

Writing in Humanities

Rhetorical Situation Chart

Genre	Purpose	Audience	Role	Rhetorical Situation
Conference presentation	To analyze a Latina/o/x poem to uncover the author's main ideas, the issues they are responding to, and the rhetorical strategies they employ	Latina/o/x studies scholars	Undergraduate Researcher who studies Latina/o/x studies	You've been selected to present your work on a poem by a Latina/o/x author at the Latina/o Studies Association conference

YOUR ROLE

You have been selected to present at the Latinx Studies conference. Your research begins with choosing a poem by a Latina/o/x author. Your conference requires a visual presentation and an accompanying write-up of your findings. Your final product will include an in-depth analysis of your poem and an original interpretation that incorporates relative information about the author, the time period, and the major themes present in the poem. ***Be thoughtful about the poem you choose—pick a poem that interests you!!*** The [poetry foundation](#) has many open-access poems available. More guidance on finding a poem is included at the bottom of this handout.

FEEDER 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND BEGINNING ANALYSIS

In Feeder One, you will begin by analyzing your poem. In the first half of your analysis, you will pay close attention to the poem in order to identify its details and intricacies. In the first half of your analysis you will include:

- A summary of each line or stanza of the poem (the point of this exercise is to summarize your poem piece-by-piece, rather than all at once. If the poem is too long to summarize line-by-line, use your best judgement to summarize it chunk-by-chunk. Overall, your summary should be 1-2 paragraphs)
- An interpretation of any three lines from the poem. We will practice this in class, but you may consider discussing the following:
 - Word choice
 - Rhythm and cadence
 - Punctuation

Once you have practiced your close-reading skills, you will move towards interpreting the poem as a whole. In the second half of the analysis you will include:

- Your reasons for choosing this poem
- The main point (or points) you believe the poem is expressing and a brief description of how you reached this conclusion

- The audience you believe this poem was intended to reach and a brief description of how you reached this conclusion

FEEDER 2: ESTABLISHING A CONTEXT

For Feeder Two, you will contextualize your poem by conducting secondary research that will provide critical information about your poem. As a researcher, you want to better understand the historical and cultural context of the poem. This research will come together in the form of an annotated bibliography.

In the second half of this assignment, you will consider how your research helps contextualize and texture the analysis you conducted in feeder 1. You will use your research to create an interesting, original argument about your poem.

In the humanities, argument and research are closely tied together. Many researchers start with a question or guiding idea from their primary source, and then use secondary sources to inform their argument. **You will synthesize your background research by submitting two documents: an annotated bibliography and an introductory paragraph.**

Your annotated bibliography will:

- Include no fewer than three annotations of peer-reviewed sources including:
 - One source that develops one aspect of the historical context of your poem
 - *note: if your comic is relatively contemporary (within the last ten years), you can find sources either about the contemporary topic if they are available, or secondary sources about the history of the contemporary issue
 - One source from the field of Latina/o Studies that relates to your poem
 - One source that discusses the larger theme or context of your chosen comic
 - Ex: if a comic is interested in questions of gender, you might choose a source in the field of Women and Gender Studies
- Use MLA citations to introduce each source
- Follow the suggestions given by the Purdue OWL https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/annotated_bibliographies/index.html, including in each citation:
 - One paragraph that **summarizes** your source
 - One paragraph that **assesses** and evaluates your source
 - One paragraph that **reflects** on how the source is relevant to your research
 - This paragraph should be your lengthiest paragraph. You might think about how this informs your argument, or adds extra depth to a piece of evidence you'd like to include from your chosen poem.

Your introduction will:

- Provide a short background about your topic and your chosen comic
- Have a strong thesis that includes:
 - An observation: something interesting and arguable about your chosen poem

- A so-what: a justification for the importance of your topic. Questions you might consider here include:
 - How does this observation contribute to the field of Latina/o Studies?
 - Why might this observation be of importance to someone interested in the poem's main themes?
 - Does this observation change the way we think about a certain issue? How?

UNIT PROJECT: CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

For the Unit Project, an Essay and Conference Presentation, you will build on your prior research and thinking from Feeders One and Two to craft your final presentation. Your unit project will connect your original ideas and observations with your secondary research, under one central argument. Your presentation should introduce your argument and include the highlights of your research. Your essay is your opportunity to expand on your presentation and include detailed, methodical analysis of your essay.

Your essay should:

- Include an interesting and arguable thesis that includes an observation and a so-what.
- Include a chain of reasons that support your main argument, with clear transitions between each paragraph that demonstrate how each point relates to the next.
- Cite textual evidence from your poem to support your argument
- Cite at least three peer-reviewed, secondary sources. These citations should *contribute* to your argument, rather than simply summarize the source
- Include MLA-formatted in-text citations and a works cited page
- Be 5-6 double-spaced pages, in 12 point, Times New Roman Font (Works Cited not included in the page count).

Your oral presentation should:

- Introduce your main idea and your main argument
- Provide relevant examples that support your argument (note: given the time constraints, you will likely will not have time to speak on all of the evidence you use in your written paper)
- Use oral signposting to help your listeners follow along
- Use relevant PowerPoint visuals that appropriately balance text and images
- Include images of your chosen comic
- Use good oral presentation skills, including speaking slowly and clearly, as well as projecting your voice
- Be between 4 and 5 minutes

TIPS ON CHOOSING A POEM

For this assignment, you may choose any poem written by a Latina/o/x author. While you can use any method to choose a poem, the [Poetry Foundation](#) has a robust page on Latina/o/x poetry that includes a list of authors that is a great starting place. The website has a list of authors that

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links to the biography of each author. Some, but not all, of these authors have poems that are featured on the Poetry Foundation website. When you visit an author's Poetry Foundation page, if their work is featured on the Poetry Foundation, in the right-hand side of the page, there will be a heading that reads: "Poems by _____," and you will see a list of their poems. If their work does NOT appear on the Poetry Foundation, you might consider googling the author or searching for the author's poems through the UNC libraries if the author interests you.

Additionally, on the [Poetry Foundation](#) page under "Audio and Visual," you can find interviews with poets. For most of these links, you will have the option to "view audio-transcript," which includes an interview with the poet *and* a poem by that poet. If you are having trouble finding a poem by clicking through the authors, this is a good way to ensure you are able to easily access a poem.