the middlemen had acquired their goods and were ready to transport them to their new homes, the slaves were led to a small door at the back of the Maison. Termed 'the door of no return,' it is through this door that slaves left their motherland for the ships that would float them to the Americas. This door remained shut apart from two occasions: when the transport ships were ready to load and when the sick were dumped at sea. The door's key, like some precious bejeweled necklace, was chained to the maison master's neck. The key was dreaded as much as it was hated. Nobody knew what lay beyond the door though. This was the only door through which captives left the island. They would never return to their homes again.

They would never behold the beauty of people they called – might call or would call - their own. They would never find rest for their minds; for life, as they knew it, would never be the same again.

When you look at the landscape now, the trees won't tell the ills and the houses won't show the evils. You'd expect some gory image that would tell you of the place infested with marauding criminals, hungry sharks, and broken slaves, a people weakened by hunger, sadness, hopelessness. Two centuries later, Gorée is like a haven of tranquility. Modern-housing is unthought of and automobiles are unheard of. Gorée was declared a UNESCO heritage site in 1978 and since then it has constantly attracted about 200,000 visitors each year. Some of these visitors come to trace their roots, some for research, some just to relax and unwind... or to sit with the ghosts.

When you leave the island and feel the wind on your face as you sail back to the paved roads of Senegal and the air conditioned, Febreze scented cars, you are bound to think of them, the many souls that left Gorée not knowing what the future held. Or, like me, you could think of that rough patch you had in the past and the one door that you took that saved you from the pain of its sorrow. And you wish those captives had that door – your door – as open.