

Let Me Help You

# Sell Your Homework

12-Week Course of Study:

*24 Ways to Write  
What You Think*

*Lesson 5*

**MUSIC RECITAL REVIEWS  
ARTICLES THAT INSTRUCT  
ARTICLES OF COMMENT**

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# A MUSIC RECITAL REVIEW WHEN YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR OWN IMPRESSION

**The tone deaf and the musically uninformed should pass this chapter by. Music critics should know their music—especially if they expect the public to trust their viewpoint.**

But one can, by using the vocabulary of the critic and by paying unusually close attention to details, pull off a reasonably good short piece about a concert.

And by being sure to get in the “who-what-where-when-how-wow” structure, one might be thought quite competent.

In a sense, this lesson must come off as tongue-in-cheek. The author was a music theory major in college. He knows that critical authority comes from years of study. Yet, for the sake of this book, there is a

method by which one may become an instant expert—at least in appearance.

The method? Use the vocabulary of the critic. Sprinkle these words across your salad and you may yet persuade a gourmet editor that you know your way around the kitchen.

The vocabulary?

**Accelerando finish**—gradually accelerating in tempo at the end.

**Accompaniment**—if your soloist is accompanied by an instrument or orchestra, pay attention and mention that performance too.

**Acoustics**—sometimes reference to the effect of the sound produced in an enclosed place will have significance.

**Amateurish**—on occasion, an artist is inept. Say so.

**Ardor**—warmth, intensity, passion.

**Atmosphere**—the predominant tone or mood of the work.

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**Atonal**—it sounds as if it has no key, no home base. It's written in all keys. It's totally incapable of ever having an "Amen" appear at the end.

**Attack**—soloists attack their instrument when they play it with confidence and vigor.

**Austere**—plain, severe, somber, simple or with no frills.

**Authority**—an expert is at work. He knows what he's doing and how it should be done. He plays with authority.

**Balance**—when more than one person or instrument is performing, you want balance. When four hands are performing together, you want balance. You want to hear each, but you want to enjoy the communion of all.

**Baroque**—a style of music written from 1550 to 1700 that was elaborate, ornate, flamboyant in style.

**Bombastic**—when the guy puts on a lot of show and pounds or heaves. Sometimes this is called the "washboard technique" with the artist weaving and bobbing during the performance, coming nose-to-nose with the keyboard and then backing off at arm's length.

**Brassy**—showy.

**Breathtaking**—some performances are so astonishingly beautiful that there's nothing you can say—or write—except to say so.

**Broad**—the tone is grand; the low notes growl like a big organ; you can see the river pouring out to sea.

**Brooding**—where the artist plays or sings out of total sadness. You wonder why he doesn't go take a potty break and start over.

**Bubbling**—his fingers fly and the music sounds like dashing waterfalls.

**Cadenza**—where the artist pulls out all the stops to let-er-rip. It sounds like they're frantically searching for the right note. It's in there somewhere. Then they remember it's at home in a closet and they run lickety-split to get it.

**Cautious**—the performer can't decide if the water's too hot or if it might be too cold. He diddles around making up his mind when he could be doing something more constructive.

**Challenge**—what an artist faces when he has not practiced enough

**Chromatic**—where the music goes by half steps up the scale—or down.

**Clarity**—where the tone is clear and bright—not garbaged.

**Coda**—the shirt-tail at the end of the composition.

**Collaboration**—when two sing or play together and get their foot on home plate at the same time. Usually one has been wandering out in left field while the other has gone behind the bleachers for a hot dog and coke.

**Compensation**—the artist falls flat and then makes it up to you. Or you give him a roaring ovation and he sings his heart out. It's wherever there's a give-a-little/take-a-little.

**Complicated**—whatever you don't

understand, you call complicated.

**Consistency**—if he lives up to his billing, he's consistent.

**Contemplative**—if it sounds like he hasn't quite made up his mind, call it this.

**Contemporary**—up-to-date.

**Conviction**—this is what you play with or sing with if you know what you're doing.

**Counterpoint**—two melodies collaborating. A method of composition that sounds effortless but conforms to rigorous rules. The parts go their own way but still harmonize.

**Convulsive**—another way to describe the heavens.

**Creamy**—when the mixture is so rich you could spoon it on.

**Crisp**—when every note can be distinguished; when the music is cool and calculated.

**Delicate**—when the notes fall on the air like an Oregon mist.

**Dimensions**—the whole range of something—of musical feeling, of vocal or instrumental technique

**Discipline**—used of an artist who doesn't weave or bob, of a musician who controls his instrument whether it's his voice or his music-maker. Someone or something has been to obedience school.

