

English Composition VIII, IX, and X: Encomium, Invective, and Comparison Stages

Exercises for Descriptive Essays

By

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Composition Curriculum

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Progymnasmata: Stages Eight, Nine and Ten

Encomium, Invective, and Comparison

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Introduction: Encomium, Invective, and Comparison

The next three stages of the Progymnasmata, Encomium, Invective, and Comparison unlike the Common Topic will deal with particular subjects. These three continue to train the student in his ability to utilize and integrate heads of development or enthymemes and examples, that is, the general and the particular in communicating ideas as well as heads of purpose or modes of argument. As with the previous stages the following lesson plans are being offered tentatively in that though we have found them quite effective in teaching composition we know they will be revised as our understanding grows with time and experience.

As we shall see when we discuss Aphthonius' model to follow the exercises establish in the minds of the students categories for expression. Contrary to popular opinion a mastery of well-defined categories increases creativity rather than limits it. A mind without clear categories of expression is limited in its ability to communicate thoughts and emotion. Once mastered, the creative minds of the Rhetoric students will add, subtract, rearrange and modify the categories to suit the imaginations of the audiences they will engage in the future.

The particular subjects of the encomium are unlimited. People, animals, places, virtues, and objects are all fit categories for these three stages. Teachers may use the exercise form across the curriculum. For example, when teaching Gilbert's *On the Loadstone* an encomium on iron or a magnet can be assigned to evaluate the students' understanding of Gilbert's treatise. The same could be done for a proof in Geometry.

Aphthonius provides models for a person and a virtue in his curriculum. We must therefore be creative in our application of his categories for other particulars. How do we express the ancestry of an animal verses the animals parents? How do we articulate the education of iron? The following lessons provide both general suggestions and specific examples from students and others for tackling these categories.

As always, repetition is critical and the more essays written the better. Having teachers assign regular essays apart from the composition class provides enormous benefits. Such assignments presuppose that each faculty member is familiar with the exercises. Teachers as well as students must be trained in the exercises. For teachers such training makes essay assignments doable in the sense that their grading of their student's writing contains objective criteria know and understood by all parties. If a teacher knows objectively what should be included in a good essay the teacher may with confidence grade and essay quickly and accurately. Without objective criteria grading becomes wholly subjective, time consuming and difficult.

There are nine lessons per stage but if students are writing essays for subjects other than composition these three stages might well be mastered in a semester—eighteen weeks rather than twenty seven. Figures of description continue to be emphasized and a weekly variation exercise is incorporated again into the lessons. Both of these skills will be heavily drawn in Rhetoric, especially as the students develop the skill of extemporaneous speaking.

Definition of terms

Action—corresponds to the narrative question “what?”

Agent—corresponds to the narrative question “who?”

Analogy—resemblance of relations or attributes as a ground of reasoning. A figure identifying similarities found in dissimilar ideas.

Anecdote--a concise reminiscence aptly referring to some person. It is called anecdote [*chreia*] because it is useful [*chreiôdes*].

Cause—1) corresponds to the narrative question “why?” 2) a heading in the Chreia

"Chreia" (from the Greek *chreiodes*, "useful") is "a brief reminiscence referring to some person in a pithy form for the purpose of edification." It takes the form of an anecdote that reports either a saying, an edifying action, or both.

Clarity—a source of argument introduced in the Refutation stage and is renamed in Common Topic as a Head of Purpose labeled as Consequence.

Consequence--

Consistency-- a source of argument introduced in the Refutation stage and is renamed in Common Topic as a Head of Purpose labeled as Justice.

Converse—a form of words derived from another by the transposition of two antithetical members; a thing or action which is the exact opposite of another.

Copia--a full body or plethora of language which has been internalized and is, as a result, available to the writer.

Encomium—a formal expression of praise or the eighth stage of the progymnasmata..

Epilogue—the concluding part of an oration, speech, or written discourse, in which the speaker or writer sums up; any rhetorical conclusion to a speech; a summary. The concluding part of a literary work.

Example—a typical instance; a fact, etc. that forms a particular case of a principle, rule, state of things, or the like; a person or thing that illustrates a quality.

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Teaching Procedure

1. Read to the students Aphthonius' introduction. Explain these lessons are exercises and they are learning how to thoroughly praise a person, place, idea, animal, or object. This skill does not come naturally and must be taught through imitation and repetition. (see Page 10)
2. Define or explain any uncertain terms in Aphthonius' introduction. A complete understanding of the ideas will come as the students work through the exercises.
3. Determine if the students have any questions about meaning, first relative to vocabulary then as a whole. For unknown words ask the students to attempt a tentative definition from the context. Have excellent dictionaries available for the students to look up the uncertain words. Rarely tell them the meaning of a word. Possible vocabulary words would include contradict, provoke, inventing, absurd, contempt, and patron.
4. Review the brief biographical sketch of Thucydides—page 11.
5. Read through Aphthonius' model. Have one of the students paraphrase each paragraph orally. You may need to do this one sentence at a time. Note the paragraph by paragraph instructions below.
6. The following procedure will be used for each of the six heads identified by Aphthonius. Depending upon the class and the time devoted to composition this process could be done in a day or a week. Give each student a copy of the exercise outline for an Encomium on a Person. Read the first paragraph of Aphthonius' model on Thucydides and work through the following material with the students.

