

English 12 First Peoples: Synthesis of Texts

Scale: 3

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 3. An attempt at synthesis is evident but the understanding of the texts is superficial and slightly flawed. There is little analysis.

Falling Song shows the natural world as having greater importance. This is obvious when “I gaped at a window shade dull sky, at a hollow city, and felt like I’d missed a parade I would have wanted to follow.” It talks about if given the chance, he would leave the city for a life with the birds, with nature, and with freedom. In the story freedom, the importance of the natural world is diluted by the importance of having her nephew home. This is nothing special though because any aunt would feel this way. “I want to cry, watching him from the corner of my eye as he bends and tries to pick up wood and then finally sits and pulls rocks to him slowly, making a fire circle. I just didn’t get the connection to nature in this story, like I did to Falling song. Falling song indicated how nature is the future, “I wanted to catch them riding, spots on the wake of the wind, marking the certain direction of their migration.

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Scale: 3

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 3 because the understanding is very limited and literal. Although the paper addresses both texts, analysis is simplistic.

I think that the story "Returning" shows the natural world as having greater importance than "Falling song".

In the story "Returning" the natural world is more of an importance because she travels by the river system, she doesn't like to stay in the town for a long time. She seems to be more comfortable in the nature than in civilization. As she remarks "We do not stay in town long. It makes me nervous. Automobiles, they are everywhere."

In the story "Falling song" shows that the natural world is important but "Returning" shows more. For instance "There was the sweet but reedy honking of geese coming down this morning." That states that the sound of the geese is enjoyed when they are flying over head.

In conclusion I believe that "Returning" shows more importance in the natural world than the poem "Falling song".

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Scale: 3

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 3 because although there is understanding, much of the content is personalized and the topic is barely addressed.

From the two passages “Falling Song” and “Returning” I believe “Returning” shows greater importance toward the natural world. I choose this story because it is a first nations based story and I believe as a first nations peoples, they have a better understanding of the land and environment than anybody of society. As First nations peoples, they had to literally live off the land and in the story “Returning” they mention that they have to camp along side the river and rely on the peices of wood they gather to keep them warm and to cook their food. Although the Poem “Falling Song” does mention the “honking of geese” and “rain over rush hour streets” it does not show great importance toward the natural world as “Returning” does.

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Scale: 4

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 4 because although references are present, they are limited. The conclusion demonstrates some synthesis, and the writing is organized and straightforward.

In this essay I shall be assessing which passage, "Falling Song" and "Returning", shows the natural world as having greater importance. "Returning" shows more importance because it seems more involved with the natural world.

In the story "Falling Song" the narrator is disgusted with the world, this is made clear when "with rain over rush hour streets, coming through like bells that celebrate". He seems spiteful and wants to get away when he remarks "I'd missed a parade I would have wanted to follow." The natural world has really no great importance.

In the story "Returning" there is a great deal of importance to the natural world. The narrator uses a canoe instead of driving an automobile. In fact she hates cars. She has a great understanding of the natural world when she remarks "We must cross the dusty roan that they travel upon before [she] can get to the river." She absolutely doesn't understand and doesn't want to about how the wemistikoshiws work. She also shows a great tie to the work when she remarks "I place a salted fish, on another some moosemeat and on a third, blueberries picked fresh from the bush."

Reading this stories shows how they're connected to the natural world, but when it comes to the modernized "new world" they don't know much and certainly don't want to start.

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Scale: 4

Comment:

This paper was awarded a low 4. The analysis of the texts is competent but literal and the understanding is clear. The writing is simplistic but adequate.

Both "Falling Song" and "Returning" show the natural world being important. "Falling Song" refers to geese during rush hour and how the narrator would like to follow them. The narrator also refers to the "window shade dull sky", as in the pollution the "hollow city" has created. The "hollow city" would refer to the city lacking life, which could be nature. In "Returning" the narrator referred to a boat being "a beast pulling up, smoke pouring out." She did not seem to like this boat, but she did enjoy paddling her canoe. In the town, the narrator felt nervous as there was automobiles everywhere and she was not used to them. In the town, she could smell the factory, and the burning wood covering up a decaying smell. Her nephew who had just gotten back from the war was not comfortable or at ease until they were far from town and the narrator was cooking meat. He could finally smell natural scents, and became content. In conclusion, I believe that "Returning" showed the natural world being more important. The characters seemed to place themselves within nature.

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Scale: 4

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 4 because although competent, it is heavily reliant on plot summary. Synthesis is apparent, and the writing is clear and straightforward.

