

# How Do the Style & Content of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature Reflect the Evolution of Antislavery Thought

---

**GRADE LEVEL:** 11

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** How does the 18<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery movement differ from 19<sup>th</sup> century Abolitionism?

## **LESSON**

**SUBTOPIC QUESTION:** How does the style and content of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century American literature reflect the evolution of anti-slavery thought?

### **INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

\* Identify stylistic techniques used in “To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” (1773), “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773), Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, (1845) and Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852).

\* Identify content in “To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” (1773), “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773), Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, (1845) and Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852) that reflects the movement of American opinion from anti-slavery feeling to abolitionist action.

\* Compare and contrast the use of stylistic techniques in the expression of anti-slavery and/or abolitionist points of view.

\* Analyze the effectiveness of style and content in expressing anti-slavery and/or abolitionist points of view.

\* Evaluate the role of style and content in expressing and changing opinions.

## OVERVIEW OF LESSON OBJECTIVE:

As the culminating lesson in this unit, this lesson will require two 45-minute class periods or one 90-minute block. Prior to Day One of the unit, students will have completed reading two 18<sup>th</sup> century poems by Phillis Wheatley (“On Being Brought from Africa to America”, “To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth”) and two 19<sup>th</sup> century works, either in whole or excerpts (Narrative of the Life of a Slave by Frederick Douglass and Uncle Tom’s Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe.) The students will also have discussed the essential characteristics of anti-slavery sentiment in 18<sup>th</sup> century America and the essential characteristics of Abolitionism in 19<sup>th</sup> century America. In the first half of this lesson, the teacher will present and lead an analysis of style and content of “To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth”, modelling completion of the worksheets that will be used when the class is divided into groups. The class will then divide into five groups to complete worksheets for their assigned excerpt. The groups will then report their findings to the class and the teacher will lead the entire class in a discussion of:

- (1) changes in attitudes towards slavery evident in the literature and
- (2) the role of style and content in persuading readers.

## STRATEGIES:

Students will accomplish the instructional objectives by:

- \* Reading literary works and completing assigned worksheets for each work or excerpt.
- \* Completing assigned worksheets in both class and group work.
- \* Engaging in discussion based on worksheet conclusions.

## **MATERIALS:**

### Documents

Poetry by Phillis Wheatley:

“To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” (1773)

“On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773)

Autobiography by Frederick Douglass:

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845)

Novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe:

Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852).

### Worksheets

Style and Content Analysis Worksheet

Style and Content Effectiveness Graphic Organizer

## **ASSESSMENT:**

Students will write an essay in response to the following prompt:

Based on readings of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery works, what appears to be the relationship between style and content with regards to persuasion?

## DAY ONE

**Length of lesson: 45 minutes**

**SUBTOPIC QUESTION:** How do the style and content of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century American literature reflect the evolution of anti-slavery thought?

### MATERIALS:

#### Documents

Poetry by Phillis Wheatley:

“To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” (1773)

“On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773)

Autobiography by Frederick Douglass:

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845)

Novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe:

Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852).

#### Worksheets

Style and Content Analysis Worksheet

Style and Content Effectiveness Graphic Organizer

**PREVIEW:** Students have studied the essential characteristics of the 18<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery movement and the 19<sup>th</sup> century abolition movement, learning the influence of the Enlightenment philosophy on the 18<sup>th</sup> century movement and the growing complexity and urgency of the movement as it developed into 19<sup>th</sup> century Abolitionism. Students are already aware of the gradualism that characterized the 18<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery position and the push for immediate action that characterized the 19<sup>th</sup> century Abolitionism movement.

Students are also experienced in analysis of style and familiar with such concepts as speaker, tone, imagery, allusion, diction, rhyme, and meter. They will have read the works to be used in this lesson prior to class and have a basic idea of who Wheatley, Douglass, and Stowe are. Students will have previously considered the connection between style and content, particularly in the context of persuasion.