**Dispossessed**—used of a maniac musician. We used to recite the immortal rime: "The bats in your belfry go flut, your comprenez-vous rope is cut. There's nobody home in the top

of your dome and your head's not a head, it's a nut." When a musician plays with such skill, he seems beside himself; he's both dispossessed and possessed.

**Dissonant**—when the music is sheer noise, harsh and unpleasant, full of bangs, thumps, burps and growls, the critic lifts an eyebrow and calls it "dissonant."

**Distilled**—music that is refined, reduced to its essence in beauty.

**Distinguished**—used of a musician or a performance to set him/her/it apart as unusually worthy of note.

**Dominant**—music's strongest combination of sounds. Specifically, it's where the chord moves from *so* to *do*. It is the last tum-ta-dum of the bugler's taps. Subdominant is the "Amen" sound in music—the *fa* to *do*. It's the first line of "Here Comes the Bride." It is softer, less emphatic than *so/do* dominant.

**Dramatic**—striking in effect and emotional content. Almost anything can be dramatic: Appearance, Beauty, Coloration, Delivery, Entrance, Focus, Gravity . . . I've given you a-b-c-d-e-f-g. You can take it on to z.

**Dynamics**—variation in force or intensity of the sound.

**Elegant**—grace and refinement in appearance, movement, manner, style, sound, decoration, presentation.

**Ensemble**—a group of at least three supporting singers, musicians, dancers or actors who perform to-

gether to enhance the performance of one another.

**Evoke**—a sound or saying that calls something else to mind, like memories or mystery.

**Exaggeration**—this can be used positively or negatively. An artist can give a sound or performance greater than life. He can add to it a dimension it would never have on its own by the sheer power of his performance. Or he can overdo it.

**Exciting**—it arouses strong feelings in the listener.

**Exercise**—a succession of musical notes sung or played in sequence in order to increase one's skill. Some music sounds like nothing more than a lot of finger or vocal exercises.

**Expression**—when an artist makes the music talk.

**Exquisite**—the ultimate word of praise.

**Extravagant**—lavish, more than enough, unusually abundant.

**Exultant**—marked by great joy or jubilation. Describes an audience after a terrific performance.

**Fabric**—the substance of the musical work itself.

**Failure**—when things fall flat. There are times when critics must call a spade a spade.

**Fantasy**—the artist's creative imagination creates a new world.

**Feeling**—the emotional quality the artist lends to his own performance.

**Fingering**—the skill with which an

instrumentalist displays his technique.

**Floating**—to remain suspended.

**Fluency**—flowing effortlessly. When an artist knows his material so well, he is said to be fluent in it.

**Focus**—the essential meaning of a musical piece or what the artist is really trying to do up there.

**Forays**—as when an artist runs off wildly in all directions or when he makes a sudden attack on his music or instrument.

**Frills**—the tutti-frutti effects that color some pieces of music.

**Gifted**—when there's no other explanation for a good performance.

**Gimmickry**—(be sure to spell this one right) cheap tricks to make something look or sound showy.

**Gothic**—grotesque, dark, mysterious, desolate.

**Gusto**—vigorous enjoyment, zest.

**Haphazard**—careless.

**Harmonic**—relating to musical harmony as opposed to melody or rhythm. A piece's harmonies are its chord progressions.

**Hazy**—the artist has no clear interpretation of the composer's intent.

**Heroic**—larger than life.

**Histrionic**—a tiring, artificially dramatic or overly emotional performance. "Ho-hum. Won't this thing ever end?"

**Imbued**—sopping full of.

**Impinge**—to collide or strike one

against another. Used of the music rather than the audience.

**Impassioned**—filled with passion.

**Inflection**—using pitch and tone to speak an interesting musical language.

**Ingenuous**—straightforward, frank—no put-ons.

**Instinct**—the musician knows what's right and does what's right.

**Instrumentation**—the musical arrangement (orchestration) of the composition.

**Interpretation**—the musician's own explanation of the meaning of what he's in the act of singing or playing.

**Intonation**—a way of uttering tones while concentrating more on pitch than on vibrato; it can sound like a lost boy wailing in a cathedral.

