

Introduction & Conclusions

Writing Guide Workshop

Columbia University Writing Center

Writing Guides:

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TODAY WE WILL:

Look at Introductions & Conclusions

“[THEY] GO TOGETHER”

JUST LIKE THIS BRAIN
NEEDS A BIG OLE PENCIL

JUST LIKE A MIND NEEDS
A WRITING UTENSIL

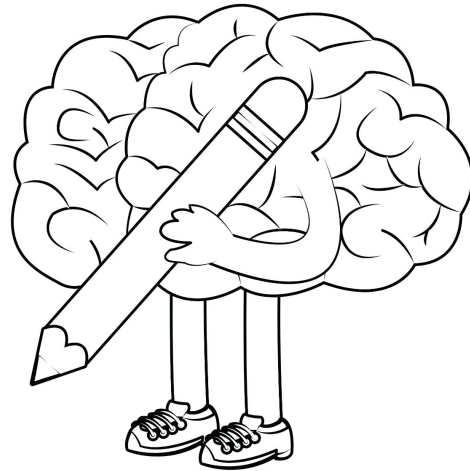
WHAT GOOD IS SUGAR
IF YOU HAVE NO TEA

WHAT GOOD ARE YOU
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ME

WE GO TOGETHER

JUST LIKE A TEAR IN A
BABY'S EYE

LIKE ICE CREAM &
APPLE PIE



I like old
country
music...

Think of a favorite
movie/documentary.

What is it? What's it about?

How did you begin your telling of the movie?

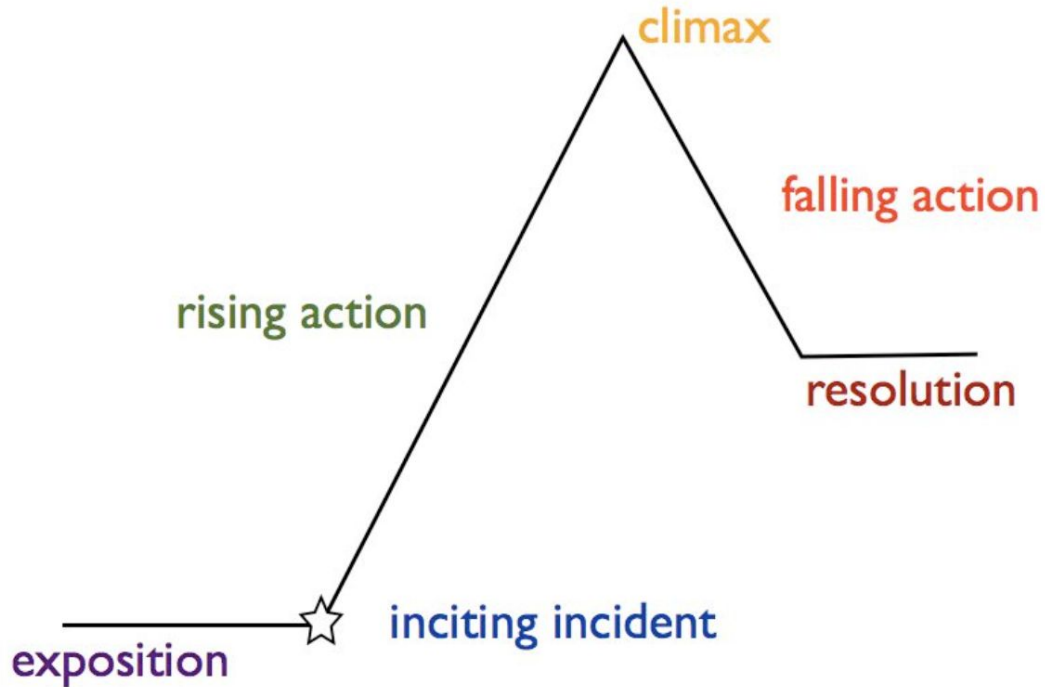
How did you structure your telling?

We want to make two points.

1. You likely had an instinct about what a listener needed to know first. You knew how to orient the listener.
2. An essay introduction has the same aim: to orient a reader.

This is why we will look at the parallels between dramatic storytelling and essay writing.

freytag's pyramid



Freytag's basic shape of a dramatic story.

Think about how this maps on to the movie you talked about.

Story beginning	Scholarly text introduction
The writer introduces characters and sets the scene. →	Context: The writer introduces object of analysis, background information, and the scholarly conversation.
The writer presents a dramatic problem. →	Scholarly problem: The writer presents a difficulty arising from a gap in understanding.
Characters confront the problem. →	Project: The writer describes an approach to confronting the problem.
Characters set off on a path toward resolving the problem. →	Claim: The writer promises a path toward resolving the problem.