## **PROCEDURE:**

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

Style: Specific techniques used by the writers

Content: Attitudes towards slavery revealed by the writers

## **GUIDED QUESTIONS:**

### **Questions for Day One**

What stylistic techniques has Wheatley used in her poems?

What poetic devices such as rhyme and meter are used?

How has she used simile, personification and other imagery?

What is the role of punctuation and grammar in the poems?

What use has Wheatley made of diction? Of allusion? Of descriptive details?

What is the predominant tone of her poems? Who is the speaker? The audience? What is the occasion ?

Is there a purpose? If so, what is it?

What stylistic techniques have Douglass and Stowe used in their writings?

What rhetorical techniques such as parallel structure and dramatic techniques such as vernacular have they used?

How have they used simile, personification and other imagery?

What is the role of punctuation and grammar in the works?

What use have they made of diction? Of allusion? Of descriptive details?

What is the predominant tone of their works? Who is the speaker? The audience? What is the occasion ?

Is there a purpose? If so, what is it?

## MODELLING GROUP WORK:

- Distribute “To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth”
- With entire class, read the poem.
- As practice for their individual group work, have students begin to annotate the poem, looking for stylistic techniques and attitudes revealed about slavery.
- Discuss students’ findings

## GROUP WORK:

- \* Divide the class into five groups.
- \* Each group should receive a worksheet and a copy of one of the writings.

“On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773)

Excerpt from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845)

Excerpts from Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852):

Chapter III

Chapter XVI

Chapter XL

- \* Groups should read the excerpt and complete the worksheet for that excerpt.

## DAY TWO

**Length of lesson: 45 minutes**

**SUBTOPIC QUESTION:** How do the style and content of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century American literature reflect the evolution of anti-slavery thought?

*Teacher Note: Building on the information and conclusions discovered in Lesson One, this lesson will use the anti-slavery context in order to focus on consideration of the concept of persuasion.*

### MATERIALS:

#### Documents

Poetry by Phillis Wheatley:

“To The Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth” (1773)

“On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773)

Autobiography by Frederick Douglass:

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845)

Novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe:

Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852).

#### Worksheets

Completed Style/Content Analysis Worksheet

Style and Content Effectiveness Graphic Organizer

**PREVIEW:** On the board, the teacher writes the subtopic question: *How do the style and content of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century American literature reflect the evolution of anti-slavery thought?*

Students have completed the style/content analysis worksheet in their groups or – if the work was not completed yesterday in class - the students have completed the work individually at home.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

*Style:* Specific techniques used by the writers

*Content:* Attitudes towards slavery revealed by the writers

*Style and Content:* The relationship between style and content for the purpose of persuasion

## **GUIDED QUESTIONS:**

### **Questions from Day One's Work:**

What stylistic techniques has Wheatley used in her poems?

What poetic devices such as rhyme and meter are used?

How has she used simile, personification and other imagery?

What is the role of punctuation and grammar in the poems?

What use has Wheatley made of diction? Of allusion? Of descriptive details?

What is the predominant tone of her poems? Who is the speaker? The audience? What is the occasion ?

Is there a purpose? If so, what is it?

What stylistic techniques have Douglass and Stowe used in their writings?

What rhetorical techniques such as parallel structure and dramatic techniques such as vernacular have they used?

How have they used simile, personification and other imagery?

What is the role of punctuation and grammar in the works?

What use have they made of diction? Of allusion? Of descriptive details?

What is the predominant tone of their works? Who is the speaker? The audience? What is the occasion ?

Is there a purpose? If so, what is it?

### **Questions for Day Two's Work:**

What attitudes towards slavery are revealed in all of the works?

How do the works reflect 18<sup>th</sup> century gradualism and 19<sup>th</sup> century abolitionist activism?

What specific content conveys those attitudes?

What response does each piece of writing evoke?

Based on class discussion of the analysis of these pieces, what could one conclude about the relationship between style and content when the writer's goal is persuasion?



