

## ELA II

Weeks One and Two – March 30 - April 3

Mrs. Deeter – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6th Periods

## ELA II

### **Analyzing Text Structure: Linear vs. Nonlinear Text**

10RL2A: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events, or manipulate time impact the reader.

1. For Review, read the lesson on linear vs. nonlinear text by Millie van der Westhuizen (attached).
2. Complete the short worksheet on linear and nonlinear text.
3. For better understanding, Read the nonlinear version of “Little Red Riding Hood” by Taylor Houston (attached). How does this change in structure affect the reader?
4. Read and annotate the poem “Half-Hanged Mary” by Margaret Atwood (attached). Think about the structure of the poem. Is it linear or nonlinear? How does the structure affect the reader?
5. As you read, answer the annotation questions in the margins.
6. Answer the “Half-Hanged Mary” analysis questions (attached).

### **Pre-AP English II - In addition to the assignments above, add the following assignments:**

1. Read and annotate the poem “I Have a Time Machine” by Brenda Shaughnessy (attached). Think about the structure of the poem. Is it linear or nonlinear? How does the structure affect the reader?
2. Answer the “I Have a Time Machine” analysis questions (attached).

### **Useful Resources**

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## Linear vs. Nonlinear Narratives: Definition & Structure

Millie van der Westhuizen

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<https://study.com/academy/lesson/linear-vs-nonlinear-narratives-definition-structure.html>

In this lesson, you'll learn the difference between linear and nonlinear narratives. We'll explore how this relates to plot structure and examine some narrative techniques used by authors in constructing narratives.

## Time and Structure

Imagine waking up one day and finding that you have gone ten years into the past. Such an event would simply not make sense to you and this is because our experience of time follows a very set structure. Simply put, we have a definite sense of what constitutes the past, present and future. Events that unfold in our lives follow a certain order, and we can often see how something that happens today might have an influence on events to follow. It is important to consider this understanding of time when considering whether a narrative is linear or nonlinear.

## Linear Narratives

In literature, **narrative** refers to the telling of a story through the presentation of events. When authors use **linear narratives**, the order in which events are portrayed corresponds to the order in which they occur. Stories told using this narrative structure will have a clear beginning, middle and end. They might begin with a description of the setting, have events leading up to a climax (the point where there is the most tension or drama in the story) and end with a resolution in which all the problems that arose during the narrative are either resolved or accepted.

When focusing on the sequence in which events are portrayed in a narrative, this sequence can also be referred to as the **plot**. This concept refers to the main events in a story, although many narratives also contain **subplots**, which are additional supporting story lines. It is also possible to encounter **parallel plots**, which is when a narrative features more than one plot, with both of these carrying equal importance and sometimes merging at the end.

Plot, as a concept, draws our attention to the idea of cause and effect. When events are told in the order in which they occur, the audience's sense of an event's consequences tends to be straightforward. Often, authors will only tell us about the most important events related to a story's plot or subplots, thereby strengthening our sense of how they relate to one another.

## Nonlinear Narratives

In contrast to linear narratives, **nonlinear narratives** are those in which the author has chosen to jump around in time, and the order in which events are portrayed does not correspond to the order in which things happened. These might also be referred to as disrupted or disjointed narratives. We are still being told a story, but without the same sense of being told about things as they happened.

There are several **narrative techniques** available to authors who wish to break with the actual order of events. Two common techniques used to break the order of progression are **flashbacks** and **flash forwards**, in which the reader is shown things that happened either before or after what had previously been presented as the 'current' time.

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Flashbacks might serve to show us either a memory of a particular character or to give a sense of causality, whereas flash forwards often serve in **foreshadowing** events. When something is foreshadowed, it means that the reader has a sense of things to come and the result is often a sense of suspense, which influences the way in which we interpret the events that lead up to the event we foresaw.

A story might also begin **in medias res** (or 'in the middle') and then jump back to a more logical starting point. Alternatively, authors sometimes tell a story in reverse, starting with the ending and moving back toward the start. Also note that there is a difference between a story referring to something that has happened before and it jumping to the moment when this happened. Very often the difference here will be with regards to whether we are told about something or shown something.