Prologue

The prologue is composed of four sentences. The first sentence utilizes two heads of purpose in a compound-complex sentence to argue for encomiums. Aphthonius uses first propriety or Honor and then Justice or consistency.

It is right (Honor) to honor those who have made useful discoveries for the good things they have provided, and to refer what they have brought to light back justly (Justice) to those who disclosed it.

The second sentence is the thesis sentence in which the purpose or intent of the essay is stated.

So I will praise Thucydides, choosing to honor him with his own eloquence.

The third sentence states the reason for praising Thucydides. Aristotle in the Rhetoric lists the following seven categories for heightening the praise of an encomium:

“There are also, many useful ways of heightening the effect of praise. We must, for instance point out that a man is the only one [1], or the first [2], or almost the only one [3] who has done something, or that he has done it better than any one else [4]; all these distinctions are honorable. And we must, further, make much of the particular season and occasion of an action, arguing that we could hardly have looked for it just then [5]. If a man has often achieved the same success, we must mention this; that is a strong point; he himself, and not luck, will then be given the credit [6]. So, too, if it is on his account that observances have been devised and instituted to encourage or honor such achievements as his own [7]: thus we may praise Hippolochus¹ because the first encomium ever made was for him, or Harmodius and Aristogeiton² because their statues were the first to be put up in the market-place. And we may censure bad men for the opposite reason.”³

Here we see that Aphthonius has chosen to heighten Thucydides' praise by citing the fourth effect of someone doing something better than anyone else. These seven may not be the only ways to heighten praise but they give the students sufficient categories or tools with which to write effective encomiums.

It is a noble thing to honor all discoverers, but Thucydides above the rest, just as he discovered the finest thing of all.

The fourth sentence states the good discovered by or attributed to Thucydides, which is eloquence, with another heightening of praise, again the fourth listed by Aristotle of someone (in this case something) doing something better than anyone else, and a paraphrase or restatement of the preceding sentence linking Thucydides directly with eloquence. For the exercises we will list in the student's outline the seven categories given by Aristotle and require four sentences in the prologue.

For it is not possible to find anything in existence superior to eloquence, nor to find anyone more skilled in eloquence than Thucydides.

7. We will repeat this process with each of the following heads identified by Aphthonius.

Birth, Source, or Origin

These four categories relate to either enthymemes (general demonstrations), Nation and Ancestors, or examples (particular demonstrations), Homeland and Parents. As we

¹ The editor notes “Of Hippolochus nothing is known.”

²⁶ The editor notes “Harmodius and Aristogeiton were famous tyrannicides. Their attempt to kill the sons of Peisistratus in 514 B.C. only partly succeeded. Cp. Aristotle, Politics, viii 10.”

³⁶ The Rhetoric, Book One, Chapter nine, lines 10ff,

mentioned in the Chreia/Maxim stages Aristotle states that enthymemes and their counterpart examples constitute the “substance of rhetorical persuasion.”⁴

This section is, again a single paragraph, composed of three sentences. The first sentence is an enthymeme or general demonstration and refers to Greece at large.

Nation: *Thucydides came from a land which gave him both life and art; for he was born in the very same place as eloquence.*

The second sentence combines both Homeland (particular) and Ancestors (general)

Homeland: *Though Athens the mother of his life,*

Ancestors: *he had kings as ancestors and his fortunes were enhanced by his ancestry.*

The third sentence refers back to ancestry and then completes the section with a subtle implication of parents from whom he received his citizenship although his wealth we are reminded came from his ancestors.

Parents: *Possessing both powerful ancestry and citizenship of a democracy, he applied the advantage of each to the other's correction; he allowed equality of speech to correct the injustice of wealth while avoiding the poverty of a common citizen by virtue of his prosperous descent.*

We would certainly like to see our seventh and eighth graders displaying such subtleties and skills and we will challenge them to strive to emulate Aphthonius' model but at present we are giving them the option of writing four sentences for this paragraph.

8. The next head is education.

Education:

This section and paragraph is composed of three sentences each referring to one of the three heads. The first head of education, pursuits, here appears to seek superiority to others as an end. Interestingly enough the Athenians were considered arrogant and proud by the other Greek city-states, witnessed by Thucydides himself in his History of the Peloponnesian War.

Pursuits (Aspirations, passion, goal, intransitive in nature, that is reflecting upon itself):

⁴ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, Book One, Chapter one, line 15; and Book One, Chapter nine, l. 25ff

Coming of such stock, he was reared under a constitution and laws manifestly superior to others.