## PROCEDURE:

- \* Teacher distributes *Style and Content Effectiveness* graphic organizer and instructs students to fill it in as class discussion unfolds.
- \* Groups report on their analysis of assigned excerpts.
- \* Teacher guides discussion to consideration of how the way in which the works are written affects their impact. That discussion further evolves into consideration of the relationship of style and content when the writer's goal is persuasion. (*In persuasion, content and style must always be palatable to the reader; when content is potentially offensive, the writer must employ a style that makes the material readable.*)

## ASSESSMENT:

Students will write an essay in response to the following prompt:

Based on readings of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery works, what appears to be the relationship between style and content with regards to persuasion?

Curriculum created by Stephanie Shute Kelsch

***Abolitionism and Literature  
Style and Content Analysis Worksheet***

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Author of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Genre: \_\_\_\_\_

***STYLE:*** *What stylistic techniques has the author utilized in this piece? Identify the technique and provide a quotation from the work as an example. Be sure to consider both poetic and rhetorical techniques.*

**Technique**

**Example**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

***(over)***

## **CONTENT:**

***1. Who is the intended reader of the excerpt? If there are any other possible readers, who are they?***

***2. What is the author's purpose in writing this piece?***

***3. What historical events coincide with the writing of this excerpt?***

***4. At a literal level, what is the excerpt about? What is the deeper subject?***

***5. What attitudes towards slavery does the excerpt reflect?***

## **TO BE DISCUSSED AFTER GROUP WORK IS PRESENTED**

***In terms of slavery, what do these excerpts reveal about evolution of attitudes?***

***Why has each author employed the style he or she has? How effective is that choice?***

***What conclusions are suggested about the role of style and content when the purpose is persuasion?***

*Abolitionism and Literature*  
*Style and Content Effectiveness*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Excerpt	Stylistic Techniques	Content	Response Evoked	Effectiveness
Wheatley “Dartmouth” 1773				
Wheatley “Being Brought” 1773				
Douglass Ch.9 from <u>Narrative</u> (1845)				
Stowe Ch. 3 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				
Stowe Ch. 16 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				
Stowe Ch.40 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				

***Rubric for Assessing Response to Essay Question:***

**Based on readings of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery works, what appears to be the relationship between style and content with regards to persuasion?**

- (90 – 100)      These essays offer:  
                         a well-written **thesis** statement offering a universal truth that  
                         answers the question  
                         strong **organization** based on the thesis being used to create  
                         effective paragraph topic sentences  
                         persuasive supporting **evidence** that is clearly presented and  
                         analyzed and reflects a strong understanding of the  
                         passages studied  
                         engaging, fluent, and accurate **use of language**
- (80 – 89)      These essays offer all of the above, but are less effective in:  
                         answering the question  
                         organizing that answer  
                         presenting and analyzing evidence  
                         controlling use of language
- (70 – 79)      These essays attempt the above but the thesis fails to answer the question  
even though the essays show good organization and use of language.  
These essays do show recall and understanding of the analyzed passages.
- (60 – 69)      These essays offer a thesis statement that fails to answer the  
question. The essay reflects poor recall and understanding of the  
analyzed passages and exhibits significant problems in organization and  
use of language.
- (50)              These essays present significant problems in the thesis, the organization,  
the evidence, and the use of language.

To the Right Honourable W I L L I A M, Earl of DARTMOUTH, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for North-America, &c.  
by Phillis Wheatley (1773)

HAIL, happy day, when, smiling like the morn,  
Fair *Freedom* rose *New-England* to adorn:  
The northern clime beneath her genial ray,  
*Dartmouth*, congratulates thy blissful sway:  
Elate with hope her race no longer mourns,  
Each soul expands, each grateful bosom burns,  
While in thine hand with pleasure we behold  
The silken reins, and *Freedom's* charms unfold.  
Long lost to realms beneath the northern skies  
She shines supreme, while hated *faction* dies:  
Soon as appear'd the *Goddess* long desir'd,  
Sick at the view, she languish'd and expir'd;  
Thus from the splendors of the morning light  
The owl in sadness seeks the caves of night.

