



AP English Language 2000 Student Samples

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A writer's beginnings can be rooted almost anywhere; a devastating experience, a triumph, an inspirational teacher or idol—any and all of these can compel a child to ~~become~~ a writer. The most common cause, however, is a "feeling of insatiability" when it comes to books. Children whose "only fear [is] that of books coming to an end" grow up to write their own, so that the end never has to come. In this passage from her autobiography, *One Writer's Beginnings*, Eudora Welty explores the origin of her drive to write. The language she employs to relate anecdotes of her childhood love affair with reading is invested with the same passion and value that she applied to books.

Welty's description of her encounters with Mrs. Calloway, the librarian, serves to accurately portray the atmosphere that enveloped the books of her childhood. Welty "never knew anyone who'd grown up in Jackson without being a afraid of Mrs. Calloway... [who] sat with her... ~~the~~ dragon eye on the front door." There was only one child who never let the librarian intimidate ~~her~~, and that was Welty herself, who was willing "to abide by her rules. She "would do anything to read." Welty shows the ^{extent of her} ~~strong~~ determination to read by her treatment of Mrs. Calloway in this passage. The "signs tacked up everywhere" with "SILENCE in big, black letters" did not scare her then, and still do not now. The capitalization of the command ~~was~~ conveys not her own terror, but the fear of other children to which she was never prey

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Welty's depiction of Mrs. Calloway's "rules about books" emphasizes how much of a necessity reading was to the author. That she "could not take ~~back~~ back a book to the library on the same day [she'd] taken it out" ~~shows her~~ exasperated her. ~~For~~ Welty delineates that exasperation when she writes that "it made no difference to her [Mrs. Calloway] that [she'd] read every word in it and needed another to start." The two book limit also frustrated Welty, her greatest joy was reading, and she never had enough books to occupy all her time. It did not matter what she read, as her contrast ~~between~~ the "Bunny Brown" book and Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea illustrates. Instead, "every book [she] seized on... stood for the desiring wish to read being instantly granted." Welty wanted to read immediately; her emphasis of the word "immediately" only goes to further prove the intensity of her passion for reading.

~~Welty~~ The language Welty uses in describing her relationship with her mother shows the bond they share ~~and~~ ^{through} their loves of reading. Her mother, too, "was not afraid of Mrs. Calloway. She wished [Welty] to have her own library card to check out books for herself." Her "mother was very sharing of this feeling of insatiability." Welty's mother also thought her "too impressionable." Perhaps it was this very "impressionability" that led to the development of Welty's love for reading. Her use of specific examples and anecdotes about her mother's reading habits is

Show what kind of influence her mother had on her.

The very ~~language~~ language of Welty's writing is drawn from an amalgamation of her ~~experiences~~ experiences in the world of literature. The forcefulness and determination of her language come from her overwhelming passion to devour books and the language within them. The language of the passage races from memory to memory, from illustration to illustration, much as ^{the} young Welty darted from book to book as quickly as possible. The very structure of this excerpt shows her voraciousness as a thinker, ^{inter} even as she attempts to relate her voraciousness as a reader.

To be a writer, one must have an elite understanding of diction, syntax, and tone. These literary devices are utilized by writers, including Eudora Welty, as a method for effectively expressing the message they wish to convey to their readers. In her passage Welty uses brevity in her sentences to create suspense, allusions to witches and dragons to inspire a reminder of childish fears in her readers, and a variety of anecdotes to establish complexity in her reflective tone.

Welty's initial description of the librarian, Mrs. Calloway, prepares the reader for the typical interpretation of a child's experience with an intimidating figure. Mrs. Calloway's "dragon eye" alludes to the scaly, fire-breathing dragons that can be found in a majority of fairy tale books. This presents the fact that the speaker is recounting and reflecting on a childhood experience, and thus her perception of Mrs. Calloway is somewhat hyperbolic in content. Although Welty conveys Mrs. Calloway's austere demeanor by providing an example citing that "she [would send] you straight back home" (17), it is apparent that a child's point of view will be one of possible trepidation. Thus, the brief, laconic sentences, and the diction used, such as "steady seething" sounds; and "strong eyes" (15), provide the reader with a mysterious impression of Mrs. Calloway. This enables the reader to relate with the speaker more thoroughly.

