



A REVOLUTIONARY SUMMER

2018 NASAA PDI

Simulated Workshop



ASSESSMENT

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BASED ON THE SHORT STORY "GIRL."

Paraphrase the question posed at the end of the short story. Then explain its meaning.

From whose point of view is "Girl" told? _____

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BASED ON CARRIE MAE WEEMS' THE KITCHEN TABLE SERIES.

Below are some themes illustrated in Weems' photographic series. Select one or two and describe how the photographer captures them. What methods does she use? What stories does she tell?

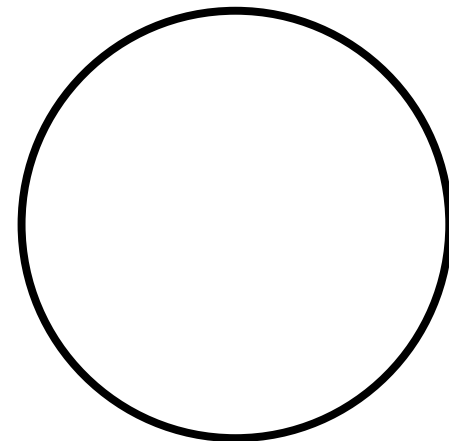
race gender friendship love
class loss power motherhood



THE DIALOGUE CIRCLE

"CIRCLES BREAK DOWN SOCIAL DISTANCE.." —KAY PRANIS

- This is a sacred space.
- We strive to bring the best version of ourselves here.
- A ceremony of some sort should indicate when we've arrived and when we're ready to depart.
- A centerpiece may create a focal point and support the circle's core values/shared vision.
- The talking piece is crucial to the process. It is an equalizer.
- Guidelines help us determine how we will conduct ourselves in dialogue. They describe the behaviors that help us feel safe and speak our truths.
- A check-in allows us to tend to any needs that may prevent us from showing up.
- The circle can hold any emotion or degree of conflict, but it cannot hold a deviation from process.



TEACHER'S STORY

"I HAD NOT CHOSEN THIS IDENTITY: IT HAD BEEN IMPOSED ON ME BY UNSEEN FORCES." —BELL HOOKS



- Safety under patriarchy is an illusion.
- As soon as you are able, take charge of your representation.



DAUGHTER'S PUSH

THE SELFIE AS A RADICAL ACT

(SAMPLE HOME ASSIGNMENT)

TAKE A SELFIE THAT:

- HAS A BLACK AND WHITE FILTER.
- CENTERS A VERSION OF YOU THAT IS NOT STRONG, POWERFUL, CAPABLE, PARTICULARLY PRETTY OR SEXY.
- ILLUSTRATES YOUR PERSONAL STYLE AND VOICE.
- CHALLENGES YOU TO COMPLETELY RETHINK HOW YOU ARE REPRESENTED IN THE WORLD.



DECONSTRUCTION OF THOUGHT

BALANCE EVERY THOUGHT WITH ITS OPPOSITION. BECAUSE THE MARRIAGE OF THEM IS THE DECONSTRUCTION OF ILLUSION. —ALEISTER CROWLEY

One-Belief-at-a-Time Worksheet

The Work—A Written Meditation

On the line below, write down a stressful concept about someone (alive or dead) whom you haven't forgiven 100 percent. (For example, "He doesn't care about me.") Then question the concept in writing, using the following questions and turnarounds. (Use additional paper as needed.) When answering the questions, close your eyes, be still, and witness what appears to you. Inquiry stops working the moment you stop answering the questions.

Belief: _____

- 1. **Is it true?** (Yes or no. If no, move to question 3.)

- 2. **Can you absolutely know that it's true?** (Yes or no.)

- 3. **How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?**
 - a) Does that thought bring peace or stress into your life?

 - b) What images do you see, past and future, and what physical sensations arise as you think that thought and witness those images?

 - c) What emotions arise when you believe that thought? (Refer to the Emotions List, available on thework.com.)

 - d) Do any obsessions or addictions begin to appear when you believe that thought? (Do you act out on any of the following: alcohol, drugs, credit cards, food, sex, television, computers?)

 - e) How do you treat the person in this situation when you believe the thought? How do you treat other people and yourself?

Belief you are working on: _____

4. Who would you be without the thought?

Who or what are you without the thought?