Art (Works, production, effects, expression, or the imitation of Pursuits, in the sense of Aristotle's definition of art as the imitation of nature)

Because he was able to live at once by arms and by eloquence, he aspired to combine in one person both culture and generalship; he neither divorced eloquence from arms nor set battles in the place of culture.

Custom (Effect on culture and environment, transitive in nature):

He made a single practice out of things of which there is no single art, uniting in one what is separate by nature.

9. As Aphthonius states the head of Achievements is the most important section in an Encomium.

Achievements:

Soul (Emotional and spiritual drives, motivations, desires, virtues and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

When he reached adulthood he sought an occasion to display the skills in which he had been well schooled before.

Body (Physical characteristics, actions, virtues and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

Fortune soon provided the war, and he made the deeds of all the Greeks his own art; he became custodian of what the war brought to pass. He did not allow time to conceal what each side did.

Fortune (Tangible actions, accomplishments and products). This paragraph is a particular narrative or demonstration much like an example paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

The capture of Plataea is known; the ravaging of Attica was published; the Athenians' voyage round the Peloponnese was made known. Naupactus witnessed sea-battles, and Thucydides by his writings prevented these things

from going unnoticed. The taking of Lesbos is spoken of to this day. There was a battle against the Ambraciots, and time has not stolen away the event. The Spartans' lawless judgment is not unknown. Sphacteria and Pylos, the Athenians' greatest achievement, is not unnoticed. The Corcyreans' address to the Athenian assembly; the Corinthians' reply to them; the charges laid by the Aeginetans when they came to Sparta; Archidamus' moderation at the assembly; Sthenalaidas' incitement to war; Pericles, too, discounting a Spartan embassy and restraining the Athenians' anger during the plague - these things are preserved for all time in Thucydides' writings.

10. Next work through Comparison.

Comparison

This paragraph is composed of three sentences. The first is an interrogative naming the person to be compared.

Will anyone compare Herodotus with him?

The second states the difference in the ends or purpose of their respective arts or products.

But the one narrates for pleasure, the other's utterances are all for truth.

The third compares the men in the form of an analogy.

To the degree that amusement is inferior to truthfulness, to that degree does Herodotus fall short of Thucydides' excellence.

11. And finally a brief Epilogue.

Epilogue

This final paragraph is a single sentence renaming the subject, Thucydides, and stating the encomium could go on for quite some time. Brevity in an epilogue is a delight to an audience!

There is much else that one could say about Thucydides, but the abundance of his praises precludes saying everything.

12. The first lesson will consist in a written paraphrase of the Thucydides model. Have the students write out the first three heads, prologue, origin and education the first night; and the remaining three: achievements, comparison and epilogue the second night.
13. For each new lesson the teacher can give the class several possible subjects and then brainstorm as a class for ideas or ways to develop each of the heads. The students should be able to brainstorm though an outline for a new subject in one class period

and have time to begin writing their outlines. Strongly encourage or even require the use of at least one figure of description in each paragraph. We have found that to give the students two days to write the exercises is a leisurely pace.

14. With the use of outlines, rough drafts should no longer be necessary. Peer grading can be used as it benefits both the student's editing ability and helps with the heavy time commitment required by the teacher to grade so many essays each week.
15. The fourth day return students read their essays in groups of two, a small group, or to the entire class depending upon time available. Time constraints may also require that a student orally present only a paragraph or two of his essay.
16. The teacher may assign the oral presentation grade or the audience may assign it. The students also work the variation exercise in class or it may be assigned as homework.
17. The fifth day should continue to be used to develop the variation skills so critical to the art of communication.

Grading Sheet for Invective

Student:

Invective Title:

Points

Prologue:

Heads of Purpose	____/5	
Development	____/5	
Total		____/10

Origin:

Nation	____/5	
Homeland	____/5	
Ancestor	____/5	
Parents	____/5	
Total		____/20

Education:

Pursuits	____/5	
Art	____/5	
Custom	____/5	
Total		____/15

Achievements:

Soul	____/10	
Body	____/10	
Fortune	____/10	
Total		____/30

Comparison:

Subject	_____	/5	
Comparison	_____	/5	
Total			_____/10

Epilogue: _____/5

Oral Presentation _____/10

Total _____/100

Comments:

- SP—spelling error
- Frag—sentence fragment
- RO—run on sentence
- O—(circled item) missing or incorrect punctuation
- IP—new paragraph needed
- DT—diction error

Lesson 1: Paraphrase of Encomium on Thucydides (Five days)

Goal: To equip each student with all the skills necessary to effectively communicate through written and oral composition and to prepare them for Rhetoric.

Purpose: To master the eighth stage of the Progymnasmata, Encomium, by learning, understanding and utilizing the eight steps of constructing this descriptive essay.

To review the skills mastered in Narrative, Fable, Chreia and Maxim, Refutation and Confirmation, and Common Topic.