Story middle	Scholarly text body
Characters grapple with the problem.	Evidence and analysis: The writer analyzes evidence to grapple with the problem.
Characters develop as the problem becomes more complex with new characters and new events.	Complication: The claim develops as the problem becomes more complex with new scholars and new evidence.

But we're not talking about the middle...

Story ending

The problem resolves in a way that offers the audience a new understanding of the characters to take away.

Scholarly text conclusion

Take-away: The problem resolves with a claim that offers readers a new understanding to take away.



Stating the most fully evolved version of the claim, the one that can only fully make sense here. This resolution sets the stage for:

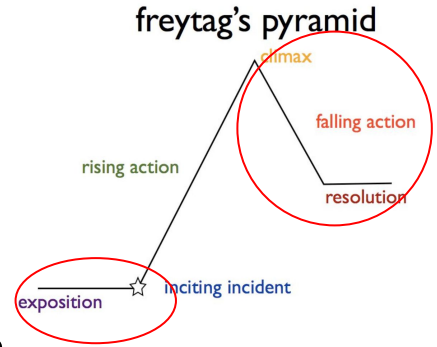
- a. **Emphasizing the newfound meaning** of a key term or other aspect of the project
- b. **Making calls to action** for a problem or set of conditions detailed in the project
- c. **Suggesting solutions** for a problem
- d. **Acknowledging the limits** of the project & **Listing next steps or additional aspects** for further investigation of the project's topics by **Identifying new questions** raised by the work done in the project

Beginning and End are the brackets that hold the story/essay together.

What readers need at the beginning:

Orientation

- What's this about?
- What is the question we're following (the whodunit)?



What reader need at the end:

A sense of completing something and a sense that engaging with this content was valuable (stakes and motive).

- What was the arc? What should we remember?
- What's the answer to the questions?
- How do your insights help us understand something else that we might encounter?

Stakes and Motive

In introduction

- Previewing why the project is important

In conclusion

- Stating explicitly why the project is important

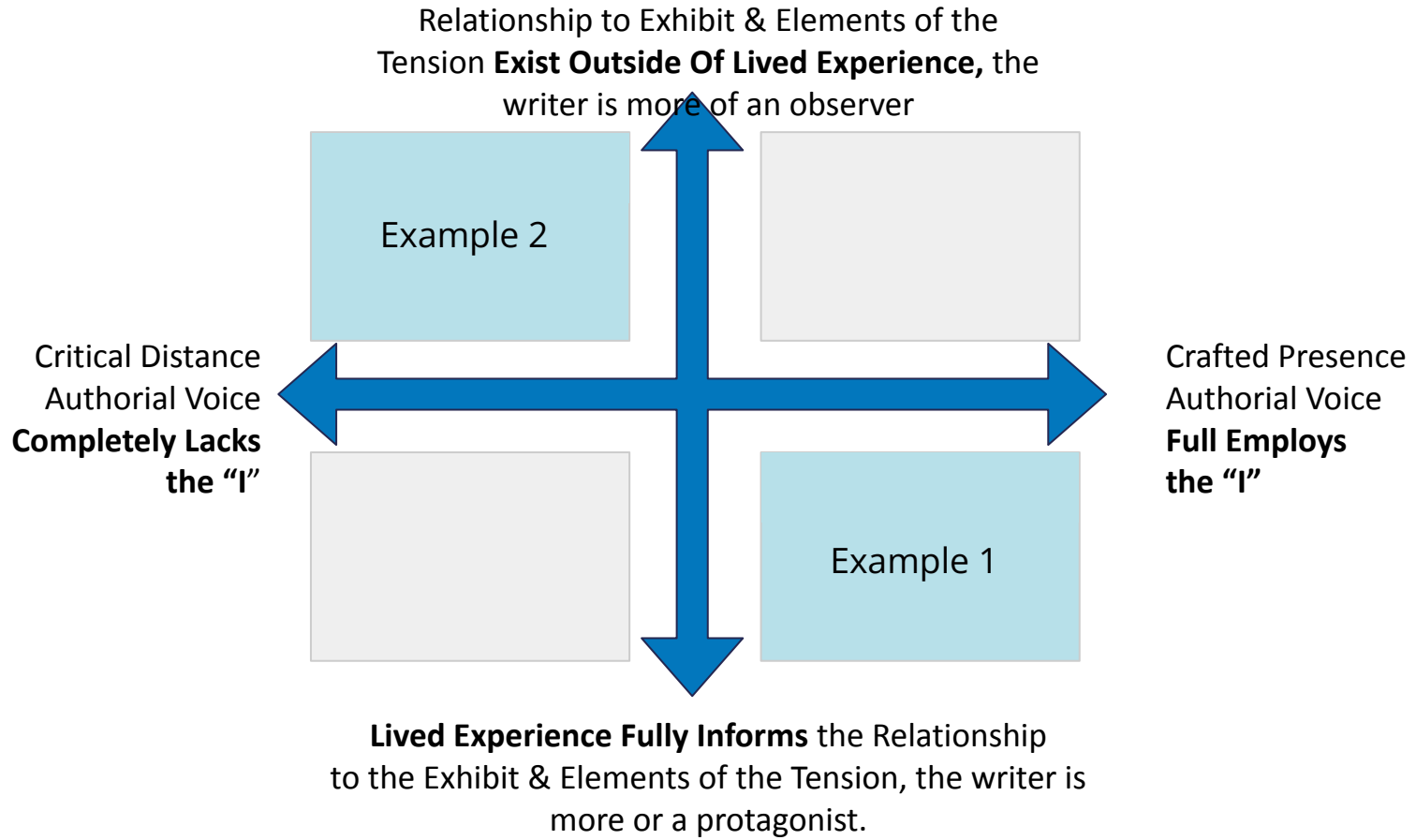
Think about your movie example again: How soon/ how do we understand a movie's moral center and who we root for? What initially transmits that understanding? (tone, dramatic question, status quo)

