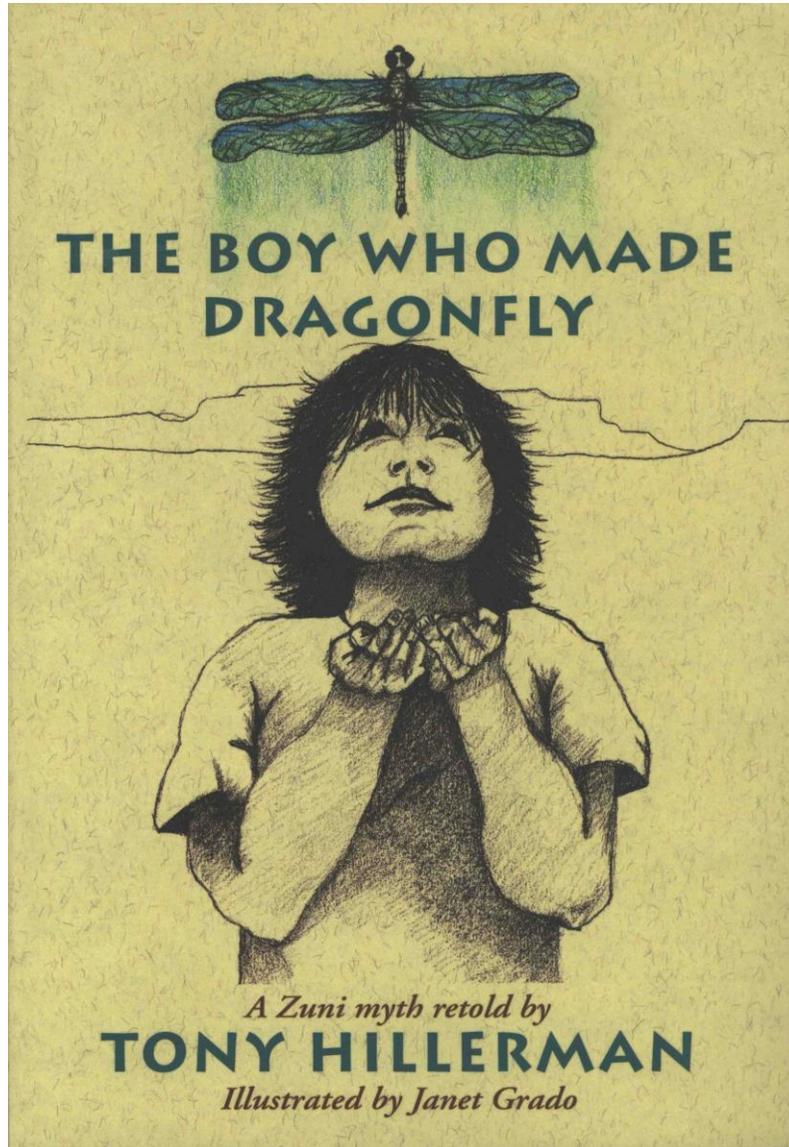


The Boy Who Made Dragonfly

Elementary School Level
Reading and Writing Assignments



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What is the Rhetorical Situation in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*?

Message: What is the message, or lesson, of the story?

Sender: Who is sending out the message of the story? How might the sender's biases and background affect the delivery of the story's message?

Context: How do cultural factors and their presentation influence the work?

Audience: Who is the target audience for this work? Be specific. Who is the person reading this story? What might the target audience's expectations, values, and attitudes be?

Purpose: What is the objective or goal of this work? Do you think the purpose was achieved? Why or why not?

Profile of a Place – Travel Writing Assignment

Tony Hillerman's *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

Length requirement: 1 paragraph - 1 page, plus an image (handwritten or word-processed)

Format: blurb

Purpose: To describe in detail a location

Audience: potential travelers to the Southwest

Situation:

A national travel magazine is holding their annual writing contest to source content for its upcoming feature on the Southwest. The editors are looking for brief, descriptive profiles of a variety of southwestern locations. The best pieces will be picked for publication and the top profile writer will win a monetary prize. Because you live in the Southwest and have some background knowledge, gained from reading *Dance Hall of the Dead* and using the eHillerman website, you have decided to enter the contest.

