

Critical Concepts 8.4B Literary Writing Lesson Plans

Turning Graphic Organizers into Writing Responses

After students complete their organizers, model how to turn it into a summary paragraph.

Prompt:

Choose a word, phrase, or sentence from one of the excerpts (*The Captain's Tollgate*, *The Pit*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*). In a paragraph, explain:

1. What the word/phrase is and its **figurative or connotative meaning**.
2. What **sound device** (if any) is used (alliteration, assonance, rhyme, repetition).
3. How the word choice and/or sound device **impact tone or meaning** in the passage.

Word/Phrase (what you notice in the text)

Figurative or Connotative Meaning (beyond literal)

Sound Device (repetition, alliteration, assonance, rhyme)

Analysis (how tone/meaning is shaped, why it matters)

Model (I Do) – *The Captain's Tollgate*

In Stockton's story, the tollgate is described as "**stood like a sentinel on the road.**" This is figurative language comparing the tollgate to a guard. Connotatively, "sentinel" suggests authority, protection, and watchfulness, not just an ordinary gate. The author also uses **alliteration** with the repeated s sound in "stood" and "sentinel." This sound is soft but steady, mirroring the serious, watchful mood. Together, the figurative comparison and sound device create a tone of solemnity, showing that the tollgate represents power and order rather than just a wooden structure.

Guided (We Do) – *The Pit*

In Norris's excerpt, the line "**They shouted, shouted, shouted, until the air quivered with noise**" uses **repetition** of the word "shouted." This repetition emphasizes the overwhelming chaos of the trading pit. The word "quivered" carries a connotative meaning beyond simply shaking—it suggests that the atmosphere is fragile, overloaded, and about to break. The combination of repetition and connotative word choice creates a tone of frenzy and tension, making the reader feel the suffocating pressure of the marketplace.

Collaborative (You Do with Partner) – *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

When Stowe describes Eliza's escape, she writes, "**She flew across the river, her child pressed to her bosom.**" The verb "flew" is figurative, since Eliza is not literally flying; instead, it connotatively suggests desperation, near-superhuman strength, and speed born of fear. Stowe

also uses **alliteration** in the phrase “flew... across,” where the repeated *f* sound creates a sense of fast motion. This combination builds a frantic and urgent tone, emphasizing the mother’s courage and the terrifying stakes of her escape.

Independent (You Do Alone) – *The Captain’s Tollgate*

Later, Stockton writes that the tollgate “**stood silent, unmoving in the dusk.**” The silence here is connotative—it suggests not just quiet, but judgment, mystery, or hidden authority. The phrase also uses **alliteration** with the repeated *s* sounds in “stood” and “silent,” which gives the description a hushed, tense rhythm. This combination creates a tone of quiet power and suspense, suggesting that the tollgate is more than an ordinary object—it foreshadows its symbolic role in the story.