How and Why Do Atrocities Occur?

A Focus on Voice

If you were given a text to read, you wouldn't confuse a ghetto gangster with that a successful lawyer. Not only do they sound different, they also use different kinds of language: words, tone, sentences, and forms of address.

**Voice is the way your words "sound" on the page**

In writing, voice is the way your character “sounds” on the page. It is created by the way you write, the tone you take (friendly, formal, chatty, distant), the words you choose (everyday words or sophisticated language), the pattern of your sentences, and the way these things fit together to bring your character to life.

**Voice is a reflection of experience**  
Voice is a reflection of how your character experiences the world of your story. Invest time in understanding how your character feels and thinks about what he/she has lived. When you've done that,  
tell the character’s story as that person would speak.

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| Criteria | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Students will use sentence length and structure to reflect character’s age and personality. | No evidence that specific words were chosen to support the character’s personality | Attempts to use vocabulary that reflects the character’s age and point of view. | Word choice is usually appropriate to the character’s age and generally reflects the character’s feelings throughout the story. | Word choice is always appropriate to the character’s age and mostly reflects the character’s feelings throughout the story. | Carefully chosen and arranged words clearly and accurately reflect the character’s age, personality and point of view. |
| Students will write in such a way that the rhythm of the writing will “sound” like the character developed when read aloud. | Story sounds stilted and unnatural when read aloud, showing no connection to the character. | Story occasionally flows with a rhythm connected to the main character, but it is an inconsistent rhythm. | Rhythm of the story generally connects to the character’s thoughts and personality. | Story flows naturally, when read, clearly capturing the rhythm of the character’s thoughts and personality. | Story flows in an authentic and natural manner, when read, clearly capturing the rhythm of the character’s thoughts and personality. |
| Students will include ideas introduced in the text and give a clear perspective on the characters attitude towards kites/flying/the sky above. | Purpose and main idea may be unclear and cluttered by irrelevant detail | Main idea may be cloudy because supporting detail is too general or even off-topic | Evident main idea with some support which may be general or limited | Clear, focused, interesting ideas with appropriate detail | Exceptionally clear, focused, engaging with relevant, strong supporting detail |

**Your Assignment**

**Write (500-600 words) in the voice of one of the characters from a text (print or visual) you have read this term. Concentrate on capturing what that character felt and experienced at a given moment in time. Be sure to consider how the character experienced violence (as the perpetrator or recipient).**

Be sure to write as if you ARE that character. **Try to capture the language (vocabulary and style of talking) and voice of that character.**