**Jubilant**—a shout of joy like he's just scored the touchdown that won the game.

**Jugular**—large, flowing.

**Kinetic**—having parts that move as if they were hooked up to some kind of mechanism.

**Kinky**—odd, perverted, not normal.

**Lachrymose**—sorrowful, anguished, causing tears.

**Lyric, lyrical**—expressing emotion or deep feeling.

**Maturity**—full mastery of the medium.

**Melancholy**—sadness, thoughtful, gloomy.

**Melodic**—where the music line is unusually pleasant and singable.

**Moody**—gloomy, uneasy, changeable emotional states. A mood is a temporary state of mind or feeling.

**Momentum**—movement.

**Movement**—a self-contained section of a major composition; the motion of music through its harmonic parts.

**Musicianship**—a person's skill, insight and artistry in the performance of the music.

**Nuances**—subtle shades of variation in feeling or meaning.

**Orchestral**—relating to the orchestra.

**Orgy**—excessive indulgence.

**Ostentatious**—a lavish display for the purpose of impressing others.

**Overwhelmed**—overpowered.

**Paradoxical**—self-contradictory, unexpected and surprising because either out of character or not predicted.

**Pastoral**—relating to the countryside and therefore charmingly simple.

**Patterns**—repetitions of sounds in the same key or in a succession of keys.

**Percussive**—hit like a drum.

**Phrasing**—often a pause or a comma after a brief melodic expression as the artist interprets the lilt and flow of the music. Some musicians perform a string of notes. Others phrase it and make it speak—conversationally.

**Pizzicato**—playing by plucking the strings, not bowing them.

**Playfulness**—the music or the musician or both may express an unusually enjoyable, dancing kind of sound.

**Precise**—deliberate, exact, clear sounds or technique.

**Proficiency**—skill in performance.

**Profundities**—great depth of intellect, feeling or meaning.

**Proportions**—harmonious relationships in sound or significance.

**Propulsive**—a driving or propelling force as in “the tempos set by the music conductor seemed unduly propulsive at times.”

**Quiescent**—Inactive or still, dormant.

**Quirky**—like kinky.

**Rambling**—aimless, going nowhere, not showy or exciting.

**Raucous**—harsh, strident, a black-bird chorus, noisy, boisterous.

**Refined**—elegant, disciplined.

**Relationships**—the compatibility of sounds.

**Relaxed**—a performer at home on the stage; a performance where no tensions among performers are evident.

**Repertoire**—the bag of tricks the performer can draw from; all the songs he knows and is ready to perform.

**Repose**—poise, composure, tranquility; where all is at rest.

**Resolution**—when one note in a

discord lifts or drops into harmony and the tensions between the notes are resolved.

**Rhythmic**—a regular pattern formed by a series of notes of differing stress and duration.

**Rich**—mellow, broad, full-bodied sound.

**Riff**—a short rhythmic phrase constantly repeated.

**Riffle**—choppy, like water rushing over stones near the surface.

**Rococo**—the musical style that replaced the baroque period in music history. It is musical filigree and ornamentation rather than the broader baroque (bar-oke).

**Romantic**—a period in music history when classical correctness in form dropped out and was replaced by strong emotion, imagination and innovation.

**Ruminative**—thoughtful; where the musician plays with a musical thought by playing it frontwards, backwards, upside-down, inside out; contemplative.

**Satisfying**—where the competence of the performer justifies some sort of commendation, however slight.

**Score**—a written page of music; a tribute that says the performer made a hit with the audience.

**Searching**—a deep word, a probing word that says the music reached the depth of the soul. It might also suggest that the right notes are there somewhere, yes . . . somewhere.

**Sedentary**—staying in one area; used of sitting; not much action going on.

**Sensitive**—perceptive; a nice thing to say about a young artist who performs thoughtfully.

**Sensuous**—something that stimulates the senses; note, this does not mean sensual—that which stimulates the lusts. You can keep this straight by remembering that sensuous ends in “s” and that stands for “senses” while sensual ends in “l” and that stands for “lusts.”

**Showy**—flamboyant; ostentatious (which see).

**Shimmering**—to shine as with flickering lights; harp music shimmers; dazzling.

**Shrillness**—high pitched and piercing, sometimes used of a soprano gone flat.

**Sizzle**—to seethe with anger; a hissing sound; to sound like frying fat.

**Sluggish**—slow to respond to stimulation; an orchestra that drags its feet; an accompanist that lags behind the soloist.

**Smooth**—see broad.

**Sonorous**—producing a full, rich, deep sound; bass viols are sonorous and so, perhaps, are some vile basses.

**Sophistry**—a plausible but misleading argument.

**Spiritual**—used, again, of sensitive young artists; a religious folk song of black American origin.

**Static**—going nowhere.

**Suavity**—smoothly gracious;

bland; nice in a sophisticated kind of way.