Objectives:

- Students will discuss the Encomium and develop ideas for each paragraph.
- Students will develop a prologue paragraph with a thesis and two heads of purpose that set forth the matter at hand.
- Students will develop a paragraph that sets forth the birth of the subject using both general (enthymeme) and particular (example) categories.
- Students will develop a paragraph that sets forth the education of the subject using the categories of pursuits, art, and custom.
- Students will develop three paragraphs that set forth the achievements of the subject, the most important head of encomium, utilizing the categories of soul, body and fortune. Each will answer the six narrative questions.
- Students will develop a paragraph that compares the subject with another praiseworthy subject.
- Students will develop a brief epilogue to conclude the exercise.
- Students will practice their “copia” through variation drills.

Biographical sketch of Thucydides:

Aphthonius writes the following on Encomium:

Encomium⁵

Encomium is a discourse that expounds good attributes. It is so called because they sang in komai in old times, komai being a name for narrow lanes.

“Narrow lanes” emphasize the beauty, which can be created through the mastery of well-defined categories and the aid to creativity provided by narrow boundaries. Students must closely and accurately follow the outlines in order to master these boundaries or mental lanes. Once mastered they will, in their rhetoric years, be able with confidence and success to modify the forms to the needs of their audience.⁶

⁵ Malcolm Heath translator, Aphthonius’ words are italicized on this page.

⁶ Indented text are the author’s comments.

It differs from hymn and from praise in that the subjects of the hymn are gods, of the encomium mortals; and praise is brief, while encomium is artistically elaborated.

One may use encomium for persons and things, times and places, irrational creatures and in addition plants (persons: e.g., Demosthenes or Thucydides; things: e.g., justice or self-control; times: e.g., spring or summer; places: e.g., harbors or gardens; irrational creatures: e.g., horse or ox; plants: e.g., olive or vine); one may use encomium also both corporately and individually (corporately: e.g., all Athenians; individually: e.g., one Athenian). This is the division of encomium.

In other words the sky is the limit. The choice of topics within the above divisions in the following exercises will be left to the students with input from the teacher.

You will develop it under the following heads. You will have a prologue referring to the subject in hand. Then you will place birth, which you will divide into nation, homeland, ancestors, and parents. Then adduce education, which you will divide into pursuits, art, and customs. Then you will adduce the most important head of encomium, achievements, which you will divide into soul, body and fortune (soul: e.g., courage, practical wisdom; body: e.g., beauty, speed, strength; fortune: e.g., power, wealth, friends). After these the comparison, attaching greater weight to the subject of the encomium through juxtaposition. Then conclude with an epilogue, more akin to a prayer.

Aphthonius' model follows, then the model outlines and finally the outline of the encomium exercise form used in the lessons:

Here is Aphthonius Encomium on Thucydides:⁷

It is right to honor those who have made useful discoveries for the good things they have provided, and to refer what they have brought to light back justly to those who disclosed it. So I will praise Thucydides, choosing to honor him with his own eloquence. It is a noble thing to honor all discoverers, but Thucydides above the rest, just as he discovered the finest thing of all. For it is not possible to find anything in existence superior to eloquence, nor to find anyone more skilled in eloquence than Thucydides.

Thucydides came from a land which gave him both life and art; for he was born in the very same place as eloquence. Though Athens the mother of his life, he had kings as ancestors and his fortunes were enhanced by his ancestry. Possessing both powerful ancestry and citizenship of a democracy, he applied the advantage of each to the other's correction; he allowed equality of speech to correct the injustice of wealth while avoiding the poverty of a common citizen by virtue of his prosperous descent.

⁷ Heath writes: [Note: This treatment of Thucydides (written in a style that seeks to imitate his) naturally stresses his work as a historian, but also alludes to his distinguished family connections (including a Thracian king), his military service (naturally, the fact that he was exiled for losing Amphipolis to the Spartans is passed over in silence), his citizenship in a democracy and his wealth (the biographical tradition includes stories of financial malpractice - perhaps arising from a confusion with the politician Thucydides son of Melesias - which are, again, passed over).]

Coming of such stock, he was reared under a constitution and laws manifestly superior to others. Because he was able to live at once by arms and by eloquence, he aspired to combine in one person both culture and generalship; he neither divorced eloquence from arms nor set battles in the place of culture. He made a single practice out of things of which there is no single art, uniting in one what is separate by nature.

When he reached adulthood he sought an occasion to display the skills in which he had been well schooled before. Fortune soon provided the war, and he made the deeds of all the Greeks his own art; he became custodian of what the war brought to pass. he did not allow time to conceal what each side did. The capture of Plataea is known; the ravaging of Attica was published; the Athenians' voyage round the Peloponnese was made known. Naupactus witnessed sea-battles, and Thucydides by his writings prevented these things from going unnoticed. The taking of Lesbos is spoken of to this day. There was a battle against the Ambraciots, and time has not stolen away the event. The Spartans' lawless judgment is not unknown. Sphacteria and Pylos, the Athenians' greatest achievement, is not unnoticed. The Corcyreans' address to the Athenian assembly; the Corinthians' reply to them; the charges laid by the Aeginetans when they came to Sparta; Archidamus' moderation at the assembly; Sthenalaidas' incitement to war; Pericles, too, discounting a Spartan embassy and restraining the Athenians' anger during the plague - these things are preserved for all time in Thucydides' writings.