## Lesson Summary

To summarize, **linear narratives** are those in which events are portrayed in the order in which they occur, whereas **nonlinear narratives** are those that break from this convention. When trying to determine whether a story is told in a linear or nonlinear fashion, it might be useful to get a sense of the **plot**, as well as any subplots or parallel plots.

If you write out the major events in a story as they are told, and this order corresponds with the order in which they occurred, then the chances are that you are dealing with a linear narrative. Some narrative techniques available to authors who wish to create a nonlinear narrative include **flashbacks** and **flash forwards**, which could include **foreshadowing**, meaning that the reader has a sense of things to come.

"Linear vs. Nonlinear Narratives: Definition & Structure." Study.com, 26 June 2017, [study.com/academy/lesson/linear-vs-nonlinear-narratives-definition-structure.html](https://study.com/academy/lesson/linear-vs-nonlinear-narratives-definition-structure.html)

## Worksheet: Linear vs. Nonlinear Narratives: Definition & Structure

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/linear-vs-nonlinear-narratives-definition-structure.html>

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1. Fill in the blank: Human beings experience time in a \_\_\_\_\_ fashion.

- a) nonlinear
- b) constructed
- c) temporal
- d) linear

2. Which of the following could be used to represent a character's memories?

- a) Flash forwards
- b) Flashbacks
- c) Causality
- d) Plotlines

3. What term is used to refer to the telling of a story through the presentation of events?

- a) Plot
- b) Temporality
- c) Narrative
- d) Sequence

4. What term refers to the sequence of events that occurs in a story?

- a) Framing
- b) Causality
- c) Plot
- d) Narrative

5. Which of the following terms refers to a narrative that starts in the middle?

- a) Temporality
- b) Flash forward
- c) Flashback
- d) *In medias res*

Nonlinear Red Riding Hood

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#### Taylor Houston

When the woodsman saw the tracks in the mud, he knew something wasn't right. The forest was too quiet and both sets were fresh, meaning the second set could only have been a moment or two behind the first. Shouldering his axe, he ran down the path just as a scream ripped the air.

Clancy loved her Grandma and tried to visit her whenever she could. It was spring, but it was not warm enough to leave home without her cloak, a red, hooded cape that her mother had made her. She prepared a basket of goodies for her grandma who hadn't been feeling very well lately. She kissed her mother good-bye and set off into the forest, but not before her mother warned her to go directly to Grandma's and not to dawdle or talk to strangers.

*Wow. Grandma looks worse than ever,* Clancy thought when she spotted her bonneted grandmother peeking out at her from under the bed covers. Strange, too, that Grandma had not opened the door for Clancy, but rather called out in a hoarse voice to enter. Usually her grandma left the front door locked, but because Clancy had been late (she'd been distracted during her journey) her grandmother had probably grown tired of waiting and unlocked the door before lying in bed.

The day was truly glorious, and after only a few minutes of walking, Clancy pulled her hood down. The sun peaked through the forest canopy and shafts of sunlight spotlighted little groups of wild flowers. Clancy yearned to pick some, but remembered her mother's edict to go straight, so she walked on.

As Clancy approached the bed, she could see that her grandmother really wasn't herself today. Her hands, wrinkly and small on any other day, were large—perhaps swollen—and covered in hair. “Gran, I brought you some flowers,” she ventured. Grandma just looked at her with wide eyes. Grandmother's bonnet, too, looked stretched, and two lumps protruded on the sides. When Clancy reached the bedside, her grandmother suddenly smile a wide, toothy grin that Clancy had never seen on her nearly toothless old grandma; she exclaimed, “Grandma, what big teeth you have!”

As she neared her Grandmother's house, Clancy paused for a moment to loosen her red cape. She was quite warm from the walk and needed to cool down. She put down her basket and started to undo the lace at the neck, when a thick, growling voice interrupted her. “Where are you off to this fine day?”