**Subtle**—difficult to detect or analyze; not all that clear right off; capable of making fine distinctions or changes.

**Suffused**—to spread through or over with liquid, color or light.

**Tasteful**—proper; suitable to the occasion.

**Taut**—pulled tight; strained; tense.

**Technique**—essential skill.

**Tempestuous**—often used of stocky brunette sopranos with a flair for the dramatic.

**Tempo**—the speed at which the composition is to be played. Remember the old Burma Shave sign: “Angels who guard you while you drive usually retire at 65.”

**Textures**—see fabric; the grain of a composition.

**Thematic**—relating to the theme of the piece—the principal melody. Used if one melody or several melodies recur repeatedly.

**Timbre**—(pronounced *tamber*) the quality of a sound that distinguishes it from another sound of the same pitch and volume but made by a different sound box or instrument.

**Timeless**—of unchanging appeal.

**Tone**—a sound of distinct pitch, quality or duration.

**Tone deaf** is used of a person who can’t distinguish one tone from another.

**Towering**—a marvelous performance; a giant of musical power and skill.

**Traditional**—unchanged from the way it has always been.

**Transcendent**—surpassing all others of the same kind.

**Transmutational**—to change from one form, substance, state into another.

**Ululating**—howling, wailing or lamenting loudly. A high shrill sound punctuated by the rapid flipping on the tongue. Ethiopian women ululate when they celebrate someone's achievement of which they are proud.

**Unctuous**—marked by affected, exaggerated or insincere earnestness; a sop.

**Undulating**—to move in a smooth wavelike motion.

**Unpolished**—not ready to perform.

**Unsteady**—not ready to perform.

**Utterance**—a statement; a vocal expression.

**Virtuoso** (pl. virtuosi)—a musician with superb ability, technique or personal style.

**Vivid**—full of freshness and vigor; having bright colors; brilliant in the clarity of the performance.

**Vitality**—energy.

**Wailing**—what people do when they see the price of the ticket.

**Wealth**—richness of performance skills.

**Whirlwind**—a wound-up conductor; rushing through the performance.

**Wistful**—thoughtful; sensitive.

**Wooden**—stiff, methodical, lifeless.

**Worshipful**—inspiring.

**Youthful**—only nine years old and he can play like that!

**Zesty**—charming; spirited enjoyment; enthusiastic.

There you have from A to Z a vocabulary to help you write credible reviews of musical performances.

Let's look at some reviews to see how the critic has used these words:

**“Despite Mr. Petronne’s alert, energetic conducting, the orchestra played sluggishly and mingled choruses did not sing with requisite focus.”**

**“Miss Gogoluski had the wisdom not to distort Chopin’s delicately calculated movement with extravagant Romantic gestures. Secondly, she was sensitive both to the music’s hazy exteriors and to its pinpoint inner clarities.**

**“Wanda played all 64 etudes from memory, not an easy thing given the abrupt shifts in character between each. There was a scattering of minor lapses but none serious enough to disrupt the music.”**

**“The Lament’ proved a solemn,**

**impassioned utterance, stronger histrionically than musically.”**

**“Mr. Hairaloff’s music had a sweet melancholy. Mr. Pullatusky sang with feeling, although his tendency to break up the melodic line**

**with little gulps and sobs struck this listener as unduly lachrymose.”**

Sprinkle these words lightly. Too many will make you look foolish.

# **AN ARTICLE TO INSTRUCT WHEN YOU KNOW A TRUTH OTHERS NEED TO KNOW**

**One of the difficulties with opinion columns that instruct is that they sound didactic—as if a teacher is wagging her finger and pointing it at the reader.**

**Sometimes**, of course, this may be entirely necessary. Generally, the column will state its case and tell what must be done.

The following example from THE NEWS (Lynchburg, Va.) does just that. It begins with a simple sentence of fact. It gives the background of a situation the local city has found itself in. It tells what the city is trying to do about it and then it concludes that the public is responsible—as always—to pay the bill.

The subheads in parentheses did not appear in the original story. They were inserted here to show how the reporter organizes his material.

## **Thieving Kids Can Get Off Free**

**The General Assembly is composed primarily of lawyers. Each year they add hundreds of laws to the thousands already on the books. Virginians are subjected to thousands of state laws, thousands of federal laws, and hundreds, if not thousands, of local ordinances.**

(Cause of the Problem)

**It is understandable that these laws sometimes contradict each other. However, because the assembly is dominated by lawyers, who are assisted by committees of lawyers in writing laws, major contradictions should be avoided.**

**But they happen—as Staff Writer Michael Fuchs reported last Sunday. The result in this case:**

(Unexpected Result)

**Lynchburg—and Virginia—now**

find it all but impossible to prosecute some juveniles for shoplifting.