Turn the thought around.

Example of a statement:
He hurt me.

Possible turnarounds:

- 1. To the self. (*I hurt me.*)
- 2. To the other. (*I hurt him.*)
- 3. To the opposite. (*He didn't hurt me.*)

Then find at least three specific, genuine examples of how each turnaround is true for you in this situation.

For each turnaround, go back and start with the original statement. For example, "He shouldn't waste his time" may be turned around to "I shouldn't waste *my* time," "I shouldn't waste his time," and "He *should* waste his time."

For more information on how to do The Work, visit thework.com

STRATEGIES OF SELF-LOVE

CATHEXIS

plural cathexes play \-,sēz\

: investment of mental or emotional energy in a person, object, or idea

First Known Use: 1922

Origin and Etymology of cathexis

From Greek kathexis holding, from katechein to hold fast, occupy.

from bell hooks:

When we feel deeply drawn to someone, we cathect with them. In other words, we invest feelings or emotion in them.

This process of investment wherein a loved one becomes important to us is called cathexis.

We often confuse cathexis with love.

LOVE

Merriam-Webster does not provide a useful definition of love.

We must begin to use love as a verb.

M. Scott Peck defined love back in 1978 as, "the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth."

He said, "Love is as love does. Love is an act of will—namely both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love."

from bell hooks:

Love is a mix of ingredients. It is affection, care, recognition, respect, commitment, trust, and honest, open communication.

In another text, hooks notes that love must include these six ingredients:

Care, knowledge, responsibility, respect, trust and commitment.



INGREDIENTS OF LOVE

AFFECTION

HONEST, OPEN
COMMUNICATION

RECOGNITION

RESPECT

KNOWLEDGE

CARE

RESPONSIBILITY

TRUST

COMMITMENT

STRATEGIES OF SELF-LOVE

(SAMPLE HOME ASSIGNMENT)

JOURNAL ENTRY

Sunday, we talked a little bit about the different ways boys and girls are socialized. Even though I grew up in a house full of smart, capable, resilient, system-bucking Black women, I still internalized many harmful messages about love. One such message had to do with honoring the potential in my male partners. Not only was it necessary to hold out and suffer through their growing stages (which very often hurt me badly and took forever to run their course), to do so was almost glorified. Do not underestimate the power of that narrative, daughters. Consider the fact that one of the most powerful and celebrated women of our time (Queen Bey) was wooed by the ride-or-die story; this, despite having multiple forms of power not accessible to the average woman. A residual effect of adhering to that story, for me, was lying to myself. bell hooks said something like, Women will do all manner of things to pretend men love them! In tonight's entry, I want you to consider harmful messages about love that have crept into your belief system. You may have picked them up from the Internet or television or school or home. List them and if you'd like, discuss the experiences that brought you to them. Tomorrow, we'll think about the good, productive messages that soothe us and keep us safe. Then we'll compare the two. Text or call me if you have any questions.



WRITING WORKSHOP (teacher led)

THE SIMPLE SENTENCE

- THERE ARE ONLY FIVE SENTENCE TYPES IN THE WHOLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. AND SOME LINGUISTS WOULD SAY THERE ARE ONLY THREE.
- YOU COULD WRITE 3.786.542 SENTENCES. AND EACH OF THEM WOULD QUALIFY AS ONE OF FIVE (OR THREE) TYPES.

SENTENCE TYPES

- SIMPLE SENTENCE
- COMPOUND SENTENCE
- COMPLEX SENTENCE
- COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE
- PERIODIC SENTENCE

IN HIGH SCHOOL
AND COLLEGE,
YOU'LL USE THE
FIRST THREE
SENTENCE TYPES
THE MOST.

A STRONG WRITER USES A GOOD MIX OF THESE SENTENCES. TOO MANY SHORT, SIMPLE SENTENCES + YOU START TO SOUND LIKE A CAVEMAN.

AMIA IS HUNGRY. SHE WANTS EGGS. SHE WANTS BACON. SHE WANTS PANCAKES, TOO. AMIA CAN'T COOK. HER STOMACH IS GROWLING. AMIA IS CRYING. POOR AMIA.