Grandma was setting the table when she heard a knock on the door. It wasn't like Clancy to be early, but she figured her granddaughter had perhaps left early because it was so nice out. No sooner had she opened the door than she found herself surrounded by giant teeth.

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“Oh!” said Clancy, “I’m off to see my grandmother.” She’d been taken off guard by the hairy creature that had silently emerged only a few feet from her. “I’d better get going though.” She grabbed the basket and started to walk on, but the creature said. “Oh really? How nice. I’m sure she’d love some of these flowers.”

“Well, yes, I had thought that, too, but I promised I’d...”

“Oh, it’ll just take a minute and no one would know. I bet your granny would love them.” At this, the creature wiped some drool from his lip and blinked hard.

“Maybe just a few then.”

When the cottage door burst open, Wolf was still trying to get the grandmothers tight nightgown over his bulging gut. He knew he was done for when he looked up to see the man and the axe coming straight towards him. He had one final thought as the blade split his belly, and little girl and her grandmother emerged from the gaping hole left by the axe:

*I should have chewed my food...*

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Half-Hanged Mary Analysis Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Answer each question as completely as possible, **using text** to support your answer.

**7 pm**

1. What is the speaker's tone toward being accused? How do you know?

**8 pm**

2. List two similes and two metaphors in this section. What effect did the author intend for these examples of figurative language to have?

Simile #1:

Effect of Simile #1

Simile #2:

Effect of Simile #2:

Metaphor #1:

Effect of Metaphor #1:

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Metaphor #2:

Effect of Metaphor #2:

3. How is the structure of this section different from the previous one? Why might the author have made that choice?

**9 pm**

4. What is the speaker's tone toward the women of the village in this town? Give at least two examples of lines that help you understand this.

**10 pm**

5. What is the speaker's relationship with God? Give examples of lines that help you know this.



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**2 am**

9. What motif is repeated at the end of this section?

10. How has the speaker's conversation with God changed in this section?

**3 am**

11. What do you notice about the structure of this section? How is it different from all the other sections in this poem?

12. What is the author's intended effect? How does this choice influence the pathos of this section?

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**6 am**

13. In the third stanza of this section, there is a simile. What is the speaker saying about how this experience has transformed her?

**8 am**

14. What allusion is in the first stanza of this section? What purpose does it serve?
15. At the end of this section, she says “Before, I was not a witch. But now I am one.” What are two possible meanings for these lines?

**Later**

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16. How has the speaker's relationship with God changed?

17. What is life like for the speaker now? Give two examples of lines that help you understand this.

I Have a Time Machine

BY BRENDA SHAUGHNESSY

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But unfortunately it can only travel into the future  
at a rate of one second per second,

which seems slow to the physicists and to the grant  
committees and even to me.

But I manage to get there, time after time, to the next  
moment and to the next.

Thing is, I can't turn it off. I keep zipping ahead—  
well not *zipping*—And if I try

to get out of this time machine, open the latch,  
I'll fall into space, unconscious,

then desiccated! And I'm pretty sure I'm afraid of that.  
So I stay inside.

There's a window, though. It shows the past.  
It's like a television or fish tank.

But it's never live; it's always over. The fish swim  
in backward circles.

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Sometimes it's like a rearview mirror, another chance  
to see what I'm leaving behind,

and sometimes like blackout, all that time  
wasted sleeping.

Myself age eight, whole head burnt with embarrassment  
at having lost a library book.

Myself lurking in a candled corner expecting  
to be found charming.

Me holding a rose though I want to put it down  
so I can smoke.

Me exploding at my mother who explodes at me  
because the explosion

of some dark star all the way back struck hard  
at mother's mother's mother.

I turn away from the window, anticipating a blow.

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I thought I'd find myself

an old woman by now, traveling so light in time.

But I haven't gotten far at all.

Strange not to be able to pick up the pace as I'd like;

the past is so horribly fast.