One state law says that “persons” may be immediately arrested on only two misdemeanor charges—shoplifting and assault and battery—if probable cause exists.

But another law says that juveniles never can be taken into immediate custody without a warrant—except in a few specific instances and shoplifting is not among them.

So, they can’t be taken into immediate custody for shoplifting.

(Baliles’ Attempt at Solution)

When this was called to the attention of city officials here, they queried Attorney General Gerald L. Baliles on the discrepancy. Baliles concluded that the law preventing juveniles from being taken into custody without a warrant takes precedence.

The Lynchburg Police Department has been quoted as saying it doesn’t expect any “problems” from Baliles’ ruling. That’s probably right. Baliles’ ruling, in fact, should make their job considerably easier. They won’t be called upon to arrest anywhere near as many juveniles for shoplifting as they have in years past—111 last year, nearly one every three days.

But our merchants surely will have problems—and mighty little protection.

(Correction Needed)

When the General Assembly convenes again next January, to add several hundred new laws to our books, perhaps it can be prevailed upon to correct this discrepancy.

If it does not, it will be making it easier for those juveniles so inclined to embark upon a life of crime.

(The Reason Why)

You know, of course, who pays for all that stolen merchandise, don’t you?

We, the customers who buy merchandise and who, instead of stealing it, pay for it. The cost of stolen merchandise is added to the prices we pay for the things we buy.

That little General Assembly snafu is going to add thousands of dollars to our total merchandise bill in our town—to make up for the losses incurred by shoplifting.

**Note that** the sentences in this article are short and the tone is matter-of-fact. The paragraphs are short. The writer refers to the reader as well as to “we” and “our.” He is able to write with authority because he understands the legislative system. He has facts to support his instruction—“Ill last year, nearly one every three days.”

And he makes the whole opinion piece personally relevant to his reader. He tells who essentially is paying the bill—and why!

Using the following news story, write an opinion piece to instruct the reader. Tell what's taking place here and why. Tell the reader what he should be thinking when he hears things like this.

If you can support your instruction with facts, do so.

You may know that fabrics don't last for two thousand years without showing signs of decay.

You might wish to tell the reader that faith in anything is not justifiable just because it's faith. Faith needs fact.

And then, again, you might not.

Whatever you say, write simply and directly. Summarize the incident that is generating your article. State an opinion. Then support it and bring the reader to a suitable conclusion.

## **Robe thought to be Christ's goes on display**

**ARGENTEUIL, France (AP) -A brown woolen tunic said to have been worn by Jesus Christ went on public display Saturday for the first time in 50 years to mark the Easter season.**

**The robe, which contains traces of human blood, will be displayed in a glass globe until April 23 and is expected to be viewed by 60,000 people.**

**"I really don't know why it's shown only every 50 years. It's just**

**the tradition," said the Rev. Marcel Guyard from the Basilica of Saint Denys in this northern Paris suburb, where the robe has been kept for nearly 1,200 years.**

**"We chose the Easter period for this showing because we thought it would remind people of Christ's love for mankind," Guyard said.**

**A 24-hour police guard will be posted in and around the basilica during the showing. The tunic was stolen last December and was mysteriously returned undamaged in February.**

**Guyard said the authenticity of the tunic has never been clearly established, but added the robe had "a priceless value to people of faith."**

**Some French Roman Catholic officials say the robe was worn by Jesus Christ before the crucifixion and that the garment ranks with the shroud of Turin in importance. The robe is said by some to have been the one for which Roman soldiers cast lots while Christ died on the cross.**

Write another one, using this article:

## **Man felt God told him to kill kidnapper**

**BATON ROUGE, La. (AP - Gary Plauche, who is charged with killing his son's karate instructor before**

the man could face kidnapping charges, was suffering from hallucinations and thought he was following instructions from God, his lawyer said Tuesday.

“Gary felt Christ was telling him that he had to commit this very grave act or it would happen to other children,” Attorney E. Foster Sanders said at a news conference. “He felt obliged. It was kind of like a divine mandate.”

Plauche, 39, remained free in a hospital under \$10,000 property bond. He was booked for second-degree murder in the shooting death of Jeffery Paul Doucet, 25, as Doucet was returned to Baton Rouge to face charges of kidnapping Plauche’s 12-year-old son, Jody.

The shooting, in which Plauche stepped from a phone booth and allegedly fired a single shot close to Doucet’s ear, was recorded by a television news crew at the Baton Rouge airport.

Doucet was arrested by FBI agents who raided an Anaheim, Calif., motel Feb. 29 and rescued Jody.