10

No more, *America*, in mournful strain  
Of wrongs, and grievance unredress'd complain,  
No longer shalt thou dread the iron chain,  
Which wanton *Tyranny* with lawless hand  
Had made, and with it meant t' enslave the land.

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,  
Wonder from whence my love of *Freedom* sprung,  
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,  
By feeling hearts alone best understood,  
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate  
Was snatch'd from *Afric's* fancy'd happy seat:  
What pangs excruciating must molest,  
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?  
Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd  
That from a father seiz'd his babe lov'd:

20

Such, such my case. And can I then but pray  
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

30

For favours past, great Sir, our thanks are due,  
And thee we ask thy favours to renew,  
Since in thy pow'r, as in thy will before,  
To sooth the griefs, which thou did'st once deplore.  
May heav'nly grace the sacred sanction give  
To all thy works, and thou for ever live  
Not only on the wings of fleeting *Fame*,  
Though praise immortal crowns the patriot's name,

But to conduct to heav'n's refulgent fane,  
May fiery coursers sweep th' ethereal plain,  
And bear thee upwards to that blest abode,  
Where, like the prophet, thou shalt find thy God.

40

Source: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rbear/wheatley.html>

On being brought from A F R I C A to  
A M E R I C A.

by Phillis Wheatley (1773)

'T WAS mercy brought me from my *Pagan* land,  
Taught my benighted soul to understand  
That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:  
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew,  
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,  
"Their colour is a diabolic die."  
Remember, *Christians, Negroes*, black as *Cain*,  
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

Source: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~rbear/wheatley.html>

From Chapter X, Narrative of the Life of a Slave  
By Frederick Douglass (1845)

Mr. Covey's FORTE consisted in his power to deceive. His life was devoted to planning and perpetrating the grossest deceptions. Every thing he possessed in the shape of learning or religion, he made conform to his disposition to deceive. He seemed to think himself equal to deceiving the Almighty. He would make a short prayer in the morning, and a long prayer at night; and, strange as it may seem, few men would at times appear more devotional than he. The exercises of his family devotions were always commenced with singing; and, as he was a very poor singer himself, the duty of raising the hymn generally came upon me. He would read his hymn, and nod at me to commence. I would at times do so; at others, I would not. My non-compliance would almost always produce much confusion. To show himself independent of me, he would start and stagger through with his hymn in the most discordant manner. In this state of mind, he prayed with more than ordinary spirit. Poor man! such was his disposition, and success at deceiving, I do verily believe that he sometimes deceived himself into the solemn belief, that he was a sincere worshipper of the most high God; and this, too, at a time when he may be said to have been guilty of compelling his woman slave to commit the sin of adultery. The facts in the case are these: Mr. Covey was a poor man; he was just commencing in life; he was only able to buy one slave; and, shocking as is the fact, he bought her, as he said, for A BREEDER. This woman was named Caroline. Mr. Covey bought her from Mr. Thomas Lowe, about six miles from St. Michael's. She was a large, able-bodied woman, about twenty years old. She had already given birth to one child, which proved her to be just what he wanted. After buying her, he hired a married man of Mr. Samuel Harrison, to live with him one year; and him he used to fasten up with her every night! The result was, that, at the end of the year, the miserable woman gave birth to twins. At this result Mr. Covey seemed to be highly pleased, both with the man and the wretched woman. Such was his joy, and that of his wife, that nothing they could do for Caroline during her confinement was too good, or too hard, to be done. The children were regarded as being quite an addition to his wealth.

**Source:** [sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Douglass/Autobiography](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Douglass/Autobiography)



From Chapter III, "The Husband and Father" in Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1852

"My master! and who made him my master? That's what I think of--what right has he to me? I'm a man as much as he is. I'm a better man than he is. I know more about business than he does; I am a better manager than he is; I can read better than he can; I can write a better hand,--and I've learned it all myself, and no thanks to him,--I've learned it in spite of him; and now what right has he to make a dray-horse of me?--to take me from things I can do, and do better than he can, and put me to work that any horse can do? He tries to do it; he says he'll bring me down and humble me, and he puts me to just the hardest, meanest and dirtiest work, on purpose!"