Welty's anecdote containing her visit to the library with her mother, establishes that she believes she "saw and had met a witch" (24). This description is important for it again reinforces the childlike tone of the passage. However, these anecdotes also create a complexity to the meaning of the Welty's piece by pointing out that her desire to read is so powerful that



Question 1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

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she is willing to deal with the overpowering presence of Mrs. Calloway. By citing examples of how she would read, "two by two... pushing them home in the basket of my [her] bicycle" (45-46), it is obvious that Welty's passage contains more intensity than a simple childhood reflection. There is gentle humor in her fear of Mrs. Calloway, yet simultaneously there is a major point that she effectively conveys: her desire to be a writer began at a young age with her desire "to read immediately" (53).

As she closes the passage, Welty conveys that without reading she is unsatisfied, as she states that her "mother was very sharing of this feeling of insatiability" (55). Thus, she deduces that her encounter with Mrs. Calloway, although scary, is worthwhile because it enables her to read. Her insights can be recognized in her reflective tone, but also in her final excerpt from ~~the~~ the childhood fairytale, "Little Red Riding Hood." Although this image of Mrs. Calloway as the Big Bad Wolf who states, "the better to eat you with my dear," reminds us of the speaker's childlike fears and perceptions, ~~it~~ it is apparent that the speaker's complex tone indicates that she - experienced growth through her experience with Mrs. Calloway.

Therefore, Welty utilizes ~~this~~ direct...

hypothetically

In the excerpt from One Writer's Beginnings, Eudora Welty conveys a positive tone toward her childhood experiences.

She accomplishes this tone through the use of descriptive diction, impressionable images, and unusual syntax.

Welty begins the passage in first person, with a description of Mrs. Calloway, the librarian. She uses the following words and phrases to emphasize the effect of her appearance on the children: "dragon eye," "commanding voice," "seething sound," "streaming face," "strang eyes," and "witch."

These descriptive adjectives effectively convey the sense of fear that she felt while visiting the library. Welty's use of metaphors also conveys the atmosphere in the library, "her dragon eye" and "I had met a witch." Welty expresses a positive attitude toward her experience by saying "I would do anything to read." At nine years, she was willing to face the scary librarian and change her clothes ("if she could see through your skirt she sent you straight back home...") to be able to read books.

This also shows that her experiences were very valuable to her becoming a fiction writer. Welty uses the literary allusion to Elsie Painsmore to express how much books had an effect on her. Her mother would not let her read this series of books because she says "You're too impressionable, dear... You'd read that and the very first thing you'd do, you'd fall off the piano stool." She also alludes to Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue at Camp Rest-a-While and Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, to show the wide range of books that she read, essentially anything she could get her hands on. She values her avidness for

reading because it had a great impact on her future career as a fiction writer.

The syntax Welty uses also contributes to her positive tone. The word "SILENCE" is capitalized to contribute to her vivid description of the library. She uses many semicolons to enhance the images she presents, "...her normally commanding voice; every word could be heard all over the library..." and "You could not take back a book... on the same day you'd taken it out; it made no difference to her that you'd read every word in it and needed another to start." Welty italicizes the word immediately in the sentence "I wanted to read *immediately*," to convey her love of reading, and her only fear was "that of books coming to an end."

The dashes in the following sentence: "She'd just look up at the right time, long enough to answer - in character - 'The better to eat you with, my dear,'" and go back to her place in the war news," serve the purpose of expressing how her mother's love of reading reflected her love of reading.

In the excerpt from Eudora Welty's One Writer's Beginnings, she expresses a positive tone toward her early experiences. This tone is conveyed through descriptive diction, imagery and syntax. One idea to be gathered from this passage is that one should not allow fear to stand in the way of pursuing a goal.