



English IV

Week 4

English IV, Week 4 Creating Perspectives

Activity 4.5 -Framing the Investigation

For the next three weeks, you will investigate how critical lenses can both shape and reveal perspectives about real-world events and issues.

In this activity, you will begin exploring the ways the media, public figures, and government organizations shape or construct the meaning of a historical event: Hurricane Katrina. You will start by reading several texts that help frame and contextualize the event.

Complete the tasks in the sequence presented.



Task 1: Defining and Understanding Critical Lenses (20 minutes)

- Read and annotate the explanations for the critical lenses that will be referenced in the upcoming tasks.
- Reach out to your teacher if you have questions, or conduct research on your own to gain a working understanding of these critical lenses.

Literary Theories

The following list of literary critical theories is not intended to be an exhaustive representation of these complex theoretical perspectives, but rather a brief introduction. You may want students to do further research on one or more of these literary theories.

Archetypal Criticism: Archetypes are universal symbols—images, characters, motifs, or patterns that recur in the myths, dreams, oral traditions, songs, literature, and other texts of peoples widely separated by time and place. Archetypal Criticism deals with the similarities of these patterns in the literature of widely diverse cultures. For example, most cultures have stories that present the Hero's Journey. Common assumptions include the following:

- Certain images recur in texts from diverse cultures that share a common interpretation—water, sun, colors, trees, and settings such as gardens and deserts.
- Certain characters recur—the hero, the trickster, the great mother, the wise old man, the prodigal son.
- Certain motifs and patterns recur—creation stories, the quest, voyage to the underworld, journey, and initiation.

Cultural Criticism: Cultural Criticism asserts that differing religious beliefs, ethnicities, class identifications, political beliefs, and individual viewpoints affect how texts are created and interpreted. What it means to be a part of—or excluded from—a specific group contributes to and impacts our understanding of texts in relation to culture. For example, in *Things Fall Apart*, the way the missionaries treat the natives suggests they see the native culture as inferior. Common assumptions in the use of Cultural Criticism include the following:

- Ethnicity, religious beliefs, social class, and so on are crucial components in formulating plausible interpretations of a text.
- While the emphasis is on diversity of approach and subject matter, Cultural Criticism is not the only means of understanding ourselves and our art.
- An examination or exploration of the relationship between dominant cultures and the dominated is essential.

Feminist Criticism: Feminist interpretation focuses on relationships between genders. It examines the patterns of thought, behavior, values, enfranchisement, and power in relations between and within the sexes. A Feminist reading of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, for example, may examine the novel as an example of a heroine's journey. Common assumptions include the following:

- A pervasively patriarchal society conveys the notion of male dominance through the images of women in its texts.
- Many literary texts lack complex female figures and deem the female reader as an outsider or require her to assume male values in terms of perception, feelings, and actions.
- Issues of gender and sexuality are central to artistic expression.
- Fictional portrayals of female characters often reflect and create stereotypical social and political attitudes toward women.
- Texts authored by women may have different viewpoints than texts authored by men.

Historical Criticism: While acknowledging the importance of the literary text, the Historical approach recognizes the significance of historical information in interpreting literature. This perspective assumes that texts both influence and are influenced by the times in which they are created. For example, an interpretation of *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe may be enhanced by an understanding of the effects of colonialism in present-day African life. Common assumptions include the following:

- A text cannot be separated from its historical context, which is a web of social, cultural, personal, and political factors.
- An understanding of a text is enhanced by the study of beliefs and artifacts (such as diaries, films, paintings, and letters) in existence when the text was created.

Marxist Criticism: Marxist Criticism asserts that economics provides the foundation for all social, political, and ideological reality. The presence of economic inequalities in a power structure drives history and influences differences in religion, race, ethnicity, and gender. For example, status in the community in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* can be examined from an economic point of view. Common assumptions include the following:

- All aspects of humanity are based on the struggle for economic power.
- The basic struggle in human society is between the haves and the have-nots.

Reader Response Criticism: Reader Response Criticism focuses on a reader's active engagement with a print or nonprint text. The reader's response to any text is shaded by the reader's own experiences, social ethics, moral values, and general views of the world. For example, the response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* may depend on the reader's sense of outrage on behalf of someone unjustly accused of a crime. Common assumptions include the following:

- When encountering a text, the reader not only seeks the meaning that inherently lies within the text, but also creates meaning from a personal interaction with the text.
- It is important to the discussion of the text to take into account the reader as well as the reading situation.
- Different readers formulate different acceptable interpretations because a text allows for a range of acceptable interpretations for which textual support is available.

Task 2: "As You Read" (5 minutes)

- Read "As You Read" on page 397 to prepare for the article.
- Annotate the text OR take notes on paper or a Google Doc.

Task 3: "The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Section 101" (15 minutes)

- Read and annotate the text selection on pages 397-398.
- Be sure to read slowly and carefully to better understand the legal language of this document.

Task 4: "Making Observations" (10 minutes)

Answer the two (2) bulleted questions on page 398.