Will anyone compare Herodotus with him? But the one narrates for pleasure, the other's utterances are all for truth. To the degree that amusement is inferior to truthfulness, to that degree does Herodotus fall short of Thucydides' excellence.

There is much else that one could say about Thucydides, but the abundance of his praises precludes saying everything.

Day One (55 minutes): (Items one through six in the teaching procedure are reproduced here)

Read through the first paragraph of Aphthonius' model for the first lesson. For all following lessons point out the characteristics and requirements of the paragraph. Staying within the parameters of the model brainstorm other ideas, heads of purpose, that could have been used or developed in the exercise. The students are to paraphrase the first paragraphs using the outline in their workbooks. If time is available students may begin and even finish writing in class. This paragraphs are due the next day.

1. Read Aphthonius' introduction to the students. Explain these lessons are exercises and they are learning how to thoroughly praise a person, place, idea, animal, or object. This skill does not come naturally and must be taught through imitation and repetition. (see Page 10)
2. Define or explain any uncertain terms in Aphthonius' introduction. A complete understanding of the ideas will come as the students work through the exercises.
3. Determine if the students have any questions about meaning, first relative to vocabulary then as a whole. For unknown words ask the students to attempt a

tentative definition from the context. Have excellent dictionaries available for the students to look up the uncertain words. Rarely tell them the meaning of a word. Possible vocabulary words would include contradict, provoke, inventing, absurd, contempt, and patron.

4. Review the brief biographical sketch of Thucydides—see above and in student workbooks.
5. Read through the first paragraph in Aphthonius' model. Have one of the students paraphrase the paragraph orally. You may need to do this one sentence at a time. Note the paragraph by paragraph instructions below.
6. The following procedure will be used for each of the six heads identified by Aphthonius. Depending upon the class and the time devoted to composition this process could be done in less than the week given in the lesson.

Prologue

The prologue is composed of four sentences. The first sentence utilizes two heads of purpose in a compound-complex sentence to argue for encomiums. Aphthonius uses first propriety or Honor and then Justice or consistency.

It is right (Honor) to honor those who have made useful discoveries for the good things they have provided, and to refer what they have brought to light back justly (Justice) to those who disclosed it.

A paraphrase might look something like this: It is honorable to praise men who discover practical uses for the gifts they possess, and to consistently reflect the value of their discoveries back to the men who brought it to us.

Or: Even as men who discover practical uses for the gifts they possess are always praised by their communities (Consequence) so we should praise Thucydides. By such praise we encourage others to likewise seek new goods for our cities (Expedience).

The second sentence is the thesis sentence in which the purpose or intent of the essay is stated.

So I will praise Thucydides, choosing to honor him with his own eloquence.

A paraphrase might look something like this: So let us honor Thucydides with the very rhetorical eloquence he himself discovered.

Or: Let us now praise Thucydides to the utmost of our ability attempting always to imitate his skill.

The third sentence states the reason for praising Thucydides. Aristotle in the Rhetoric lists the following seven categories for heightening the praise of an encomium:

“There are also, many useful ways of heightening the effect of praise. We must, for instance point out that a man is the only one [1], or the first [2], or almost the only one [3] who has done something, or that he has done it better than any one else [4]; all these distinctions are honorable. And we must, further, make much of the particular season and occasion of an action, arguing that we could hardly have looked for it just then [5]. If a man has often achieved the same success, we must mention this; that is a strong point; he himself, and not luck, will then be given the credit [6]. So, too, if it is on his account that observances have been devised and instituted to encourage or honor such achievements as his own [7]: thus we may praise Hippolochus⁸ because the first encomium ever made was for him, or Harmodius and Aristogeiton⁹ because their statues were the first to be put up in the market-place. And we may censure bad men for the opposite reason.”¹⁰

Here we see that Aphthonius has chosen to heighten Thucydides' praise by citing the fourth effect of someone doing something better than anyone else. These seven may not be the only ways to heighten praise but they give the students sufficient categories or tools with which to write effective encomiums.

It is a noble thing to honor all discoverers, but Thucydides above the rest, just as he discovered the finest thing of all.

A paraphrase might look something like this: To praise inventors is a high duty, but Thucydides deserves praise above all others, for his invention towers above all other invention.

Or: Productive effort and creation always receive due acknowledgment and I will join with others in the praise of Thucydides whose invention is the source of all others.

The fourth sentence states the good discovered by or attributed to Thucydides, which is eloquence, with another heightening of praise, again the fourth listed by Aristotle of someone (in this case something) doing something better than anyone else, and a paraphrase or restatement of the preceding sentence linking Thucydides directly with eloquence. For the exercises we will list in the student's outline the seven categories given by Aristotle and require four sentences in the prologue.

