

breaking up with a girlfriend, someone whose father, brother, husband was leaving for Iraq, someone in Mexico whose relative was emigrating to the U.S., etc. After I give a couple examples like this, I ask students to brainstorm ideas for several more. Once they get started, they're pretty good at seeing a bigger picture.

I'm careful to tell them their "larger picture" doesn't have to be a news item or anything -- but it does have to go beyond them, and they have to write about it authentically.

As we continue with *Slaughterhouse-Five*, we examine Vonnegut's choice to write non-sequentially: How do students feel about it? What effect does it have on their reading process? Does it enhance his point? Is Vonnegut a bad writer or an artist? How does he make transitions so we don't get lost? Exploring these ideas helps students overcome the fear of using a bold and unfamiliar writing technique.

In conjunction with *Slaughterhouse-Five*, we also examine how Vonnegut communicates them through the story. Having discussed what themes the book contains, students try to stay alert to where themes are woven in. I have them choose and list five sentences per chapter that relate to the themes. I've found this increases students' awareness of the planfulness of writing, helps them understand that there is some subtlety (not that Vonnegut's particularly subtle, but...) and reduces their propensity to state the "moral" at the end of the story.

Summarize Performance Tasks or Projects:

The performance task is their story, which must address the questions listed above.

Assessment: Rubric is attached. All students complete two drafts. Students who wish to continue improving may choose to complete a third draft. No student will be allowed to earn lower than a C on any rubric item; therefore, students with such scores will continue to revise (with extra help) until they have at least a C on all criteria.

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English 6
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January 29, 2004

Slaughterhouse-Five: Anti-narrative

For this assignment, you'll do what Vonnegut does: Write a story in an anti-narrative style in which you intertwine an issue of current concern with your own "time travel" to communicate a theme (a truth about humanity/ people) relevant to your life experiences.

Your story will show your understanding of these questions:

- How does individual life experience translate to concerns of humanity? Can you communicate that broader concern in a way that recognizes your connection to the larger group and validates the experience on both levels?
- What techniques do writers use to communicate themes without beating readers over the head?
- Can you successfully communicate ideas in a non-traditional format? How does a writer craft a story with gaps and leaps (both backward and forward) and not lose the reader?

Write about yourself in the third person; for example, I'd begin as follows.

"Listen:

Kathleen O'Brien has come unstuck in time..."

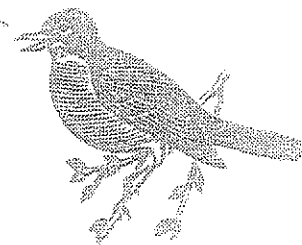
Although your time leaps should take you to genuine prior times in your life, you may be creative with the facts. Information you use relevant to the issue of current concern must be accurate.

Specs:

- 750-1,000 words – typed, double-spaced, with a word count at the end.
- For page one, use a heading like the one on this paper (left hand corner).
- For pages 2 and beyond, type your last name, space twice, then type the page number (like I did at the top right)
- Create your own title.
- Time-travel at least twice (more if you wish but only if you can develop your ideas).
- Use clear imagery (like Vonnegut – language that appeals to the reader's sense of sight, smell, taste, touch, hearing)
- Include at least two metaphors. Underline them on your first draft.
- At the end of your final page, *hand write* the theme your story communicates. Be sure you write a complete sentence.

First draft due date:
Wednesday/Thursday
February 11th/12th.

"Poo-lee-
weef"



FIRST DRAFT

Assessment Rubric: Anti-narrative
128 points

The rubric assessment presumes the assignment was completed according to instructions.

Criteria	For an A	For a B	For a C
<p>Idea Development</p> <p>4 items @ 16 pts. each = 64</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ even with time travel, paper is clear, focused, purposeful ☞ topic developed & theme conveyed with depth and insight ☞ significant, interesting details enrich the paper ☞ Accurate information regarding an issue of current concern makes the story relevant and meaningful. <p style="text-align: right;">16-15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ even with time travel, paper is clear & focused in most sections ☞ topic developed & theme conveyed with depth; connections show insight that may be slightly obvious ☞ some enriching details but could use more ☞ Accurate information regarding an issue of current concern adds to the story's relevance. <p style="text-align: right;">14-13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ even with time travel, paper has some focus but is sometimes fuzzy ☞ topic developed & theme conveyed but not with adequate depth; attempt at insight, only partly fulfilled ☞ a few specific details but mostly generalities ☞ Story includes information regarding an issue of current concern, but it needs to be better integrated <p style="text-align: right;">11-12</p>
<p>Metaphors/ Imagery</p> <p>2 items @ 12 pts. each = 24</p> <p>Dead metaphors & clichés aren't the writer's and won't carry credit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Fresh metaphors enrich writing, demonstrate advanced insight/ability to make connections ☞ Enriching imagery is specific and appropriate, detailed but not overwritten. <p style="text-align: right;">12-11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Metaphors enrich writing, demonstrate insight/ability to make connections ☞ Imagery is specific and appropriate, may be slightly vague, slightly overwritten or just not quite enough. <p style="text-align: right;">10-9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Metaphors demonstrate ability to make connections; may be shallow or awkward ☞ Imagery is attempted with some success; often too vague, overwritten or noticeably infrequent. <p style="text-align: right;">8</p>
<p>Voice</p> <p>1 item @ 20 pts. each = 20 pts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ writer clearly reaches out to involve the audience; consistently successful <p style="text-align: right;">20-18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ writer clearly reaches out to involve the audience; mostly successful with some weak spots <p style="text-align: right;">17-16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ writer reaches out to involve the audience but is often lacking; tone sometimes indifferent, distant or otherwise inappropriate <p style="text-align: right;">15-14</p>
<p>Conventions</p> <p>1 item @ 20 pts. = 20 pts.</p>	<p>Good grasp of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ 1-3 convention errors/page <p style="text-align: right;">20-18</p>	<p>Respectable grasp of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ 4-6 convention errors/page <p style="text-align: right;">17-16</p>	<p>Basic grasp of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ 7-9 convention errors/page <p style="text-align: right;">15-14</p>