Task 5: "Returning to the Text" (15-20 minutes)

- Return to the article as you respond to the questions on page 399. Use textual evidence to support your responses.
- Answer questions #1-4.

Task 6: "As You Read" and "About the Author" (5 minutes)

- Read "As You Read" on page 399 to prepare you for the upcoming article.
- Read the background information on Dan Shea on page 400.
- Review the definition of "levee" in the "Word Connections" box on page 400.

Task 7: "Daylong Efforts to Repair Levee Fail" (15 minutes)

- Read and annotate the article on pages 400-402.

Task 8: "Making Observations" (5 minutes)

- Answer the two (2) bulleted questions on page 402.

Task 9: "Returning to the Text" (15-20 minutes)

- Return to the article as you respond to the questions on page 403. Use textual evidence to support your responses.
- Answer questions #5-8.

Framing the Investigation

Learning Targets

- Investigate how critical lenses can both shape and reveal perspectives about real-world events and issues.
- Use different critical lenses to frame research questions.
- Ask questions to evaluate the effectiveness of structural characteristics in nonfiction texts related to the same topic.

Preview

In this activity, you will begin exploring the ways the media, public figures, and government organizations shape or construct the meaning of a historical event: Hurricane Katrina. You will start by reading several texts that help frame and contextualize the event.

Learning Strategies

- Discussion Groups
- Marking the Text
- Note-taking
- Quickwrite
- Think-Pair-Share

My Notes

As You Read

- Put a star next to actions Congress will take and put a dash next to actions Congress expects individuals, state governments, and local governments to take.
- Circle unknown words and phrases, including legal language used in the document. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

Law

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Section 101

Sec. 101. Congressional Findings and Declarations (42 U.S.C. 5121)

- a. The Congress hereby finds and declares that
1. because disasters often cause loss of life, human suffering, loss of income, and property loss and damage; and
 2. because disasters often disrupt the normal functioning of governments and communities, and adversely affect individuals and families with great severity; special measures, designed to assist the efforts of the affected States in expediting the rendering of aid, assistance, and emergency services, and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of devastated areas, are necessary.

INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Connect

Much has been written about Hurricane Katrina and its massive effects on the people, environment, government, and history of the Gulf Region. Find and read an informational or fiction text about Hurricane Katrina that interests you. Take notes as you read it to help you develop contextual understandings about the event. Record your notes in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

My Notes

- b. It is the intent of the Congress, by this Act, to provide an orderly and continuing means of assistance by the Federal Government to State and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to **alleviate** the suffering and damage which result from such disasters by
3. revising and broadening the scope of existing disaster relief programs;
 4. encouraging the development of comprehensive disaster preparedness and assistance plans, programs, capabilities, and organizations by the States and by local governments;
 5. achieving greater coordination and responsiveness of disaster preparedness and relief programs;
 6. encouraging individuals, States, and local governments to protect themselves by obtaining insurance coverage to supplement or replace governmental assistance;
 7. encouraging hazard **mitigation** measures to reduce losses from disasters, including development of land use and construction regulations; and (6) providing Federal assistance programs for both public and private losses sustained in disasters.

Making Observations

- What stands out about the document's structure?
- What are your initial thoughts on Congress's plan?

alleviate: relieve
mitigation: lessening

Returning to the Text

- Reread the legal document to answer these text-dependent questions.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. According to this document, why and how does the federal government step in to assist state and local governments in the event of a disaster?

2. What is the primary purpose of this document? Who is the intended audience?

3. According to subsection (b), what is the government's responsibility in times of disaster?

4. How do subsections (a) and (b) differ in purpose? What is the overall effect of using these text features?

As You Read

- As you read “Day Long Efforts to Repair Levee Fail,” underline words and phrases that help you visualize the scene.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

WORD CONNECTIONS

Etymology

Levee is a noun derived from the French word *lever*, “to raise.” A levee is a wall or raised ridge of soil alongside a river, built to prevent flooding. Other words derived from the word *lever* include alleviate, elevate, elevator, leverage, levity, and relieve.

My Notes

About the Author



Dan Shea (b. 1963) is the publisher of *The Advocate*. Prior to this role, Shea served as the managing editor of *The Times-Picayune* for 19-years. At *The Times-Picayune*, Shea supervised newsroom operations, presentations, photography, and copyediting. He also played a pivotal role in the continued print and online coverage of the harrowing days after Hurricane Katrina. The reporting under Shea’s leadership led *The Times-Picayune* to win the Breaking News Pulitzer Prize in 2006.

Article

Daylong Efforts to Repair Levee Fail

by Dan Shea

The Times-Picayune, August 31, 2005

1 New Orleans became an unimaginable scene of water, fear and suffering Tuesday after a levee breach in the 17th Street Canal sent billions of gallons of Lake Pontchartrain coursing through the city.

2 As the day wore on, the only dry land was a narrow band from the French Quarter¹ and parts of Uptown, the same small strip that was settled by Bienville² amid the swamps.