Doucet was buried Tuesday in Vinton, a southwest Louisiana community near the Texas border where he once lived.

Sanders, who called reporters to discuss new medical evaluations of Plauche, said a psychiatrist had confirmed that his client was suffer-

ing from delusions and was hearing things when he shot Doucet.

“Gary Plauche was preoccupied with a man’s sexual assaults on his son,” Sanders said. “In Gary Plauche’s mind, he had a single sense of mission—that was, he and only he should protect his family.”

My student, Deana Pfau, wrote her commentary on this article. It will be helpful to show it to you as an example of what you can do when you want to respond as she did to an article like this one.

Her purpose is to instruct.

When Gary Plauche stepped from an airport phone booth to kill his son’s arrested kidnapper, he thought he was following God’s mandate to rid society of a child molester.

His lawyer said that Plauche was “preoccupied with a man’s sexual assaults on his son” and that only he should protect his family.

Police had arrested Jeffrey Doucet for the kidnapping of 12-year-old Jody Plauche and were taking him to Baton Rouge to face charges. But Plauche obviously did not think that Doucet’s paying for the crime in jail would be enough.

Plauche certainly had reason to hate Doucet but he had no right to take his life, especially after Doucet had been brought to justice.

A psychiatrist confirmed that Plauche had experienced delusions

and was hearing things at the time of the shooting.

Perhaps Plauche heard the voice of his own hate, but he certainly didn't hear God's. God never commands us to disobey our own government when it already has the means for punishing criminals.

God would have preferred that Plauche help his son through a traumatic experience, not further jeopardize the boy's hope of recovery.

The evidence seems to confirm that

it is Plauche who needs more help than his son.

Analyze the angle Deanna Pfau took. She spent space retelling the news. Did she spend enough or too much? Is that good? Is that bad? What was her essential point? Did she spend enough time on it? These are questions you should ask of your own writing before you try to send it out to market.

# AN ARTICLE OF COMMENTS WHEN YOU WANT TO GIVE YOUR OPINION

**Things happen all the time  
that need commenting on.**

Take this article for an example:

## EX-PRESIDENT TURNED AWAY FROM RESTAURANT

**BOSTON (AP)—Former President Jimmy Carter was turned away from the dining room of the Copley Plaza hotel recently because he showed up for dinner in a cardigan sweater, according to a published report.**

**“He was really rather put out,” writer Norma Nathan quoted one unidentified witness as saying in today’s edition of the Boston Herald.**

**Nathan, who writes “The Eye” column for the Herald, said when Carter was turned away, the Secret**

**Service went into the Cafe Plaza and said, “That’s the president.”**

**“All the more reason he should wear a jacket,” Nathan quoted maitre d’ Ursula Stadt as saying. Nathan said Carter ate elsewhere.**

**“We never saw him after that,” said Alan Tremain, president of Hotels of Distinction, which runs the Copley. “And he never came back.”**

**Carter apparently was with his wife, Rosalynn, who was in town last week promoting her new book, “*First Lady from Plains*.”**

**You can approach this one from all sorts of angles.**

**Was the President right to wear a sweater to dinner in a free country?**

**Was he wrong?**

**Was the maitre d’ right?**

**Wrong?**

**What alternatives might each party have taken?**

Or both parties?

What did each gain from the confrontation?

There's lots to comment on and you're the one to do it.

**Again, write simply.** Tell what happened in summary form. Make comments that are unique. Don't write what everyone else would.

Think first.

Be original.

Be frank.

Be you!

Even though this is long after the fact and there is no audience for the writing you are doing for these lesson assignments, write as if you were going to mail each piece out. Make sure your spelling is correct and that your sentences are complete. Edit your prose so you use the least number of words you can to tell what you think.

What do you think about this next one? Comment, please.

## What anesthetized patients hear during surgery can affect recovery

N.Y. Times News Service

**NEW YORK - The banter of the operating room may have to be toned down, if new research on unconscious awareness in patients under total anesthesia is borne out.**

**Surgeons have taken their patients' oblivion as license for talking as though the patient were not there—even making remarks that**

**patients would find frightening if they heard.**

**But two research groups report that what anesthetized patients hear can affect them.**

**“What the patient hears—say, a remark like, ‘He’s a goner’—could conceivably have an adverse effect on his recovery,” says Henry Bennett, one of the researchers.**

**In one study, anesthetized patients heard a taped voice tell them during surgery they should signify having heard the message by touching their ears in a postoperative interview. Later, in the interview, the patients tugged at their ears, although none could recall having heard the message, nor were they particularly aware of touching their ears.**