Content:

Having already discussed the primary elements of a literary story in class – setting, plot, characters, climax, resolution, etc., this short writing assignment takes a closer look at setting. There are several steps involved for this profile:

- First, you need to pick a place to profile. It can be any place name mentioned within the chapters of *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* that we have read in class.
- Next, you should think about what the place you are writing about looks like. Are you going to illustrate it yourself? If so, how? Do you have an image in mind that you've seen somewhere else? If so, where is it and how can you get a copy of it to use? Finally, how will you integrate your words with the image(s) you've decided to use?
- After you have learned a lot of information about the place you've chosen to profile, you need to organize it and pick an angle. What information do you want to focus on? What information about this location will be most interesting to readers and potential visitors? Is there anything that you feel like you absolutely NEED to include (ie. If you were writing about Albuquerque and didn't mention the Sandia Mountains, would residents/travelers think that was suspicious or weird)?
- The last step is writing! Be sure to think about and answer the following questions about your chosen location:
 - What is there to see? What did Tony Hillerman describe in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*? How did he describe it? How do you see what he described? How can you make other people see what you describe?
 - What is there to do? What did the brother and sister do to stay busy? What would you do? What could other people do? Remember, you're trying to get people to want to visit the site you're describing. Are they coming to have fun, to learn something, to have an adventure, or to try new things?
 - How can you get there? Where can you stay?

- Is this a place where you would spend a lot of time or is it more of a day trip? How might you organize the trip?
- You can insert some of your opinion here – if you’ve actually been there, you can say what the best part is, or the best restaurant, etc. or if you haven’t, you can speculate a little bit (in the hypothetical rhetorical situation, you would have already been there)
- Finally, *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* happened a LONG time ago. Is the place you’re describing in the past, present, or future? Are you updating the story, so that people can drive to the pueblo? Are you projecting it into the future so that people can visit the site you’re writing about by flying in their own personal space suit? Or, are you keeping the story in the past, like Tony Hillerman did? It’s up to you, but not only where but when your location occurs will affect what people will see and do and how they will travel.

Thinking about setting in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

- What was the easiest/hardest part in picking the location you chose to profile/write about?
- What was the easiest/hardest part about writing and illustrating the actual profile?
- Do you think your profile would actually be useful to someone considering visiting that place? Why or why not?
- How has researching this one specific place expanded your understanding of *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*?
- Why do you think setting is so important to this story? Could this story have happened anywhere? Why or why not?

Profile of a Character Assignment

Tony Hillerman's *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

Length requirement: 1 paragraph - 1 page, plus an image (handwritten, hand drawn, or word-processed)

Format: blog

Purpose: To describe in detail one of the characters from *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

Audience: readers of your popular online blog

Situation:

You are someone who travels around the Southwest and who writes a blog about the places you've visited, the things you've done, and the people you've met. Your blog is popular, you have a lot of people who follow and comment on your posts, and you really want this next piece to be special. So, who is your audience? What kind of people follow you, your adventures, and your writing? Once you have your audience in mind, it will help you figure out what character to write about, and what you want to say about that character.

Content:

Having already discussed the primary elements of a literary story in class – setting, plot, characters, climax, resolution, etc., this short writing assignment takes a closer look at characters. There are several steps involved in this profile:

