



Judy R. Rogers
Glenn C. Rogers

PATTERNS^{AND} THEMES

A Basic English Reader

THIRD EDITION

Judy R. Rogers ~ Glenn C. Rogers

Morehead State University, Kentucky

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Preface

Patterns and Themes is a collection of readings and writing assignments especially for students enrolled in basic or developmental writing courses. This edition of *Patterns and Themes* continues to provide brief readings selected to stimulate interest and reinforce frequently used writing patterns. As in earlier editions, the content of the selections will appeal to college readers, but the readability level is comfortable for basic writing students. This edition contains eighteen new selections by experienced writers and two new student essays.

Arrangement of the Text The selections are grouped, first of all, by theme. For many students, especially those not ready to study rhetorical patterns, this arrangement provides a natural way to integrate material. To freshen the text for continuing users, there are two changes in themes from the second edition.

The themes are common to large groups of people from diverse backgrounds, and thus we have been able to represent varying points of view on the same topic. We hope those who use this text will learn more about themselves and others: the same essay may be a mirror for one reader and a window for another.

The selections in this edition maintain the variety of the earlier editions: sketches, short stories, popular and academic nonfiction, journalism, student essays, and a brief narrative poem. These readings are variously entertaining, informative, persuasive, thought provoking.

Over the years, amid the rapids and eddies of changing composition theory, many writing teachers have continued to have success introducing their students to rhetorical forms. Thus, in an alternate table of contents, we have indicated the common rhetorical tools used by the writers included in *Patterns and Themes*. Basic writers generally understand and

move naturally toward uncomplicated organizational patterns. Therefore, we have chosen a number of examples of narration and description, often of personal experiences. But we have also included selections that exhibit development by other frequently used rhetorical modes. In this edition, there is an increased emphasis on persuasive writing because it stimulates analytical thinking and encourages students to become more sensitive to the daily barrage of persuasion in its many forms.

Aids to Reading and Writing To increase students' enjoyment of the material and to speed the development of their reading and writing skills, we have included several learning aids. "Looking Forward" gives brief biographical information about the authors (when relevant) and points students toward main ideas and important writing strategies. "Help with Words" offers short definitions, often contextual, of many words that may be unfamiliar. "A Second Look" sends students back to selections to consider points of meaning and to look again at writing techniques. Sometimes students are asked to consider ideas from two or more of the selections within a unit, thereby increasing their awareness of thematic unity and differing writing techniques.

"Ideas for Writing" suggests writing assignments for paragraphs and, more often, short essays. In the early units, the emphasis is on description and narration. Later assignments—like later reading selections—increase in difficulty and introduce definition, comparison/contrast, process, persuasion, and reports using outside sources. Realizing that basic writers advance at different rates, we continue to suggest topics for description and narration throughout. Many of the assignments are structured to help students move through the writing process, especially the prewriting or planning stage. Instructors may easily substitute their own topics while still following the suggestions for prewriting.

"Making Connections" helps develop students' critical thinking skills while suggesting the thematic links within a unit. The questions and suggestions in "Making Connections" call upon students to compare, contrast, define, evaluate, identify values, recognize stereotypes, identify key issues, and perform other basic critical thinking tasks. These suggestions can lead to class or small group discussion or to writing assignments.

Rationale of Patterns and Themes This text originally grew out of our discontent with basic writing courses that were given almost exclusively to drill and practice. Basic writing instruction has changed considerably in the intervening years, but many teachers still find a need for sentence-combining exercises, grammar drills, and punctuation lessons. These assignments may be helpful, even essential; but, unleavened by other material, they frequently become tedious to students and instructors alike. Reading, group discussion, and varied writing tasks add interest to basic composition, helping students build skills more rapidly.

As in the first and second editions of *Patterns and Themes*, we acknowledge the pioneering work of Mina Shaughnessy who, in *Errors and Expecta-*

tions, argues for integrated instruction in writing and reading. Her ideas, and those of many others, have helped to shape all three editions of this text. We hope that every student who uses this book will become the student Shaughnessy describes: "a more careful writer and a more critical reader."

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Memories

Salvation

Langston Hughes

Looking Forward

Langston Hughes—playwright, poet, fiction writer, expert in jazz and folklore—was one of the most influential figures in the history of African-American literature. In “Salvation,” a section of his autobiography, Hughes recalls an experience from his youth that left him sad and disappointed. As you read, remember that a piece of writing should introduce and develop a main idea or central point. Hughes’s main idea is introduced early. Watch for its development.



Help with Words

fold (*paragraph 1*): a pen for sheep; here, a church or its congregation

escorted (*paragraph 1*): accompanied or led

rhythmical (*paragraph 3*): with regular accents or beats

dire (*paragraph 3*): dreadful

work-gnarled (*paragraph 4*): roughened or hardened from work

rounder (*paragraph 6*): a drunkard

serenely (*paragraph 7*): peacefully

knickerbockered (*paragraph 11*): wearing knickerbockers: short pants gathered at the knee

ecstatic (*paragraph 14*): greatly joyful, delighted

I was saved from sin when I was going on thirteen. But not really saved. It happened like this. There was a big revival at my Auntie Reed’s church. Every night for weeks there had been much preaching, singing, praying, and shouting, and some very hardened sinners had been brought to Christ, and the membership

of the church had grown by leaps and bounds. Then just before the revival ended, they held a special meeting for children, "to bring the young lambs to the fold." My aunt spoke of it for days ahead. That night I was escorted to the front row and placed on the mourners' bench with all the other young sinners, who had not yet been brought to Jesus.