Brenda Shaughnessy, "I Have a Time Machine" from *So Much Synth*. Copyright © 2016 by Brenda Shaughnessy. Reprinted by permission of Copper Canyon Press, [www.coppercanyonpress.org](http://www.coppercanyonpress.org).

Source: *So Much Synth* (Copper Canyon Press, 2016)





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8. What is the author's intended effect? How does this choice influence the pathos of this section?

## HALF-HANGED MARY

*("Half-hanged Mary" was Mary Webster, who was accused of witchcraft in the 1680's in a Puritan town in Massachusetts and hanged from a tree - where, according to one of the several surviving accounts, she was left all night. It is known that when she was cut down she was still alive, since she lived for another fourteen years.)*

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7pm

Rumour was loose in the air  
hunting for some neck to land on.  
I was milking the cow,  
the barn door open to the sunset.

I didn't feel the aimed word hit  
and go in like a soft bullet.  
I didn't feel the smashed flesh  
closing over it like water  
over a thrown stone.

I was hanged for living alone  
for having blue eyes and a sunburned skin,  
tattered skirts, few buttons,  
a weedy farm in my own name,  
and a surefire cure for warts;

Oh yes, and breasts,  
and a sweet pear hidden in my body.  
Whenever there's talk of demons  
these come in handy.

8pm

The rope was an improvisation.  
With time they'd have thought of axes.

1. What types of people were vulnerable to these kinds of charges during this period?

Up I go like a windfall in reverse,  
a blackened apple stuck back onto the tree.

Trussed hands, rag in my mouth,  
a flag raised to salute the moon,

old bone-faced goddess, old original,  
who once took blood in return for food.

The men of the town stalk homeward,  
excited by their show of hate,

their own evil turned inside out like a glove,  
and me wearing it.

9pm

The bonnets come to stare,  
the dark skirts also,  
the upturned faces in between,  
mouths closed so tight they're lipless.  
I can see down into their eyeholes  
and nostrils. I can see their fear.

You were my friend, you too.  
I cured your baby, Mrs.,  
and flushed yours out of you,  
Non-wife, to save your life.

Help me down? You don't dare.  
I might rub off on you,  
like soot or gossip. Birds  
of a feather burn together,  
though as a rule ravens are singular.

In a gathering like this one  
the safe place is the background,

2. Define "trussed".

3. How is she similar to a flag being raised?

4. Who are "the bonnets"? Why are they afraid?

5. What favors had she done for these women?

6. What could happen if they try to help her? What would "rub off"?

pretending you can't dance,  
the safe stance pointing a finger.

I understand. You can't spare  
anything, a hand, a piece of bread, a shawl  
against the cold,  
a good word. Lord  
knows there isn't much  
to go around. You need it all.

10pm

Well God, now that I'm up here  
with maybe some time to kill  
away from the daily  
fingerwork, legwork, work  
at the hen level,  
we can continue our quarrel,  
the one about free will.

Is it my choice that I'm dangling  
like a turkey's wattles from this  
more than indifferent tree?  
If Nature is Your alphabet,  
what letter is this rope?

Does my twisting body spell out Grace?  
*I hurt, therefore I am.*  
Faith, Charity, and Hope  
are three dead angels  
falling like meteors or  
burning owls across  
the profound blank sky of Your face.

7. What are her  
feelings toward  
God right now?  
How do you  
know?

12 midnight

My throat is taut against the rope  
choking off words and air;  
I'm reduced to knotted muscle.  
Blood bulges in my skull,  
my clenched teeth hold it in;  
I bite down on despair

Death sits on my shoulder like a crow  
waiting for my squeezed beet  
of a heart to burst  
so he can eat my eyes

or like a judge  
muttering about sluts and punishment  
and licking his lips

or like a dark angel  
insidious in his glossy feathers  
whispering to me to be easy  
on myself. To breathe out finally.  
*Trust me*, he says, caressing  
me. *Why suffer?*

A temptation, to sink down  
into these definitions.  
To become a martyr in reverse,  
or food, or trash.

To give up my own words for myself,  
my own refusals.  
To give up knowing.  
To give up pain.  
To let go.