- First, you need to think about the kind of blog you write for. Is it a travel blog? A news blog? Is it angry? Is it a site that praises the underdogs in the world? Is it funny? Serious? Is it a blog directed at people your own age, or is your audience younger or older than you are? Think about the examples we've looked at and read in class. Which ones did you like, and why? Do you want to try something similar, or try something completely different? Why?
- Second, you need to pick a character to profile. It can be *any* character mentioned within the chapters of *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* that we have read in class. Sometimes the least obvious characters are more interesting and important than we might think at first, so take your time when thinking about whom to write about.
- Next, you should think about what the character you are writing about looks like. Are you going to illustrate this character yourself? If so, how? Do you have an image in mind that you've seen somewhere else? If so, where is it and how can you get a copy of it to use? Finally, how will you integrate your words with the image(s) you've decided to use to profile your character?
- After you've thought about the character you've chosen to profile, you need to organize all of this information and pick an angle. This "angle" has EVERYTHING to do with the kind of blog you've chosen to write and the audience for whom you're writing. What information do you want to focus on? What information about this character will be most interesting to your readers? Is there anything that you feel like you absolutely NEED to include about this character?

- The last step (before posting) is writing! Be sure to think about and answer the following questions about your chosen character:
 - Who is there to know? Who did Tony Hillerman describe in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*? How did he describe these characters? How do you see, or feel, whom he described? How can *you* make other people see, and feel, whom *you* describe?
 - What does the character you describe do? Can anyone do these things, or are these activities significant, special, or different? Does your character do “good” things? Does your character do “bad” things? what is the difference, if any, between “good” and “bad” in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*?
 - Did you meet the character you’ve chosen to write about? Do you know someone like this character? If you were spending time with this character, how would you introduce it to your friends and family...or would you? Why or why not?
 - Is your character someone you would spend a lot of time with? Why or why not?
 - You can insert some of your opinion here – do you like your character? do you admire your character? Is there something we can learn from your character? Why or why not?

Thinking about Character in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

- What was the easiest/hardest part in picking the character you chose to profile/write about?
- What was the easiest/hardest part about writing about and illustrating the actual character?
- Do you think your profile would actually be interesting to the people who read your blog? Why or why not?
- How has writing about this one specific character expanded your understanding of *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*?
- Why do you think this character is so important to this story? Could this story have happened without this character? Why or why not?

Literary Review of Tony Hillerman's *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*

Length requirement: 1 – 2 pages, plus an illustration (hand-written, hand-drawn, or word processed)

Purpose: To review *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* and convince readers whether to read it

Audience: The readers of the newspaper, magazine, website, or blog for whom you write

Rhetorical Situation: In time with the full launch of the e-Hillerman website, your editor has asked you to review *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* for a larger feature about Tony Hillerman and his work. Your review will be only one aspect of the large spread, and your editor has asked you to be honest, but also remember the context of the larger publication of which your piece will be part.

Process/ Content: The Review should not be all love or all hate – it needs to be a mix that shows the audience you can be objective about the story's strengths and weaknesses, but ultimately you should give your opinion and either recommend or advise against reading the story.

- **Introduction** – Introduce the story. What are the two or three main things about the story you remember, and why do you remember them? If they're interesting to you, for whatever reasons, they'll be interesting to your readers.
- **Description/Summary:** Describe the story in detail without giving so much information that you bore the reader or give too much info away. For example, you don't want to tell your reader any of the plot twists or the ending for fear of spoilers. If you tell them everything, you will upset readers and they will be less likely to go experience the book for themselves even if you say it's the best book of all time. This summary is not a book report, but rather like a commercial that
- **Strengths/Weaknesses:** Most of your review should focus on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the story. You should identify at least one of each, but if you really liked the book, you may want to provide more strengths than weaknesses or vice versa. You will also need to provide examples for those strengths and weaknesses. Let the reader know whether you think the good parts of the book outweigh the bad or the other way around.
- **Conclusion** – At the end of your review, you will want your readers to have a clear idea about your opinion about the story and whether they should read *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly* for themselves. Review the best and worst moments of the story, and then provide a rating, for example 3 out of 5 stars or on a 7 out 10 green chiles, or whatever you think appropriate. Finally, give a one or two sentence reason for your rating, just to wrap things up. For example, if you gave the story a high rating, tell your singers why. "This was a great story, and you should read it because..." Or, if you gave the story a poor rating, recommend another story, mentioning why the story you recommend "fixes" the problems you may have identified in *The Boy Who Made Dragonfly*.