We will share two P3 examples from the Morningside review.

The two authors' relationship to their exhibits (and the nature of their exhibits) is very different.

Observe how the relationship to the exhibit influences the crafting of each introduction.

Introducing your Objects of Analysis (Exhibits)



A few years ago, I worked at a leprosy care facility associated with the Center for Research and Training in Skin Diseases and Leprosy at Tehran University. I spent my days shadowing the doctor who treated patients and learning about multidrug therapies, the cure for leprosy that the World Health Organization and pharmaceutical company Novartis distribute free of charge in countries like Iran (WHO). This 'cure-all' drug renders leprosy non-communicable and non-infectious, which means that it's no longer a widescale public health threat. However, our research at the center focused on treating permanent damage from the disease that had occurred before drug administration; namely, we looked at patients' leprosy lesions and disfigured limbs.

The doctor who served as my mentor explained that the bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae* nibbles away at the soft tissue inside and outside a patient's body. Because of how *Mycobacterium leprae* disables a patient's nervous system, leprosy sufferers cannot always fully register pain. Patients often came to the clinic with irreparable burns and lesions caused by unintentionally leaving their hands on the stove. Since they felt no pain, their flesh could burn or deteriorate extensively before they noticed the damage.

In a low voice, the doctor reminded me, "What you will see will not be pleasant. You do not have to stay in the room." The nurse led an emaciated woman into the room. Wrapped in chador, the Islamic veil that some women wear in Iran, Zahra sat by the side of the bed.¹ From my seat beside my mentor, all I could see of the woman were her hands, with stubs instead of fingers. After applying pressure on Zahra's fingertips for circulation checks, my mentor explained to Zahra, "While there is minimal blood flow in your fingertips, there is no sensation in them. Be careful not to burn yourself again. Pick up these gloves at the pharmacy so you can wear them when you cook. Try not to leave your hands on heated surfaces like the stove."

Zahra's fingertips were not the main issue that my mentor had to address; it was the lesions on her forearms and legs that had brought her to the clinic. My mentor had to ask a few times for Zahra to loosen her grip from the heavy cloths and chador she held around herself. What hid beneath Zahra's chador was deeply disturbing to view. **I scuffed my eyebrows together and averted my eyes toward the door, silently praying that Zahra would not recognize my reaction at the sight of her leprous lesion.**

Psychology can easily explain why I turned away in repulsion from Zahra's lesion: psychologists argue that a lesion is indeed a site of pain, which is an intolerable sensation. Accordingly, in his research paper regarding the emotions that human beings experience when looking at lesions, psychologist Tom Kupfer argues that when observers see an injury they vicariously feel the injury (959). Vicarious pain is the sensation of pain that another person's lesion inflicts on the person viewing it. **One might justify turning away in repulsion from a lesion as a result of a biological reaction of sharing the unbearable suffering of others.**

However, I argue that turning away from the lesion is not as simple as a biological response of a knee-jerk.



