

Exemplification Essay Pattern

Brent Staples

“Just Walk On By: A Black Man Ponders His Power to Alter Public Space” p. 240

1. What is Staples intentions opening the essay with such a statement?
2. Who is his audience? What is his tone: formal or informal?
3. What techniques does he use to increase suspense in the opening paragraph?
4. The second paragraph states: “It was in the echo of that terrified woman’s footfalls that I first began to know the unwieldy inheritance I’d come into—the ability to alter public space in ugly ways”(241).
What does he mean he has the ability to alter public space?
5. What qualifies this as an exemplification essay? Cite some of his examples.
What type of examples does he use primarily?
6. What is his topic sentence to this essay?
7. What organizational arrangement is he using in this essay?
8. In what manner does paragraph 5 lend support to his observations?
9. Often Staples resorts to figurative language and elaborate descriptions:
“discrete, uninflamatory distance between us” (1)
“a vast, unnerving gulf” (2)
“language of fear” (3)
What purpose does such phrases achieve?
10. Why do you think he ended the essay with specific classical music references?
As examples what points do these prove?
11. Why use the analogy of the bear and a hiker if his main topic deals with the streets of Chicago and New York City?

discussion