BUT EVEN THE BEST WRITERS USE SIMPLE SENTENCES ABOUT 70% OF THE TIME. BECAUSE THEY GET THE JOB DONE. SO DON'T BE AFRAID TO USE THEM. GOOD WRITERS KNOW YOU SHOULD USE SIMPLE SENTENCES FOR SIMPLE IDEAS. THEY GET RIGHT TO THE POINT.



ELEMENTS OF THE SIMPLE SENTENCE

INGREDIENT #1 - THE SUBJECT!

MS. ANDRIA MUST BE CRAZY TEACHING US ABOUT SIMPLE SENTENCES.

- the subject is who or what a sentence is about.
- the subject can be explicit, meaning you can touch it with your finger. like in this example: **MS. ANDRIA THINKS DRAKE'S ALBUM IS TOO DANG ON LONG.**
- the subject of a sentence can contain more than one noun.

BRE, SOL, JAMESHA, JOY AND TANIYA ARE ALL IN COLLEGE.

INGREDIENT #2 - THE VERB!

- the verb is what the subject is DOING or BEING.

DREEMUR AND MYAH SAAAANG THOSE AUDITION SONGS.

TANIJAH'S SMILE IS GLORIOUS.

- compound verbs count too!

SARIYAH CAN'T EAT OR TOUCH FRUIT!



ELEMENTS OF THE SIMPLE SENTENCE

INGREDIENT #3 - A COMPLETE THOUGHT!

A REVOLUTIONARY SUMMER IS THE BOMB.COM.

- so. this ain't gonna work:

SADE AND TAI RUN BIKE HICCUP JUMP BAM IT!

IDENTIFY THE SIMPLE SENTENCES

- Girls rock.
- Black girls rock.
- Black girls rock fly clothes.
- Black girls rock fly clothes in the city.
- Everyday. Black girls rock fly clothes in the city.
- Everyday. Black girls rock fly clothes in the city and hook their hair up too.

- Girls rock. (regular old subject + verb)
- Black girls rock. (adjective. subject + verb)
- Black girls rock fly clothes. (adjective. subject. verb + direct object)
- Black girls rock fly clothes in the city. (adjective. subject. verb. direct object + prepositional phrase)
- Everyday. Black girls rock fly clothes in the city. (adjective. subject. verb. direct object. prepositional phrase + adverb)
- Everyday. Black girls rock fly clothes in the city and hook their hair up too. (adjective. subject. verb. direct object. prepositional phrase. adverb + second verb and second object)

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

PRACTICING JAMAICA KINCAID

"Girl" is a single sentence of advice from a mother to her daughter. The duty and oppression in the lines weigh down the characters themselves and the reader too. The mother's fears, driven by harmful societal constructs run rampant throughout the piece. Create your own short prose poem that is one long sentence, a recipe for survival, conversational in tone and sure of itself BUT THAT UPLIFTS AND SUSTAINS ITS CHARACTERS AND READER. Use Kincaid's piece as a reference. Mimic as many things about "Girl" as you can, but use its style and the author's techniques to craft a story of joy.



From the book I'll never write

For the past 18 years, 6,820 days, 163,699 hours, 9,821,993 minutes & 589,319,594 seconds I have been waiting for someone to tell me I am strong. Let me say that again: For the past 18 years, 6,820 days, 163,699 hours, 9,821,993 minutes & 589,319,594 seconds I have been waiting for someone to tell me I am strong. I've always shown people what I want them to see. For most do not cherish your hardships and your tears, so I refused to give them the responsibility of carrying my baggage. Because my baggage is not packed neatly in a Louis Vuitton bag, one that is easy to close and pleasant to carry. My baggage is hefty; Walmart underwear and a high heel poking from the too-tight zipper. To avoid casualties, I gave people sunshine & rainbows: bullshit. I displayed a PG version of who I truly was: ensuring I was polite, meaning too many apologizes, only speaking when spoken to and even when I finally spoke it was sprinkled with sugar—the biting, chewing and swallowing of my tongue. Everything that made me strong, I buried deep in my vessel and begged, cried, hoped prayed that somebody could find it somewhere in my glassy eyes. The first and only person to tell me they recognized my strength was my ex-boyfriend—this deep down may be the reason I subjected myself to begging him to stay with me. Most of our relationship was spent over the phone because my father couldn't imagine his fifteen year old girl hugged up on some boy. It was 3am and I remember whispering into the phone, hoping not to wake & frustrate the beast. Out of nowhere, he asked me, “How does it feel to not have a mother?” I was pleasantly surprised that he actually asked me that question. Most of my friends wouldn't dare to bring up the subject, fearful of my reaction. But to me, without knowing anything about that side of me, leaves you only knowing ¼ of who I really am. The absence of my mother is my moveable feast. The thing that walks with me hand in hand, everywhere I go. “Empty,” I told him. There was a long pause. I pulled the phone away from my ear to make sure he was still there. He finally spoke, “Well, no matter what happens to us, I want you to know that you are one of the strongest people I've ever met.” In that moment, I felt like I was finally seen. I felt like somebody saw my pain and acknowledge how well I maneuver through it. I felt like I did something right.