rupikaur_



Baileys and Jameson in a Blue Java Cup

719 \$

New York, NY

Price is the time of the sunrise tomorrow, for those who will be watching it through the windows of ref.



i didn't leave because i stopped loving you i left cause the longer i stayed the less i loved myself

- rupi kaur



i didn't leave because i finished my homework i left cause the longer i stayed the less i loved myself

Butler Library
- rupi kaur



7 574 J'aime

rupikaur_ #love



TMR P3 Example 2

everything is a meme-
rupi kaur

by
Wan Yii Lee

The image on the left is a post on Instagram, made by poet Rupi Kaur. The post features one of her illustrated poems, selected from her book of poetry *milk and honey*, accompanied by a single hashtag (#love) as its caption. These words, short and simple, have racked up 7,574 likes (as of 12/3/2017), followed by hundreds of comments in which fans tag their friends, claiming “the feels are so real” and “this is deep” (Kaur). Kaur’s Instagram page is filled with such posts, alternating between posts of her poetry and pictures of herself. On top of millions of followers behind her (and zero on her following count), her published book *milk and honey* has become a New York Times Bestseller poetry collection, which is “almost unheard of for a first-time writer, let alone a first-time poet” (Walker). This has garnered attention for the 25-year-old, born in Punjab, India, and raised in Canada. She is even dubbed an “Instapoet,” a label that refers to her catapult to publishing fame through the use of social media (Qureshi). Her popularity and charismatic presence are indisputable, even reaching levels of worship; journalist Rob Walker observes that fans fall “under her spell” during her poetry performances (Walker).

In contrast, the image on the right is from the Columbia University meme page on Facebook, one of many university pages in which students post relatable content about common experiences in university life. A recent trend has been the Rupi Kaur meme, which involves editing pages from Rupi Kaur’s poetry collection to suit another context (“Milk and Honey Parodies”). In the specific example above, it has changed the poem’s subject to the common experience of overworked fatigue at the university library. Many others have hopped onto the bandwagon, creating memes by reworking Kaur’s simple words, or just by writing their own randomly enjambed verses and signing off with the trademark “- rupi kaur” at the end. **While her popularity as an Instapoet continues to soar, memes continue to emerge that caustically mimic her art. Why has the verse from such an acclaimed poet on Instagram also been used as fodder for memes on the Internet?**

Understanding these seemingly divergent trends on social media requires us to delve into why Kaur’s poetry was so popular in the first place.

Stakes & Motive

- Why are you taking on THIS question? Why do you care about it?
- Why might others care about it?
- What do you/we stand to gain? What do we stand to lose (if this question goes unexamined)?

- What larger circle of questions/themes is your question part of?
- How can your reader take a discovery you offer and transfer it to a context they might likely encounter? Or can they be made aware of a context that reflects what you examined more broadly?

Answering these questions can help articulate the consequences or implications of the new knowledge your project has created.

We will share two conclusions (parts of the next to last paragraph plus the last paragraph) of the previous P3 examples from the Morningside review.

Observe how the authors integrate stakes and motive explicitly/how they connect their project to a larger context.

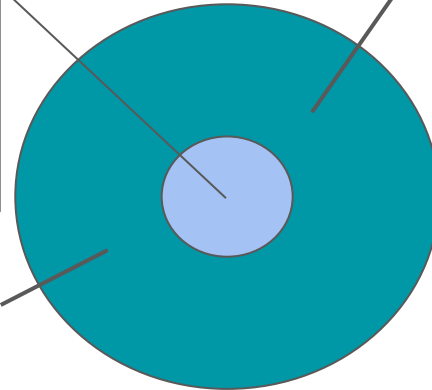
Stakes and Motive

2 The trends of Rupi Kaur's continuously rising popularity and the spread of memes parodying her poetry are, therefore, not actually surprising. Rather than seeing them as trends that diverge, it would be more accurate to conceptualize them as parallel, fueled by the same undercurrent of "shareability" in a cultural world shaped by evolutionary memetic logic as first conceived by Dawkins, i.e., that only the most "shareable" can reproduce and survive. This makes her truly deserve the title of being a poet "for the social media generation," as The Economist claimed, but in more ways than one—while raved about by fans who feel good consuming her effective brand, her poetry also makes for perfect meme fodder in today's digital participatory culture, as a sophisticated statement of self-deprecatory absurdity.

3 **In such an Internet age, where one is virtually surrounded by swaths of content like Kaur's as well as absurdist memes and everything in between, one can only wonder what it really means to exist and be truly "authentic."** But perhaps this question is, in fact, a perennial one that has been fundamental to being part of any social culture at all, only now renewed in the language of the digitally native.