8. How is Death like  
a crow? A judge? A  
dark angel?

9. What is she trying  
to convince herself to  
do?

2am

Out of my mouth is coming, at some distance from me, a thin gnawing sound which you could confuse with prayer except that praying is not constrained.

Or is it, Lord?

Maybe it's more like being strangled than I once thought. Maybe it's a gasp for air, prayer.

Did those men at Pentecost want flames to shoot out of their heads? Did they ask to be tossed on the ground, gabbling like holy poultry, eyeballs bulging?

As mine are, as mine are.

There is only one prayer; it is not the knees in the clean nightgown on the hooked rug  
*I want this, I want that.*  
Oh far beyond.

Call it *Please*. Call it *Mercy*.

Call it *Not yet, not yet*,

as Heaven threatens to explode inwards in fire and shredded flesh, and the angels caw.

3am

Wind seethes in the leaves around me the tree exude night birds night birds yell inside my ears like stabbed hearts my heart stutters in my fluttering cloth body I dangle with strength going out of me the wind seethes

10. What two different kinds of prayers is she talking about? What is HER prayer?

11. Why is the wording here so deliberately awkward here? What is the poet trying to show us?

in my body tattering  
the words I clench  
my fists hold No  
talisman or silver disc my lungs  
flail as if drowning I call  
on you as witness I did  
no crime I was born I have borne I  
bear I will be born this is  
a crime I will not  
acknowledge leaves and wind  
hold onto me  
I will not give in

12. What does she see as her only crime? What is the significance of the repetition of the word "born/borne"?

6am

13. How long has she been hanging?

Sun comes up, huge and blaring,  
no longer a simile for God.  
Wrong address. I've been out there.

14. Why is the sun no longer a simile for God?

Time is relative, let me tell you  
I have lived a millennium.

I would like to say my hair turned white overnight, but it didn't.  
Instead it was my heart:  
bleached out like meat in water.

Also, I'm about three inches taller.  
This is what happens when you drift in space listening to the gospel of the red-hot stars.  
Pinpoints of infinity riddle my brain,  
a revelation of deafness.

At the end of my rope  
I testify to silence.  
Don't say I'm not grateful.

Most will have only one death.  
I will have two.

*8am*

When they came to harvest my corpse  
(open your mouth, close your eyes)  
cut my body from the rope,

surprise, surprise:  
I was still alive.

Tough luck, folks,  
I know the law:  
you can't execute me twice  
for the same thing. How nice.

I fell to the clover, breathed it in,  
and bared my teeth at them  
in a filthy grin.  
You can imagine how that went over.

Now I only need to look  
out at them through my sky-blue eyes.  
They see their own ill will  
staring them in the forehead  
and turn tail

Before, I was not a witch.  
But now I am one.

16. Why does she say this?

*Later*

My body of skin waxes and wanes  
around my true body,  
a tender nimbus.  
I skitter over the paths and fields

15. How might the  
townsfolk have felt when  
they found her still alive?

mumbling to myself like crazy,  
mouth full of juicy adjectives  
and purple berries.  
The townsfolk dive headfirst into the bushes  
to get out of my way.

17. How do the  
townsfolk feel about  
her now? Whv?

My first death orbits my head,  
an ambiguous nimbus,  
medallion of my ordeal.  
No one crosses that circle.

Having been hanged for something  
I never said,  
I can now say anything I can say.

18. How have things  
changed since her  
hanging? How has  
she changed? What  
is her mental state?

Holiness gleams on my dirty fingers,  
I eat flowers and dung,  
two forms of the same thing, I eat mice  
and give thanks, blasphemies  
gleam and burst in my wake  
like lovely bubbles.  
I speak in tongues,  
my audience is owls.

My audience is God,  
because who the hell else could understand me?  
Who else has been dead twice?

The words boil out of me,  
coil after coil of sinuous possibility.  
The cosmos unravels from my mouth,  
all fullness, all vacancy.

**By Margaret Atwood**