My aunt told me that when you were saved you saw a light, and something happened to you inside! And Jesus came into your life! And God was with you from then on! She said you could see and hear and feel Jesus in your soul. I believed her. I had heard a great many old people say the same thing and it seemed to me they ought to know. So I sat there calmly in the hot crowded church, waiting for Jesus to come to me.

The preacher preached a wonderful rhythmical sermon, all moans and shouts and lonely cries and dire pictures of hell, and then he sang a song about the ninety and nine safe in the fold, but one little lamb was left in the cold. Then he said, "Won't you come? Won't you come to Jesus? Young lambs, won't you come?" And he held out his arms to all us young sinners there on the mourners' bench. And the little girls cried. And some of them jumped up and went to Jesus right away. But most of us just sat there.

A great many old people came and knelt around us and prayed, old women with jet-black faces and braided hair, old men with work-gnarled hands. And the church sang a song about the lower lights are burning, some poor sinners to be saved. And the whole building rocked with prayer and song.

Still I kept waiting to see Jesus.

Finally all the young people had gone to the altar and were saved, but one boy and me. He was a rounder's son named Westley. Westley and I were surrounded by sisters and deacons praying. It was very hot in the church, and getting late now. Finally Westley said to me in a whisper: "Goddamn! I'm tired o' sitting here. Let's get up and be saved." So he got up and was saved.

Then I was left all alone on the mourners' bench. My aunt came and knelt at my knees and cried, while prayers and songs swirled all around me in the little church. The whole congregation prayed for me alone, in a mighty wail of moans and voices. And I kept waiting serenely for Jesus, waiting, waiting—but he didn't come. I wanted to see him, but nothing happened to me. Nothing! I wanted something to happen to me, but nothing happened.

I heard the songs and the minister saying: "Why don't you come? 8
My dear child, why don't you come to Jesus? Jesus is waiting for
you. He wants you. Why don't you come? Sister Reed, what is this
child's name?"

"Langston," my aunt sobbed. 9

"Langston, why don't you come? Why don't you come and be 10
saved? Oh, Lamb of God! Why don't you come?"

Now it was really getting late. I began to be ashamed of myself, 11
holding everything up so long. I began to wonder what God
thought about Westley, who certainly hadn't seen Jesus either, but
who was now sitting proudly on the platform, swinging his knick-
erbockered legs and grinning down at me, surrounded by deacons
and old women on their knees praying. God had not struck Westley
dead for taking his name in vain or for lying in the temple. So I
decided that maybe to save further trouble, I'd better lie, too, and
say that Jesus had come, and get up and be saved.

So I got up. 12

Suddenly the whole room broke into a sea of shouting, as they 13
saw me rise. Waves of rejoicing swept the place. Women leaped into
the air. My aunt threw her arms around me. The minister took me
by the hand and led me to the platform.

When things quieted down, in a hushed silence, punctuated by a 14
few ecstatic "Amens," all the new young lambs were blessed in the
name of God. Then joyous singing filled the room.

That night, for the last time in my life but one—for I was a big boy 15
twelve years old—I cried. I cried, in bed alone, and couldn't stop. I
buried my head under the quilts, but my aunt heard me. She woke
up and told my uncle I was crying because the Holy Ghost had
come into my life, and because I had seen Jesus. But I was really
crying because I couldn't bear to tell her that I had lied, that I had
deceived everybody in the church, and I hadn't seen Jesus, and that
now I didn't believe there was a Jesus any more, since he didn't
come to help me.



A Second Look

- 1 Pick out some descriptive words in paragraphs 3 and 4 that help you picture the scene in the church.

- 2 Hughes uses time order to organize his narrative. Transitional words at the beginnings of paragraphs emphasize this pattern. Locate these linking words at the beginning of paragraphs 5, 6, and 7. Are other paragraphs linked in this way?
- 3 Although writers usually avoid using one-sentence paragraphs except in reproducing speech, Hughes uses two (paragraphs 5 and 12). What does he achieve by doing this?
- 4 Why does young Hughes pretend to feel something that he has not really experienced?
- 5 Read the last paragraph again and state, in one sentence, why Hughes is crying.



Ideas for Writing

Describe for a group of classmates something that happened to you when you were younger that left you frustrated or disappointed. Make sure your readers understand first what you expected to happen and then what actually happened.

After you choose the incident, write down everything you can remember about it. Do not worry about the order of your ideas or the mechanics of your writing. Just get your thoughts on paper. Then read through what you have written and select the details that seem most interesting and important. Mark these details so that you can refer to them later.

Next, decide how you will begin telling about your experience. Write the opening. Then continue describing the experience, using the details you have marked, until you reach the end. Your closing may explain why the incident was important. (Reread Hughes's last paragraph.)

Finally, reread your paper to see whether it says exactly what you want it to say. Make sure that the ideas are clear and that the details support the main idea.