The passage which shows the natural world as having greater importance would be “Returning”. The short story, “Returning” uses examples of how things from the natural world around us can help us when we are in need. “Falling Song” tells the reader of the migration of birds, but “Returning” has more examples which show the importance of nature and the world around us.

In “Returning”, the aunt uses her canoe to go get her nephew. This shows the reader she needs the river for transportation. Also, when the aunt must stop traveling for the day, she stops at a beach where she collects wood to make a fire. She collects materials from the environment around her and makes a teepee to stay in over night. The nephew, who’s on crutches, has a hard time walking in the sand so he can not help his aunt very much. The surroundings are what makes it easier and sometimes harder to get things together. They use a stick to put their meat on so they can roast it on the fire. All of the supplies they find and use are from the natural environment. The author is showing the reader the importance of the natural world.

In “Falling Song”, the only importance of the natural world that is represented is the migration of the birds. It tells the reader how birds must migrate south to a better climate and environment. Birds migrating south is a part of the natural world, but it is only one important factor.

Therefore, “Returning” displays the natural world as having greater importance. The use of supplies found in nature is represented in several ways throughout the short story, “Returning”. The poem “Falling Song” does not have enough examples to show the natural world as great importance. The author of “Returning” did a good job of displaying the uses that nature can have.

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Scale: 5

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 5 because there is clear evidence of synthesis and interpretation. The vocabulary is sophisticated and the writing is proficient.

The poem, "Falling Song" displays the importance of the natural world as being far greater than they literary prose, "Returning". Unlike "Returning", the narrator of "Falling Song" compares the restrictions of modern development to the freedom of the natural world. The poet creates the contrast between city life and nature in each stanza with vivid imagery and diction; the author of "Returning" creates a more one sided view that revolves around nature.

The poem expresses the need of freedom within the constraints of modernisation. The poet of "Falling Song" utilizes contrasts between the geese and the apartment to instill a trapped feeling. For example, "pushing up close to the sooty window pane" and "...waves floated them...". This allows for an ultimate understanding of the importance of the natural world and the effects of modernisation.

Unlike to the poem, "Returning" shows the importance of the natural world through a more direct approach. It expresses the importance through the character, Xavier who had returned from war very different. Xavier does not show a glimpse of who he was until the smell of the cooking moosemeat, despite all the familiar sights and sounds he experiences along the way.

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Scale: 5

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 5 because there is clear evidence of synthesis and the interpretation is sophisticated. The writing is organized and there is a strong voice.

Within the passages, “Falling Song” and “Returning” the Narrator shows a strong connection to nature. However, I believe that this connection is stronger in “Returning”.

In, “Returning”, the narrator is emotionally dependant on the natural world as shown by her discomfort in the city in paragraph 18. This creates a powerful sense of the importance of the natural world to the narrator. Also, in paragraphs 28 and 29 Nephew is ressurected in a sense by being reunited with nature. This theme of dependancy and comfort within a natural environment is emphasized throughout “Returning” by the descriptions of the narrator’s environment as well.

In the poem, “Falling Song”, this connection doesn’t present itself as strongly as in, “Returning”. As, “Falling Song” progresses, it is revealed that the narrator is isolated from nature, kept apart by the, “sooty window” in line seven. This window, in a sense, breaks the connection and leaves the narrator longing to return. Although the narrator is emotionally effected by the absence of a natural environment, the importance of nature is not as strong as in “Returning”.

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Scale: 5

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 5 because the analysis is sophisticated and strongly referenced. The paper gains momentum but the writing tends to be casual.

Both of these passages discuss nature but they do so in different ways. In the poem "Falling Song", the poet expresses his feelings towards the polluted state of the Earth. He describes the sky as "window shade dull sky", an obvious reference to the heavy smog many cities have obscuring their skies. I thought that the poet feels the "smog" and "soot" of our world is preventing him from following his dreams. This was the feeling I got from this line: "like I'd missed a parade I would have wanted to follow". This line also shows that the poet feels lost not only in the heavily polluted world of today but lost and out of place. For this reason, I feel, that "Returning" shows the natural world as having greater importance.

Nature is not the central idea the passage "Returning" is based upon but plays a large role throughout the passage. It is nature who helps re-kindle a relationship between an auntie and a nephew who seems traumatized by war. In this passage, whenever the author described the town, he uses words such as: "beast", "intimidated" and "decaying smell". These words all have bad connotations. Once the characters leave the town, the language the author uses becomes lighter, for example "shyly" and "starry night". As well, the main character Xavier finally talks once he and his auntie. In this way, the author portrays his view that nature has a healing quality that can bring people "back to life".