For it is not possible to find anything in existence superior to eloquence, nor to find anyone more skilled in eloquence than Thucydides.

⁸ The editor notes “Of Hippolochus nothing is known.

⁹⁶ The editor notes “Harmodius and Aristogeiton were famous tyrannicides. Their attempt to kill the sons of Peisistratus in 514 B.C. only partly succeeded. Cp. Aristotle, Politics, viii 10.

¹⁰⁶ The Rhetoric, Book One, Chapter nine, lines 10ff,

A paraphrase might look something like this: Nothing among men can be discovered to be greater than pleasing, persuasive language, and no one among men can be discovered gifted in this manner than Thucydides.

Or: Men possess many useful skills and eloquence may be the greatest but none possess this great skill to the degree of the incomparable Thucydides.

We will repeat this process with each of the following heads identified by Aphthonius.

Day Two (55 minutes): (See items eleven through fourteen in the teaching procedure)

Have the students peer edit the first paragraph using the grading sheet and utilizing the error symbols. The editor must put his/her name on the grading sheet and will be graded for their effort and skill. Be available for questions

Read through the next paragraph of Aphthonius' model, which is the head: Birth, Source, or Origin. Point out the characteristics and requirements of each paragraph. Staying within the parameters of the model brainstorm both possible paraphrases and other ideas that might used or developed in the exercise. For homework the students are to paraphrase using the outline in their workbooks. If time is available students may begin and even finish writing in class. This paragraph is due the next day.

The four categories in this head relate to enthymemes (general demonstrations), Nation and Ancestors, or examples (particular demonstrations), Homeland and Parents. Developing an ease and facility with general and particular demonstration is fundamental to effective communication. As mentioned in the Chreia/Maxim stages Aristotle states that enthymemes and their counterpart examples constitute the "substance of rhetorical persuasion."¹¹

This section is, again a single paragraph, composed of three sentences. The first sentence is an enthymeme or general demonstration and refers to Greece at large.

Nation: _____ *Thucydides came from a land which gave him both life and art; for he was born in the very same place as eloquence.*

A paraphrase might look something like this: Thucydides grew up in a country that bestowed upon him the life of both his body and his soul; for rhetorical excellence came into being the very country in which he was born.

Or: The Greek peoples were responsible for Thucydides' accomplishments in life in that language and its effects were studied by this eloquent people.

The second sentence combines both Homeland (particular) and Ancestors (general)

Homeland: *Through Athens the mother of his life,*

Ancestors: *he had kings as ancestors and his fortunes were enhanced by his ancestry.*

A paraphrase might look something like this: Through Athens the originator of his existence he had monarchs as forebearers and his wealth was heightened by his for forebearers.

¹¹ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, Book One, Chapter one, line 15; and Book One, Chapter nine, l. 25ff

Or: He grew up in the city/state of Athens where his line could be traced to kings. He was wealthy but being descended from royalty multiplied his influence and art.

The third sentence refers back to ancestry and then completes the section with a subtle implication of parents from whom he received his citizenship although his wealth we are reminded came from his ancestors.

Parents: *Possessing both powerful ancestry and citizenship of a democracy, he applied the advantage of each to the other's correction; he allowed equality of speech to correct the injustice of wealth while avoiding the poverty of a common citizen by virtue of his prosperous descent.*

A paraphrase might look something like this: He was blessed with influential forebearers and the right of suffrage in a democracy, he used the good in each to improve their weaknesses; he used the principle of one man one vote to avoid the pitfalls of wealth's privilege while not being hindered by ignorance brought on by poverty through using his wealth wisely.

Or: Being both wealthy and egalitarian allowed him to achieve great education without becoming elitist.

We would certainly like to see our seventh and eighth graders displaying such subtleties and skills and we will challenge them to strive to emulate Aphthonius' model but at present we are giving them the option of writing four sentences for this paragraph.

The next head is education.

Day Three (55 minutes):

Have the students peer edit the paragraph written yesterday using the grading sheet and utilizing the error symbols. The editor must put his/her name on the grading sheet and will be graded for their effort and skill. Be available for questions.

This section and paragraph is composed of three sentences each referring to one of the three heads. The first head of education, pursuits, here appears to seek superiority to others as an end. Interestingly enough the Athenians were considered arrogant and proud by the other Greek city-states witnessed by Thucydides himself in his History of the Peloponnesian War.

Education:

Pursuits (Aspirations, passion, goal, intransitive in nature, that is reflecting upon itself):

Coming of such stock, he was reared under a constitution and laws manifestly superior to others.

A paraphrase might look something like this: Being raised on such a foundation, he grew up under a free government and political statutes obviously greater than any others of his time.

Or: With the political legacy of his forefathers he received a unique body of knowledge unlike any other in the ancient world.

Art (Works, production, effects, expression, or the imitation of Pursuits, in the sense of Aristotle's definition of art as the imitation of nature)

Because he was able to live at once by arms and by eloquence, he aspired to combine in one person both culture and generalship; he neither divorced eloquence from arms nor set battles in the place of culture.