**Dr. Bennett, a psychologist now at the University of California Medical School at Davis, reports that when patients were given the suggestion during surgery that one hand was becoming warmer and the other cooler, the hands' temperature did so.**

**This suggests, says Bennett, inadvertent negative remarks—such as “Holy Moses, this is a terrible bone graft”—could interfere with recovery.**

**Under anesthesia, “Patients may be more vulnerable to upsetting remarks they might hear,” Bennett says. “Their normal coping techniques aren't available, since they are drugged.”**

## What anesthetized patients hear during surgery can affect recovery

By Ron Starner, Liberty University

**As if doctors** did not already have enough to worry about, new research has just added another “bone” to surgery.

The latest research shows that what anesthetized patients hear during surgery can conceivably have an adverse effect upon their recovery. Anesthesia, reports show, suppresses normal, human coping techniques, thus making patients more vulnerable to upsetting remarks they might hear.

Technology may solve a lot of problems, but it also creates a few of its own. As people learn more via the advances of science, people have more to fear.

**In the ‘50s**, everyone feared communism. In the ‘60s, people feared war. In the ‘70s, we feared Watergate and government. And now, the technocratic decades of the 1980s and 90s and 00s have brought us a new object of fear: the “subliminal society.”

Thanks to breakthroughs in audio and visual technology, no longer is what you see or hear necessarily what you get.

It all began about five years ago when psychologists first warned us of the effects of secret messages in advertisements.

They told us to look for hidden words like “sex” inside the ice cubes

of the Vernor’s glass.

They told us to listen for the little jingles in Sears and K-Mart that secretly coerced us to buy things.

**Then, about two years later**, the recording industry got in on the act with “backmasking.”

Oh, of course, groups like Led Zepelin had been doing it for years, but it suddenly became the rage of the ‘80s.

And, now, researchers tell us we are not even safe during surgery.

All this brings us to today, a day when television, magazines, records and even doctors are flooding society with subliminal messages.

At least we still have the newspaper. But, then again, maybe we should read between the lines.

What do you think about this one?

## Inmates have movie parts

**PITTSBURGH (AP) - Forget doing laundry or making license plates. Inmate Larry Lindsay is spending part of his jail term in a more glamorous job—he’s landed a role in a Hollywood movie.**

**Lindsay, who is serving up to 10 months for burglary and criminal conspiracy, is one of 50 Allegheny County Jail inmates playing turn-of-the-century prisoners in “Mrs. Sof-fel,” an MGM movie being filmed in Pittsburgh.**

But the 24-year-old is already finding that celluloid fame has its price—he says his girlfriend doesn't like the haircut MGM required.

"She told me she wouldn't talk to me if I shaved my beard," he said, flashing a smooth chin. "I had a really long one, too."

MGM's instructions were that inmates had to cut their hair if it couldn't be hidden by a skullcap. Beards were forbidden, and mustaches—the longer the better were preferred.

Jail supervisor Edward Urban said he told the prisoners there would be some radical haircuts required when he asked for volunteers.

"But almost all 500 inmates signed up anyway," he said.

The movie, set in 1902, recounts the true story of a warden's wife who helped two Death Row prisoners escape from the same Allegheny County Jail complex.

Diane Keaton plays Mrs. Soffel and Mel Gibson plays Ed Biddle, one of the escapees.

Most of the film was shot in Ontario, Canada, earlier this year. But the production came to Pittsburgh for a week to film scenes that revolve around the century-old jail.

Lindsay and the other inmates will make their acting debuts on Monday and Tuesday, when the production goes inside the jail. This weekend most of the filming is be-

ing done outside, using the facility's high granite walls as a backdrop.

## Inmates have movie parts

Joella Knight, Liberty University

"Ladies and Gentlemen, this is Roy Roving of Channel 7 News. I'm standing in front of Allegheny County Jail where the filming of a movie is about to take place. Fifty of the inmates are taking time out of the laundry room this week to actually take part in an MGM film.

Let's talk to one of the men.

"Hello, sir, can you tell us just how you feel about all this attention?"

"Yeah, dis is great. I love it. I'm telling Mom to watch for the previews."

"Do you have any speaking parts?"

"Well, in one scene I get to slam down my tray and cuss at a guard. I'm good at cussin'."

"Yes, well--tell us, do you see this film as a highlight of your stay here?"

"Yeah, it's a lot better than unloading da underwear in dryer section B. That's what I do--unload da underwear."

"Very commendable. Ah.. ."

"I fold 'em, too. Do you know how hard it is to fold un--"

"Getting back to the point. Do you feel that by taking part in this film you are getting adequate punishment for your crime?"

