

Non-Fiction Craft and Structure 2





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College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading:

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.





What authorial choices impact how an audience interprets a work of non-fiction?

- Point of view – the author’s approach or attitude toward the subject
- Structure – order in which the author introduces ideas
- **Diction** – formal or informal language
- Word choice – figurative language, repetition, etc.



“On Women’s Right to Vote”



Purpose



A key part of identifying an author's purpose is determining his or her point of view, or attitude toward the subject.

One way to analyze point of view is by looking at the **pronouns** the author uses.

Point of view	Singular	Plural
1 st person	I, me, my	we, us, our
2 nd person	you, your	you, your
3 rd person	he, she, him, her	they, their

Look back at Anthony's speech.
Which pronouns does she use?

Analyzing point of view



Authors can make their ideas more compelling by presenting information in a certain order.

You may be familiar with some common structures, such as compare/contrast, cause/effect and problem/solution. However, not all non-fiction writing will fit these structures.

A good way to analyze the structure of a piece of writing is to underline the transition sentences at the start of each paragraph to look for a pattern.

You could also summarize the main idea of each section to see if a structure emerges.

How would you describe the structure of Anthony's speech?

Look at a student's summary of structure in Anthony's "On Women's Right to Vote." Is this structure familiar to you?

○ Introduces claim/goal (to prove that women have citizen's rights)
→ Gives evidence (U.S. Constitution) → Explains evidence →
Explains why oppression of women harmful to all → Gives evidence
(definition of "citizen") → Conclusion: women are citizens, must have
legal rights

This is a typical structure for writing an argumentative essay. Do you think this is the best option for Anthony's speech?

Even if you are not familiar with the word, you have probably already used **diction** to analyze an author's tone.

Diction is the type of vocabulary an author uses in a text. An author's diction might be **colloquial** (using slang or **dialect**), informal or formal.

As a class or in groups, brainstorm a few instances in which it would be appropriate to use colloquial, informal or formal diction in non-fiction writing.



Which form of diction does Anthony use?
How is this appropriate to her purpose?

Practicing diction





Diction is a form of **word choice**. Word choice also involves figurative versus literal language.

Authors use figurative language to add extra layers of meaning to their words. Examples of figurative language include metaphor, simile, personification and symbolism.

Analyzing figurative language is essential to grasping an author's meaning. However, there are reasons that an author may choose not to use figurative language.

Has Anthony used figurative language? How does her word choice affect the meaning of the text?

Fitting language to purpose



Repetition



When analyzing an author's craft and structure, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What is the author's purpose? Consider context.
2. What is the author's point of view? Consider pronouns.
3. What structure has the author used to organize his or her ideas? Consider transitions.
4. What is the author's tone, and how did he or she use diction to help create it? Consider formality.
5. Does the author use figurative or literal language?
6. Are words repeated? Does the meaning of these words change over the course of the text?