"O, George! George! you frighten me! Why, I never heard you talk so; I'm afraid you'll do something dreadful. I don't wonder at your feelings, at all; but oh, do be careful--do, do--for my sake--for Harry's!"

"I have been careful, and I have been patient, but it's growing worse and worse; flesh and blood can't bear it any longer;--every chance he can get to insult and torment me, he takes. I thought I could do my work well, and keep on quiet, and have some time to read and learn out of work hours; but the more he sees I can do, the more he loads on. He says that though I don't say anything, he sees I've got the devil in me, and he means to bring it out; and one of these days it will come out in a way that he won't like, or I'm mistaken!"

"O dear! what shall we do?" said Eliza, mournfully.

"It was only yesterday," said George, "as I was busy loading stones into a cart, that young Mas'r Tom stood there, slashing his whip so near the horse that the creature was frightened. I asked him to stop, as pleasant as I could,--he just kept right on. I begged him again, and then he turned on me, and began striking me. I held his hand, and then he screamed and kicked and ran to his father, and told him that I was fighting him. He came in a rage, and said he'd teach me who was my master; and he tied me to a tree, and cut switches for young master, and told him that he might whip me till he was tired;--and he did do it! If I don't make him remember it, some time!" and the brow of the young man grew dark, and his eyes burned with an expression that made his young wife tremble. "Who made this man my master? That's what I want to know!" he said.

"Well," said Eliza, mournfully, "I always thought that I must obey my master and mistress, or I couldn't be a Christian."

"There is some sense in it, in your case; they have brought you up like a child, fed you, clothed you, indulged you, and taught you, so that you have a good education; that is some reason why they should claim you. But I have been kicked and cuffed and sworn at, and at the best only let alone; and what do I owe? I've paid for all my keeping a hundred times over. I *won't* bear it. No, I *won't*!" he said, clenching his hand with a fierce frown.

Source: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/utc/>

From Chapter XVI "Tom's Mistress and Her Opinions" in Uncle Tom's Cabin Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1852

There sat Tom, on a little mossy seat in the court, every one of his button-holes stuck full of cape jessamines, and Eva, gayly laughing, was hanging a wreath of roses round his neck; and then she sat down on his knee, like a chip-sparrow, still laughing.

"O, Tom, you look so funny!"

Tom had a sober, benevolent smile, and seemed, in his quiet way, to be enjoying the fun quite as much as his little mistress. He lifted his eyes, when he saw his master, with a half-deprecating, apologetic air.

"How can you let her?" said Miss Ophelia.

"Why not?" said St. Clare.

"Why, I don't know, it seems so dreadful!"

"You would think no harm in a child's caressing a large dog, even if he was black; but a creature that can think, and reason, and feel, and is immortal, you shudder at; confess it, cousin. I know the feeling among some of you northerners well enough. Not that there is a particle of virtue in our not having it; but custom with us does what Christianity ought to do,--obliterates the feeling of personal prejudice. I have often noticed, in my travels north, how much stronger this was with you than with us. You loathe them as you would a snake or a toad, yet you are indignant at their wrongs. You would not have them abused; but you don't want to have anything to do with them yourselves. You would send them to Africa, out of your sight and smell, and then send a missionary or two to do up all the self-denial of elevating them compendiously. Isn't that it?"

"Well, cousin," said Miss Ophelia, thoughtfully, "there may be some truth in this."

**Source:** <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/utc/>

Scenes of blood and cruelty are shocking to our ear and heart. What man has nerve to do, man has not nerve to hear. What brother-man and brother-Christian must suffer, cannot be told us, even in our secret chamber, it so harrows the soul! And yet, oh my country! these things are done under the shadow of thy laws! O, Christ! thy church sees them, almost in silence!