Although both passages discuss nature, "Falling" describes the poet's view that pollution has displaced the native people but "Returning" shows the healing powers nature has.

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Scale: 6

Comment:

This paper was awarded a 6. Although succinct, the thesis is clear and well-supported. The writing is sophisticated and engaging, and the synthesis is superior and thoughtful.

As dictated by supply and demand, the scarcer a resource, the higher it's value. To the narrator of "Falling Song" by Daniel David Moses nature is a very scarce resource indeed as she lives in city with "rush hour streets" and "sooty window panes". Even more, the visiting geese are such a welcome encounter with the natural world that their cries are described as "bells that celebrate". When they depart, you can feel the regret of the narrator as she exclaims that she has "missed a parade [she] would have wanted to follow." Sitting at a near opposite decision is the narrator of "Returning" by Joseph Boyden. Living constantly with nature does not lessen its value, but lessens recognition of it through constant exposure. The narrator is wary of industrialization, pointed out in the town when she thinks "It makes me nervous. Automobiles everywhere." It is clear when things such as "I feel better once... we are paddling away from town." are said that the natural world is being appreciated, but it does not seem to match the extreme wistfulness of "Falling Song":

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Scale: 6

Comment:

This is a superior 6 paper. The synthesis, analysis, writing, and vocabulary are all of the highest level.

The authors of both “Falling Song” and “Returning” deem the natural world to be important. However, whereas the former only alludes to this implicitly, “Returning” expresses nature both implicitly and explicitly. Therefore, it shows the natural world as being more important.

In “Falling Song”, the narrator employs the extended metaphor of comparing destiny to his natural surroundings. He imagines “the certain direction of [the geese’s] migration”, but the “mist kept [it] mysterious”. By relating destiny something he wishes to “catch... on the wake of wind”, with migrating geese, an aspect of nature, he demonstrates its importance to him. Furthermore, he compares the “sweet... honking of geese” to “bells that celebrate”, indicating that he celebrates the wonders of nature and its seasonal changes.

On the other hand, “Returning” explicitly refers to several aspects of nature, such as “winter ice”, “rocky shore”, etc. The numerous references to nature infers the narrator’s intimacy with the natural world, especially since “paddling away from the town” makes her feel better, more at one with her surroundings. In paragraphs 26-28, interspersed between the narrator’s the thoughts, describes the process of preparing a camp. Throughout this portion there is no mention of any machinery or industrialized materials – everything is hand-crafted and organic. This shows how much the narrator relies on nature for sustenance, and that parting from nature will make her “too nervous”, as she was while in town.

Overall, nature is in both compositions. “Falling Song” incorporates this most implicitly in its nature-destiny metaphor, whereas “Returning” mentions nature explicitly and the recurring aspects also amalgamate to portray a deeper theme. They show the narrator of the second piece to be completely dependent, familiar, and at one with nature because almost everything she does or mentions concerns the natural world. Therefore, the motif of the natural world plays a much larger part in “Returning” than it does in “Falling Song”

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Scale: 6

Comment:

This paper is an entry level 6. The synthesis is insightful and reflective. The writing is clear and the vocabulary is sophisticated. The paper reflects engagement with the texts.

In both “Falling Song” and “Returning”, the natural world is essential in having importance towards character development and cultural implications. It greatly affects change in atmosphere and sentiments, but also shows the significance of a more natural, organic environment. Nevertheless, this is more evident in “Returning”.

In “Falling”, an overall regretful mood is presented. In this passage, the narrator is trapped in surroundings where his fondness of nature and freedom is suppressed. The descriptions of “a hollow city”, “the sooty window”, and “a window shade sky” directly point out the blandness and greyness that surrounds him. The arrival of geese with their “sweet but reedy honking” in this detached environment gives the narrator a glimpse of hope, and arouses a sense of yearning. At the end, he is truly regretful of his current situation. In this way, the natural world sparks feelings of nostalgia and escape from a bleak artificial one.

The natural world carries a different purpose in the passage “Returning”. Its title is appropriate in that the character of Xavier has returned in many ways. First of all, he has returned to peace and safety following a dangerous and life-changing tenure in war. Next, he is also returning to his own people, culture and identity. Lastly, after enduring the pains and sacrifices of war, he has finally started to return to normalcy. Moreover, it is even more important in that his many recoverings seem to be triggered by reacquaintance with the natural world

As such, the natural world played a much more significant role in “Returning”, bringing a wounded, shattered First Nations soldier back towards a level of calm and security. The canoe represents anticipation to return home, and the many cultural items such as the teepee and moosemeat aided him along the way to recovery. Therefore, the natural world had a positive influence.