3 On Tuesday night, it appeared the city was returning to swamp when a daylong effort to shore the levee near the Hammond Highway failed. Mayor Ray Nagin said pumps were being overwhelmed and warned that a new deluge would bury the city in up to 15 feet of water.

4 With solid water from the lake to the French Quarter, the inundation and depopulation of an entire American city was at hand.

5 “Truth to tell, we’re not too far from filling in the bowl,” said Terry Ebbert, the city’s director of homeland security. The waters were still rising at 3 inches per hour, and eventually could move close to the French Quarter levee.

6 Although the breach occurred on the Orleans side of the canal, it did not spare the Jefferson side. Water found its way into much of the east bank, meeting the flow that came in from the west from Hurricane Katrina’s storm surge Monday.

¹ The French Quarter is New Orleans’s oldest neighborhood.

² Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville was governor of Louisiana and founder of New Orleans.

My Notes

7 An accurate tally of death was hard to determine. Five deaths related to Katrina have been confirmed in Jefferson Parish³, officials said. There also are seven people missing who decided to ride out Katrina on Grand Isle.

...

8 As to the living, with the absence of cars and electric motors in the powerless city, a sad tableau played itself out in an eerie quiet.

9 All day, a weary army of storm victims trudged through waist-deep muddy water toward the Superdome, where more than 20,000 people took refuge. The next problem is what to do with them. Late Tuesday Gov. Blanco ordered them out, saying the facility was too damaged to house people and the atmosphere too dangerous. Officials said the National Guard soon would begin driving them out to dry ground, then airlift them out of southeast Louisiana.

10 In other areas, lawlessness took hold.

11 The giant new Wal-Mart in the Lower Garden District was looted, after a limited distribution of supplies broke down in chaos. The entire gun collection was taken.

12 “There are gangs of armed men in the city moving around the city,” Ebbert said.

13 One looter shot a New Orleans police officer, who was in critical condition with a head wound.

14 Although local police focused solely on rescue, a call for help was answered by swarms of deputies from western Louisiana parishes.

15 But cops on the street, cut off from their superiors by a failure of the communications system, complained of chaos.

16 “Put this in your paper,” one officer on Canal Street said. “They told us nothing. We were unprepared. We are completely on our own.”

17 If it wasn’t coordinated, the rescue was heroic.

18 Firefighters, police and Coast Guardsmen waded through water and climbed to roofs.

19 “We’ve got boats everywhere,” said Capt. Tim Bayard of the New Orleans Police Department. “We’re going to try and get who we can get and take them to higher ground. We may have to come back for some.”

20 They were joined by an armada of Louisiana sportsmen in flat-bottomed boats, who responded to an appeal for help.

21 Ferdinand Emory rescued about 100 people, ten at a time in his boat.

22 Ebbert estimated 1,500 to 2,000 people were saved in Lakeview and Mid-City.

A woman is carried out of floodwaters after being trapped in her home after Hurricane Katrina.



³ Jefferson Parish is one of 64 parishes (rather than counties) into which Louisiana is divided.

My Notes

23 But rescue from the water didn't mean an end to misery. They were simply dropped off at the few stretches of dry ground, overpasses and parking lots along Metairie Ridge.

24 Aleck Scallan, 63, a paraplegic, was ferried in a boat from his Lakeview home. But he had been sitting for more than six hours on an overpass, with no clear indication when he and scores of others would be picked up.

25 Along the Metairie Road railroad embankment, the only passage through two parishes, people wandered aimlessly, along with dogs and cats that headed for high ground.

26 After the rescue effort, the next priority is trying to heal the breach. Ebbert said plans called for giant panels to be dropped in place by helicopter, accompanied by 50, 3,000-pound sandbags. Next the Interstate 10 underpass under the railroad trestle would have to be drained, after the giant new pumping station utterly failed its first test. That would give disaster recovery teams open access to the city from the west.

27 The failure of the Industrial Canal levee created massive flooding in St. Bernard and the 9th Ward⁴ on Monday.

28 Estimates on when the city would become habitable again ranged from two weeks to months.



People waded through high water in front of the Superdome August 30, 2005 in New Orleans, Louisiana, days after Hurricane Katrina.

Making Observations

- What images come to mind while reading this article?
- What emotions do you feel after reading this article?

⁴ The 9th Ward is the largest of 17 wards, or areas, into which New Orleans is divided.

Returning to the Text

- Reread the article to answer these text-dependent questions.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
5. Which major levee breach is the focus of this article? At the time of printing, what were the plans for repairing it? How will this help rescue efforts?

6. What is the implied connection between the events in paragraphs 11 and 12?

7. Summarize paragraphs 10–16. Whom does the officer blame for the chaotic rescue effort? Use details to support your inference.

8. Why do Aleck Scallan and others have no idea when they will be picked up from the overpass?

As You Read

- Underline the priorities that President Bush mentions in his speech.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.