love,

Your voice is mighty. I mean that in terms of what appears on the page and what comes out of your mouth. In terms of speaking, you have a depth and huskiness to your voice that I (and probably other people too) associate with the gospel. I do not think what we sound like is a mistake. I think it is a manifestation of what's inside of us. So, to me, that your voice takes on the sound it does is revealing. You have a voice that is supposed to tell stories is my point. In terms of your voice on the page, I'm referring to a sort of mix of style (how you say a thing) and tone (how you feel about the things you say). I hope you continue to write, to hone your craft, because the world would be a better place for you sharing not only your story, but your take on what it means. I left this piece intrigued and hopeful and empathetic. I'd like to begin by pointing out its strengths.

1. Style. The mix of the mundane and severe: "To avoid casualties, I gave people sunshine & rainbows: bullshit." This is a wonderful way to convey a thing. It is also a gift. To know precisely when to use the pretty and the frank. I bet this comes pretty naturally for you and that you arrive at what you'll say by counting very heavily on rhythm. That is, you'll test a thing to see if it "sounds right." If this is the case, I'd like to encourage you to keep that up. For me, rhythm is almost all that matters.
2. Courage. People are afraid to go deep and to read deep. You aren't. It requires an incredible amount of vulnerability to speak about abandonment. I almost didn't want to type that because I didn't want to harm you, for example. In essence, you're inviting people to a conversation they don't know how to have. You're laying it all on the line knowing full well most people will continue to disappoint you after it's all said and done. That bravery is dope in a general sense, but it also makes for the best kind of writing. I encourage you to keep going to not retreat when you get remarks from people who have no idea what to say in the face of your tenderness. Do not let them be the reason you write, because you'll have to fight discouragement off with a stick.

In terms of suggestions, I want you to always keep in mind that "author" comes from "authority". You are the steward of this ship. Ultimately, you'll publish and perform this. So consider my ideas, but do not take them for fact.

Again, voice is important to this work. Voice is an ambiguous idea in writing. A lot of times folks use it as a metaphor for writing they really like—they'll say, Oh your voice is so powerful. And neither they nor the listener know *exactly* what they're talking about. I'm talking about everything I listed above—the sound of your speaking voice, style, and tone.

Your voice changes depending on your audience. You talk differently when you speak to your father, your friends, your boyfriend, a stranger, a baby. You adjust to meet their needs and to help shape their understanding of you. I put a sweetness in my voice when I speak to my children, because I need them to know I'm in love with them, for example. But I strip my voice of all tenderness when I speak to their father, so he won't think about telling me he misses me. The sound of my voice is important because it reveals something else. This piece is almost grounded in voice, then. Voice is more important than any other literary element here, I'd argue. You begin by telling us what you give to folks: sunshine and rainbows. When sunshine and rainbows are bullshit and what you really want to give is your pain, your experience, your truth. My charge to you is to think deeply about what that sounds (and looks) like. What does one say

and how does one say it when they are giving sunshine and rainbows? What are the conversations like? What sort of words do you use when everything you're saying is bullshit? What kinds of gestures? Could you interject concrete examples, replete with changing voice, so that we feel for ourselves the weight come up off of you when your boyfriend finally sees you? Could you gift us that precision?

You'll notice that I changed the font on your piece. This is only in the name of where you're headed. When you get to the point of submission to literary journals and agents and such, they'll be expecting to see a Times New Roman or Courier font and can be assholeish and delete an entry just because the writer got playful with her font. Don't disqualify yourself that way. Both the accepted fonts are boring, but publishing houses are depending on your ideas to wow them. I also gave you some color-coding, simply as a method of making your organization clear to you. Here's what the colors mean to me:

Red- Waiting your life for someone to tell you you're strong AKA to acknowledge your true existence.