“We don’t get adequate enough of nothin’ around here.”

“I see. What do you think about putting actors out of work? I mean, there are 50 law-abiding actors out there who are trying to get on screen and here all you guys did to be stars is rob a bank.”

“Oh, I robbed more than ONE. It takes a lot of work to get where I am.”

“Do you think you will pursue an acting career once you’re out of jail?”

“No, I thought I’d do a sequel from behind bars. Something to show the people just how bad we have it here.”

What can you write about this one?

## Owners report 75 yellow cats missing

**BRISTOL (AP) - The disappearance of a large number of yellow cats from this Virginia-Tennessee border city has pet owners and animal agencies bewildered.**

About 75 cases of missing felines have been reported in the past two weeks, said Anita Bowie, a volunteer with Pet Find, a lost-and-found animal registry service.

“Some of these reports have more than one cat missing, so we are talking about a lot of cats,” she said. “For every one cat reported missing, there are five or more that are not reported. For some reason people think they can’t get a cat back.”

While Pet Find has been inun-

dated with calls, the Bristol Humane Society reports receiving no calls about missing yellow cats, said a humane officer who asked not to be identified.

Herman Eller, the animal warden for the city of Bristol, Va., said he has received only two missing yellow cat reports.

Descriptions of the missing felines range from alley cats to registered Persians and include both long- and short-haired male and female.

Lester Hamilton said his cat, Tom, disappeared from his home about three weeks ago.

“He just didn’t come home one day, and we haven’t seen him since. He was a big cat . . . It’s just not like him to go off like that. He’s never been gone this long. I would be willing to pay somebody to get him back,” Hamilton said.

Tinker vanished from the home of Myra Jones in Bristol, Tenn., about 10 days ago, and his owner doesn’t believe the cat is coming back.

“He usually sticks pretty close to here. I doubt that we will get him back. He is real friendly and will go to anybody,” said Jones.

Polly Hagood, a volunteer with Pet Find and president of the Annual Defense League of nearby Washington County, said she was concerned about the missing felines.

“I honestly don’t have any idea, suggestion or suspicions on where

the cats are going. We're just concerned with the fact that they are going.

"We have had certain breeds of dogs disappear, but this is the first surge we have had on cats," she said.

Although they can offer no explanation, Hagood and Bowie are aware of what can happen to stolen pets.

"Pets can be resold, or they can be sold to fur markets and tanneries where they use the pelts as substitution for rabbit fur. They might even go to a laboratory for medical research or be used in occult rituals.

"People know this happens in large cities, but they don't think it can happen in quiet little Bristol. Unfortunately, it does. I'm not saying these cats have gone to any of these. These are just some of the things that people do with them," she said.

And this one:

## **Researchers Explode Self-Esteem Myth**

Uncritical praise of children has come under fire from the November 2001 issue of *Personality and Social Psychology Review* magazine.

Researchers found that acceptance of everything a child does inflates his ego and diminishes his achievements.

As educators have "dumbed down America" and lowered expectations during the last 30 years, they have raised what they call "positive reinforcement" that has given children the false idea that they can do whatever they want because they've been told they are "special."

Roy Baumeister from Case Western Reserve University found criminals are narcissists. They believe they deserve to have whatever they want.

"Scientific American" magazine (April 2001) published these findings in an article called, 'Violent Pride,' which further stated that violent criminals, gang members and spouse abusers all have high self-esteem.

Graduates are entering the work place addicted to entitlement not to achievement, the study found. When they cannot cope with harsh reality, some turn to anti-social behavior.

Bill Gates of Microsoft told students at Mt. Whitney High School (Visalia, CA), "The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself. Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself."

Notice that I've used a number of articles to show you that newspapers every day are printing articles on which you can comment. Whether you do it as a letter to the editor or as a longer commentary, that's up to you. If you can limit all you have to say to 250 words, then go with the letter to the editor.

If you have three or more points on which you wish to opine, write the longer article.

At the end of the last lesson in this series, I have included a list of newspapers with their addresses. For each state of the union I have listed four. For the provinces in Canada, I've listed one.

It is perfectly permissible for you to

send your one letter or article to all four of the newspapers in your state. You may send them to the newspapers in as many states as you want to spend the postage.

Include a self-addressed post card for them to indicate whether they will have a use for your piece. Tell them to file or destroy what you sent. It is cheaper for them to do that than to include postage for their return of your package. You can make a new copy on your word processor for a fraction of the cost.

In our next lesson, we will discuss advice columns, political articles and articles that correct.

Professor Dick