1

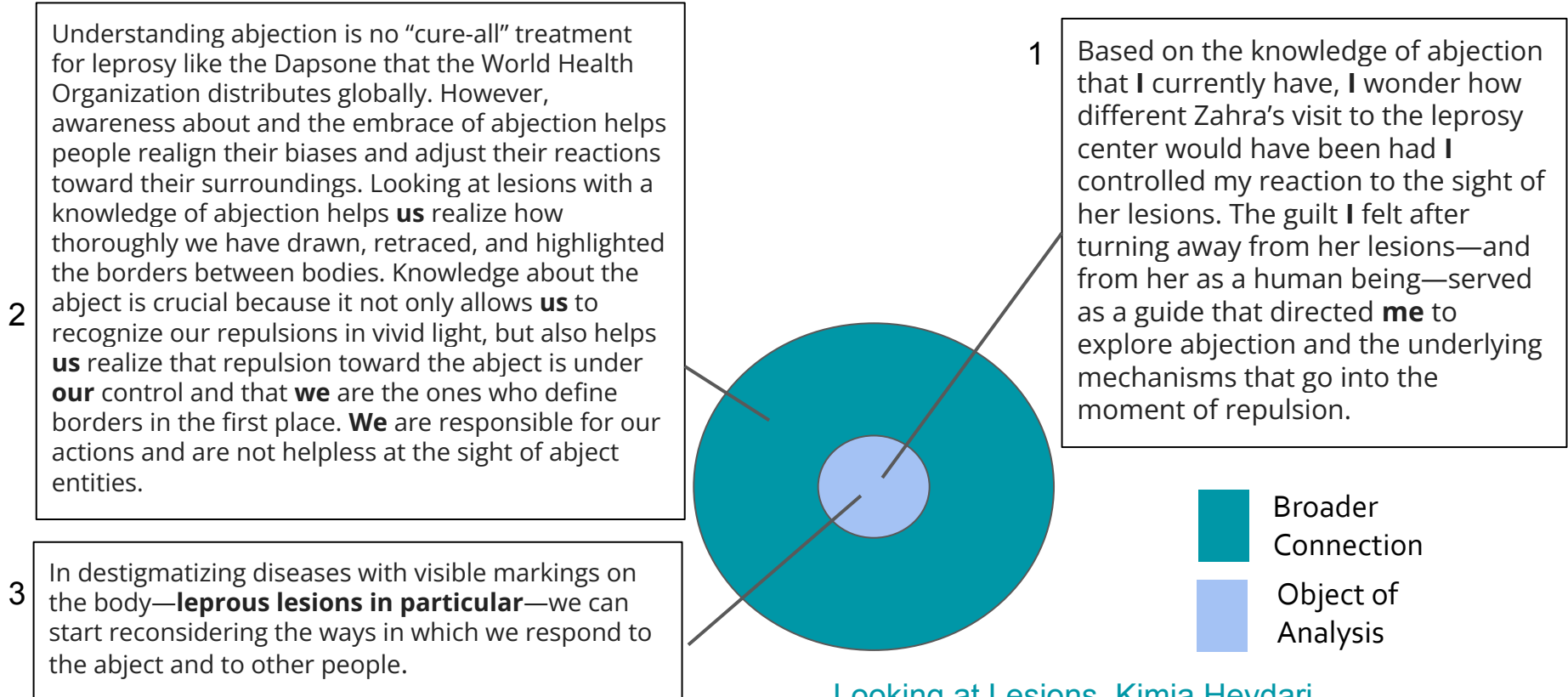
When one's value and existence is now so blatantly premised on being liked and shared, it is hard to blame youths for fretting over whether independent authenticity and meaning exist at all. What better way to express this generation-wide anxiety than through a medium that is self-deprecatory, but also, in a relieving way, self-aware?



- Teal square: Broader Connection
- Light blue square: Object of Analysis

[everything is a meme - rupi kaur](#) [Wan Yii Lee](#)

Stakes and Motive



[Looking at Lesions_Kimia Heydari](#)

PRO TIP: revision of the beginning & end in the final stage of your process is always a solid move

Introductions & Conclusions in our earliest drafts and throughout our processes are always placeholders. How we invite readers into our inquiry must always align with the fullest embodiment of what our projects become. How we play out the final implications of the new knowledge we've created to bring our projects to a close depends also on the the fullest embodiment of what our projects become.

References

- With materials adapted from Dr. Sue Mendelsohn
- And a visualization of Freytag's pyramid from [Writers.com](https://www.writers.com)