A paraphrase might look something like this: Being a man of war as well as of the pen, he sought to form in himself a melding of civilization and battle; he refused to sever the pen from the sword nor put war in place of civilization.

Or: Because he was a man with two unique and separate gifts, both of which he loved and cherished, he desired to make a living using both; he would seek a career that combined the literary with the military.

Custom (Effect on culture and environment, transitive in nature):

He made a single practice out of things of which there is no single art, uniting in one what is separate by nature.

A paraphrase might look something like this: He created a single market out of products which before had been two separate categories, combining into a single art what was divided by experience.

Or: Never before in the history of man had his two gifts of authorship and generalship been united, but he was able to do so and thus create a wholly new art.

Day Four (55 minutes):

(30 minutes suggested): Using the following sentence, or one of your choice, the students will vary using figures of speech (see Appendix B) and figures of description.

This man alone is subject to judgment for his past as well as for his present life.

Students must identify at the end of each varied sentence the figures they have used. Take the final ten minutes of this time and have the students exchange papers and review each other's variations (five minutes). Students may challenge individual varied sentences and judgment may be rendered by class consensus or by the teacher (five minutes). The student with the most sentences wins and their name is put on the Board until next week's contest.

(25 minutes suggested): Begin oral presentations of the exercise essay. The oral presentations will continue through Day Five. Depending on class size the entire class may have time to present each week. This situation is the ideal. With larger classes half may present one week and the other half the following week or the division may even need to be by thirds or quarters. Another possibility with large classes is to break up into several smaller groups. Students should be instructed to use the Oral Presentation Grading Guide (permission to make copies granted) or at least the headings of the guide. At this point we are not teaching the art of Rhetoric as such and so we are more concerned with basic skills such as eye contact¹², ease of presentation, pace and annunciation, etc. than with the finer points of presentation. However, students should be encouraged to present from memory whenever courage allows and to rely as little as possible on the text.

As Aphthonius states the head of Achievements is the most important section in an Encomium.

Achievements:

Soul (Emotional and spiritual drives, motivations, desires, virtues and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

When he reached adulthood he sought an occasion to display the skills in which he had been well schooled before.

Agent (who) _____Thucydides_____

Action (what) _____Seeking to use his tools learned in his education_____

¹² The exception we make is with Scripture. God's written Word should be read without error and so total concentration should be utilized in any public reading. All attention, both speaker and audience, should be on the Scripture and, therefore, eye contact is unnecessary and may even be a distraction.

Time (when) _____After finishing School_____

Place (where) _____Athens_____

Manner (how) _____With eloquence and honor_____

Cause (why) _____To be useful and productive_____

A paraphrase might look something like this: Upon maturity he looked for an opportunity to use the tools which had been so wonderfully given him through his education.

Or: Because he had received such a marvelous education he immediately looked for ways in which to bring honor upon both himself and his community.

Body (Physical characteristics, actions, virtues and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

Fortune soon provided the war, and he made the deeds of all the Greeks his own art; he became custodian of what the war brought to pass. He did not allow time to conceal what each side did.

Agent (who) _____Thucydides, the Greeks_____

Action (what) _____Chronicling the war_____

Time (when) _____During the Peloponnesian War_____

Place (where) _____Throughout the Mediterranean_____

Manner (how) _____Through immediate eye witness accounts, both his own and others

Cause (why) _____To preserve the deeds of the Greeks in the war_____

A paraphrase might look something like this: Events brought about the conflict and the actions of the Greeks became his art; he recorded the events that occurred during the conflagration. He wrote immediately so that the passage of days would not cloud the action of the antagonists.

Or: The coming of war allowed him to use his gifts in combining eloquence with military action; he alone preserved the events created by armed conflict. He wrote about the events as they happened before they could be forgotten.

Fortune (Tangible actions, accomplishments and products). This paragraph is a particular narrative or demonstration much like an example paragraph in a Chreia. Students should check to see that all six narrative questions could be answered after they have finished the paragraph.

The capture of Plataea is known; the ravaging of Attica was published; the Athenians' voyage round the Peloponnese was made known. Naupactus witnessed sea-battles, and Thucydides by his writings prevented these things from going unnoticed. The taking of Lesbos is spoken of to this day. There was a battle against the Ambraciots, and time has not stolen away the event. The Spartans' lawless judgment is not unknown. Sphacteria and Pylos, the Athenians' greatest achievement, is not unnoticed. The Corcyreans' address to the Athenian assembly; the Corinthians' reply to them; the charges laid by the Aeginetans when they came to Sparta; Archidamus' moderation at the assembly; Sthenalidas' incitement to war; Pericles, too, discounting a Spartan embassy and restraining the Athenians' anger during the plague - these things are preserved for all time in Thucydides' writings.