Blue – Your history of dealing with people who don't see you.

Purple – Your hope of being discovered.

Green – Your being discovered/acknowledged.

Pink – An aside, not related to the larger story, but interesting.

Orange – Also an aside; see Pink.

Everything here is tied together. Does the way you've organized the details serve your point? Are the ideas arranged in a way to maximize impact? For example, we get some green in the middle, and it's summarized for us, not shown. It kind of gives away what I think the point of the piece is—we're reading this to learn about the single time you were told what you needed to hear in your life. Is it more powerful to save that for the end is my question? Also, I want you to consider the weight of the pink and orange. I think those details are interesting and juicy and they make me greedy for more as a reader, but you also drop them. Are you okay with raising but not fulfilling these promises?

Its the first time
no biggie
a little scratch on your heart is all it made
get out while you can

its the second time
okay, everyone makes mistakes
everyone has their flaws and we're only human
your heart received a small bruise, but **thats okay**
get out while you can

its the third time
this one hit you a little harder than the last
you're feeling something **thats** telling you something isn't right
and your heart has received a welt
get out while you can

its the fourth time
you thought about leaving
but why not give one more **chance ?**
why let go of the little bit of hope **left ?**
however this time your heart has an enormous crack down the middle of it
get out while you can

its the fifth time
you can't even think about letting go
what would life be like with out **it ?**
the pain is unbearable but you believe that if you left , the pain would be even worse

and now you're stuck
because you didn't get out while you could

Hi baby. We've done this before, so I'm going to jump into the poem's strengths, as I see them. Please recall that you are the authority, this is your poem, your baby. You must live with it. Do not feel any pressure to apply the changes I suggest. Even if you are polite when I discuss them with you, and can't find the nerve to say I disagree, you can demonstrate your power by not making the revisions. After I say a thing, and you paraphrase what I've said, acknowledge it, I will not bring it up again. If I see that you have not made a change, I'm going to assume you don't agree with it. I do encourage you to say, "No, Mommy, I don't agree. I think..." Just because I want you to exercise that power, but I understand that it's developing.

I love the way the stanzas compete. There are these "no biggie" statements (that betray themselves with their tone—in other words, I know the narrator is saying them, but she doesn't sincerely believe them) that inevitably end with the admonishment "get out while you can". It could be that this is a single speaker who is conflicted with her choices. It could be that there are two speakers. Either way, I dig it. I think it's complicated and dope.

The poem draws me in immediately. I think you do this in tangible and intangible ways. Tangibly, you give the reader parallelism and repetition she can count on. In other words,

the “It’s the first time” stanzas are dependable and I can see them and seek them and run to them wondering what new bit of information they’ll give me. You also draw me in by addressing such a universal pain.

In terms of suggestions, I want you to remember that you’ll likely have 5-7 minutes to tell the denial story. I encourage you to fill that space. Not with nonsense. Don’t feel obligated to elongate this poem and do it harm. It should only be as long as it needs to be. But I would like to see you write other things. This could be a single poem in a series.

I also want to challenge you to be as precise as possible. To take some risks. I feel (and my feeling may not mean anything) like you take the first word available to you. The issue with that is that the first word available to you is likely the first work available to everyone. Gwendolyn Brooks encouraged writers to eliminate the first idea, because it popped into everyone’s head just like it popped into yours. Use it as a foundation, but go back and strengthen it.

For example: “your heart received a small bruise, but that’s okay” ←sentiment is clear, but let me ask you: Did the heart really “receive” the bruise (word choice is generally for a later draft, but I think you’re ready to hear this). Because to receive is to welcome. It is to hold out a hand with a smile. Is that how the heart got that bruise? Is there a more precise way to describe how that bruise got there? And “small”—what is small? Small for you may be different than it is for me. And what is small in terms of the heart? The heart is already small. A small blood clot could ruin it. Give me a reference. The bruise was small enough...that the heart didn’t notice? That is could continue beating? That is sagged some? That it could recover? What does small mean? My charge for you is to go through each of these lines and be sure they are telling the precise truth.