But, of old, there was One whose suffering changed an instrument of torture, degradation and shame, into a symbol of glory, honor, and immortal life; and, where His spirit is, neither degrading stripes, nor blood, nor insults, can make the Christian's last struggle less than glorious.

Was he alone, that long night, whose brave, loving spirit was bearing up, in that old shed, against buffeting and brutal stripes?

Nay! There stood by him ONE,--seen by him alone,--"like unto the Son of God."

The tempter stood by him, too,--blinded by furious, despotic will,--every moment pressing him to shun that agony by the betrayal of the innocent. But the brave, true heart was firm on the Eternal Rock. Like his Master, he knew that, if he saved others, himself he could not save; nor could utmost extremity wring from him words, save of prayers and holy trust.

"He's most gone, Mas'r," said Sambo, touched, in spite of himself, by the patience of his victim.

"Pay away, till he gives up! Give it to him!--give it to him!" shouted Legree. "I'll take every drop of blood he has, unless he confesses!"

Tom opened his eyes, and looked upon his master. "Ye poor miserable critter!" he said, "there ain't no more ye can do! I forgive ye, with all my soul!" and he fainted entirely away.

"I b'lieve, my soul, he's done for, finally," said Legree, stepping forward, to look at him. "Yes, he is! Well, his mouth's shut up, at last,--that's one comfort!" Yes, Legree; but who shall shut up that voice in thy soul? that soul, past repentance, past prayer, past hope, in whom the fire that never shall be quenched is already burning!

Yet Tom was not quite gone. His wondrous words and pious prayers had struck upon the hearts of the imbruted blacks, who had been the instruments of cruelty upon him; and, the instant Legree withdrew, they took him down, and, in their ignorance, sought to call him back to life,--as if *that* were any

favor to him.

"Sartin, we 's been doin' a drefful wicked thing!" said Sambo; "hopes Mas'r 'll have to 'count for it, and not we."

They washed his wounds,--they provided a rude bed, of some refuse cotton, for him to lie down on; and one of them, stealing up to the house, begged a drink of brandy of Legree, pretending that he was tired, and wanted it for himself. He brought it back, and poured it down Tom's throat.

"O, Tom!" said Quimbo, "we's been awful wicked to ye!"

"I forgive ye, with all my heart!" said Tom, faintly.

"O, Tom! do tell us who is *Jesus*, anyhow?" said Sambo;--"Jesus, that's been a standin' by you so, all this night!--Who is he?"

The word roused the failing, fainting spirit. He poured forth a few energetic sentences of that wondrous One,--his life, his death, his everlasting presence, and power to save.

They wept,--both the two savage men.

"Why didn't I never hear this before?" said Sambo; "but I do believe!--I can't help it! Lord Jesus, have mercy on us!"

"Poor critters!" said Tom, "I'd be willing to bar' all I have, if it'll only bring ye to Christ! O, Lord! give me these two more souls, I pray!"

That prayer was answered!

Source: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/utc/>

***Abolitionism and Literature  
Style and Content Analysis Worksheet***

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Author of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Genre: \_\_\_\_\_

***STYLE:*** *What stylistic techniques has the author utilized in this piece? Identify the technique and provide a quotation from the work as an example. Be sure to consider both poetic and rhetorical techniques.*

**Technique**

**Example**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

***(over)***

## **CONTENT:**

*1. Who is the intended reader of the excerpt? If there are any other possible readers, who are they?*