Agent (who) _____ Thucydides and the Greeks who fought in the war _____

Action (what) _____ Preserving the significant events of the war _____

Time (when) _____ Throughout the war _____

Place (where) _____ Where ever war events took place _____

Manner (how) _____ Event by event _____

Cause (why) _____ To combine his talents in a unique way and bring himself and his civilization honor _____

A paraphrase might look something like this (*Because this is a listing of events offer only one example*):

The taking of Plataea is recorded; the pillage of Attica was revealed; the Athenians' sailing around the Peloponnese was recorded. Naupactus experience naval conflicts, and Thucydides by his eloquence kept these things from being forgotten. The capture of Lesbos is discussed in our own time. There was a skirmish against the Ambraciots, and the years have not destroyed the memory away the battle. The Spartans' decision made against the law stands for all to see. Sphacteria and Pylos, the Athenians' most glorious actions, is not forgotten. The Corcyreans' speech to the Athenian assembly; the Corinthians' response; the wrongs alleged by the Aeginetans when they traveled to Sparta; Archidamus' leadership at the assembly; Sthenalaidas' incitement to arms; Pericles, too, passing off a Spartan embassy and keeping in check the Athenians' anger during the plague – such events are recorded for all to see by Thucydides' pen.

Day Five (55 minutes): Next work through Comparison.

Comparison

This paragraph is composed of three sentences. The first is an interrogative naming the person to be compared.

Will anyone compare Herodotus with him?

A paraphrase might look something like this: Will any writer consider Herodotus in relation to Thucydides?

Or: No other man, not even Herodotus, may be laid side by side and win such a competition.

The second states the difference in the ends or purpose of their respective arts or products.

But the one narrates for pleasure, the other's utterances are all for truth.

A paraphrase might look something like this: Herodotus entertains but Thucydides instructs.

Or: Herodotus wrote to pass the time, the other to transport us to the heights of learning and profit.

The third compares the men in the form of an analogy.

To the degree that amusement is inferior to truthfulness, to that degree does Herodotus fall short of Thucydides' excellence.

A paraphrase might look something like this: To the heights that entertainment is inferior to instruction, to those heights does Herodotus fall short of Thucydides' excellence.

Or: To the level that leisure is below to learning, to that level does Herodotus sink below that of Thucydides' eloquence.

And finally a brief Epilogue.

Epilogue

This final paragraph is a single sentence renaming the subject, Thucydides, and stating the encomium could go on for quite some time. Brevity in an epilogue is a delight to an audience!

There is much else that one could say about Thucydides, but the abundance of his praises precludes saying everything.

A paraphrase might look something like this: One might speak forever about Thucydides, but the cornucopia of his honors limits speaking all.

Or: Volumes might be written but time limits our encomium to the above.

A student worksheet follows which is replicated in the student workbooks:

Prologue

Develop two heads of purpose for an opening sentence.

Develop a thesis sentence in which the purpose or intent of the essay is stated.

States the reason for praising Thucydides. Choose one of the seven categories for heightening the praise of an encomium:

1. Point out that a man is the only one who has done something.
2. Or the first who has done something.
3. Or almost the only one who has done something.
4. Or that he has done it better than any one else.
5. Or make much of the particular season and occasion of an action, arguing that we could hardly have looked for it just then.
6. If a man has often achieved the same success, we must mention this; that is a strong point; he himself, and not luck, will then be given the credit.
7. So, too, if it is on his account that observances have been devised and instituted to encourage or honor such achievements as his own.

States the good discovered by or attributed to your subject and heighten its praise with one of the above categories and then link the good with your subject.

Birth, Source, or Origin

Nation (General):

Homeland (Particular):

Ancestors (General):

Parents (Particular):

Education:

Pursuits (Aspirations, passion, goal, intransitive in nature, that is reflecting upon itself):

Art (Works, production, effects, expression, imitation of Pursuits, that is, Aristotle defined art as the imitation of nature)

Custom (Effect on culture and environment, transitive in nature):

Achievements:

Soul (Emotional and spiritual drives, motivations, desires and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Check that all six narrative questions could be answered after completion of the paragraph.

Agent (who) _____

Action (what) _____

Time (when) _____

Place (where) _____

Manner (how) _____

Cause (why) _____

Body (Physical characteristics, actions, virtues and qualities). This paragraph is a general narrative or demonstration much like a cause paragraph in a Chreia. Check that all six narrative questions could be answered after completion of the paragraph.

Agent (who) _____

Action (what) _____

Time (when) _____

Place (where) _____

Manner (how) _____

Cause (why) _____

Fortune (Tangible actions, accomplishments and products). This paragraph is a particular narrative or demonstration much like an example paragraph in a Chreia. Check that all six narrative questions could be answered after completion of the paragraph.

Agent (who) _____

Action (what) _____

Time (when) _____

Place (where) _____

Manner (how) _____

Cause (why) _____

Comparison

Develop an interrogative naming a person to be compared with your subject.

States the difference in the ends or purpose of their respective arts or products.

Compares the men in the form of an analogy.

Epilogue

Rename the subject, Thucydides, and state the encomium could go on for quite some time. Brevity in an epilogue is a delight to an audience!

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