*2. What is the author's purpose in writing this piece?*

*3. What historical events coincide with the writing of this excerpt?*

*4. At a literal level, what is the excerpt about? What is the deeper subject?*

*5. What attitudes towards slavery does the excerpt reflect?*

### **TO BE DISCUSSED AFTER GROUP WORK IS PRESENTED**

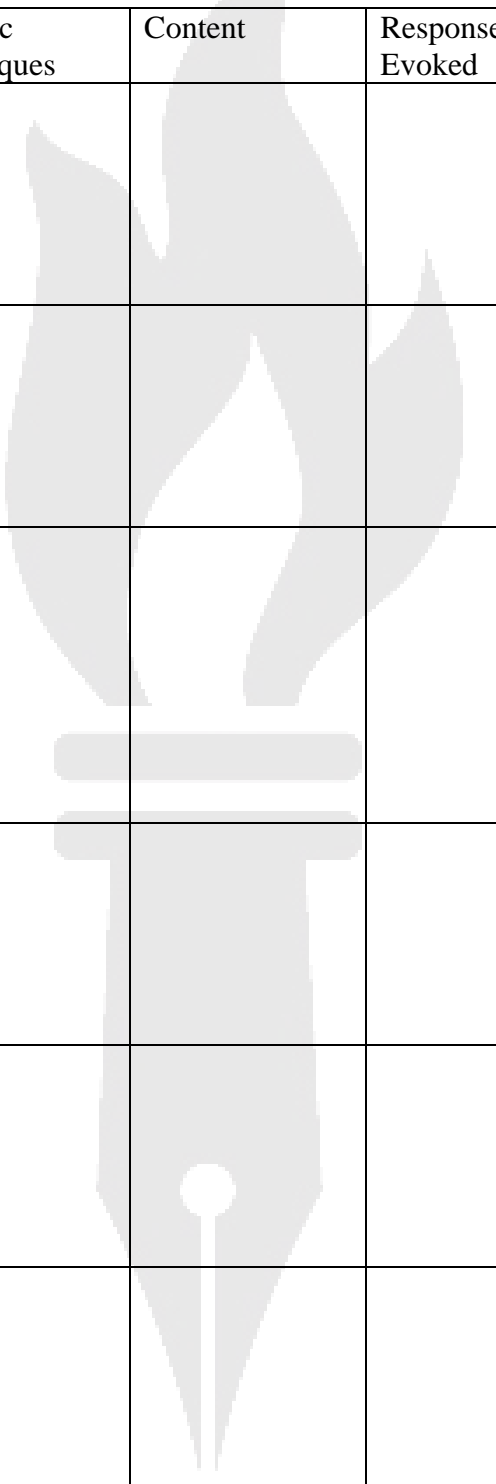
*In terms of slavery, what do these excerpts reveal about evolution of attitudes?*

*Why has each author employed the style he or she has? How effective is that choice?*

*What conclusions are suggested about the role of style and content when the purpose is persuasion?*

**Abolitionism and Literature  
Style and Content Effectiveness**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_



Excerpt	Stylistic Techniques	Content	Response Evoked	Effectiveness
Wheatley “Dartmouth” 1773				
Wheatley “Being Brought” 1773				
Douglass Ch.9 from <u>Narrative</u> (1845)				
Stowe Ch. 3 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				
Stowe Ch. 16 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				
Stowe Ch.40 from <u>UTC</u> (1852)				

***Rubric for Assessing Response to Essay Question:***

**Based on readings of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-slavery works, what appears to be the relationship between style and content with regards to persuasion?**

- (90 – 100)      These essays offer:  
                         a well-written **thesis** statement offering a universal truth that  
                         answers the question  
                         strong **organization** based on the thesis being used to create  
                         effective paragraph topic sentences  
                         persuasive supporting **evidence** that is clearly presented and  
                         analyzed and reflects a strong understanding of the  
                         passages studied  
                         engaging, fluent, and accurate **use of language**
- (80 – 89)      These essays offer all of the above, but are less effective in:  
                         answering the question  
                         organizing that answer  
                         presenting and analyzing evidence  
                         controlling use of language
- (70 – 79)      These essays attempt the above but the thesis fails to answer the question  
even though the essays show good organization and use of language.  
These essays do show recall and understanding of the analyzed passages.
- (60 – 69)      These essays offer a thesis statement that fails to answer the  
question. The essay reflects poor recall and understanding of the  
analyzed passages and exhibits significant problems in organization and  
use of language.
- (50)              These essays present significant problems in the thesis, the organization,  
the evidence, and the use of language.

Curriculum created by Stephanie Shute Kelsch