

Closely read both passages. Number their paragraphs. Write a ten-word summary for each. For each aspect of SPACE-CAT, mark the text and add an annotation in the margin:

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| S | SPEAKER: Who is the speaker/writer? What do we know about them? What can you tell or what do you know about the speaker that helps you understand the point of view expressed? | ORANGE → Highlight: a line revealing the speaker's identity/position/reliability. Write: "The speaker is ____; we can tell because ____." |
| P | PURPOSE: What is the speaker/writer hoping to accomplish? What is the reason behind this piece? What is the reason behind this piece? What do they want the audience to do after having listened? | YELLOW → Highlight: a sentence showing what the writer is trying to do (warn/justify/criticize/persuade/complicate). Write: "The purpose is to ____ so that ____." |
| A | AUDIENCE: Who is the speaker/writer trying to reach? How do we know? Do they indicate a specific audience? What assumptions exist in the text about the intended audience? | GREEN → Highlight: direct address OR assumptions about the reader OR who would agree/disagree Write: "The audience is likely ____ because ____." |
| C | CONTEXT: What is the time and place of this piece? What is happening in the world as it relates to the subject of the speech or the speaker/writer? | PURPLE → Highlight: time/place clues, situation, references that anchor what's happening. Write: "Context: ___, which matters because ____." |
| E | EXIGENCE: What was the spark or catalyst that moved the speaker/writer to act/write? How did that event impact the speaker/writer? | PINK → Highlight: the pressure/problem/tension that sparked the text (the "why now?"). Write: "The exigence is ____; it pushes the writer to ____." |
| C | CHOICES: What are the rhetorical choices that the speaker/writer makes in the speech? Think about overall structure, devices, diction, syntax, etc. | BLUE → Highlight: two notable authorial choice (repetition, contrast, imagery, syntax shift, irony, structure, etc.). Write: "[CHOICE] – creates ____ / pushes the reader to ____." |
| A | APPEALS: Which of the three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, pathos) are present in the text? Where? Why? | ★ → STAR: the two strongest logos / ethos / pathos moment you can find Write: "Appeal: ____ – it works by ____." |
| T | TONE: What is the speaker/authors attitude toward the subject? Is the tone the same throughout the whole piece? Where does it shift? What evidence is there to demonstrate the tone? | CIRCLE → CIRCLE: words/phrases that reveal a specific attitude (sarcastic, detached, anxious, admiring, scornful, etc.). Write: "Tone is ____ here; it shifts when ____." |

I came from a working family. My parents were young, and both went to college after their children were born. I was the little mama, the oldest of three, and the support for my parents. I picked up my brother and sister from school and daycare. I made them snacks and helped them with their homework while we waited for our parents to come home. During the week my mother cooked quick meals like pasta with a salad or canned soup with sandwiches.

But Sundays were different. On Sundays, she cooked all day.

My mom was born and raised in Waynesboro, Georgia, a small town just south of Augusta. It was on Sundays that she reminded her young family where she came from. She would roast chicken and serve it with rice and gravy and greens. We ate glazed ham with sweet potatoes and cabbage. She didn't bake, but there was always cornbread or biscuits on the table. And the real treat, fried chicken! She made the best fried chicken. She used a cast-iron pan and grease she had saved, to be used only for chicken. It was a meal that took hours, and we only had it sometimes. She would always make pan gravy, mashed potatoes, and sweet peas to go alongside the crispy meat. Really good fried chicken is still one of my favorite foods.

Mom's Sunday cooking—now that was food to me. Living up North, soul food and southern food were commonly considered to be one and the same. People think of soul food as BBQ ribs, macaroni and cheese, buttermilk biscuits, and sweet tea. Our Sunday dinners taught me about my family and what we ate, and helped me distinguish *real* southern from soul food. But I had no idea that there was so much more.

In 2000, I decided to change my career path from social work to becoming a chef. My decision was prompted by a few work dinners where coworkers complimented me on my sweet potatoes and roasted chicken. With a half-cocked aspiration, I left my job in Brooklyn and decided to attend culinary school.

The school I attended was French based, like all culinary schools at the time and the majority, still, today. I had chosen it because it was geared toward career changers and had an excellent work-study program. I also liked that the school took the view that French food was the mother of all professional cuisines, so my education's foundation of principles, I thought, would be priceless.

During the first phase of classes our chef instructor asked us to write an essay about someone who inspired us to cook. My mother, of course; so easy, I thought. I would interview her when I got home that evening. But our teacher insisted that it be someone professional, like Escoffier or James Beard. My dilemma was that the only chefs I'd heard of were the ones on TV: Julia Child, the Frugal Gourmet, and the Cajun chef Justin Wilson.

I wanted to write about someone who looked like me, and like my mother and grandmothers. I began my search for a chef that I could admire. I started trolling around on the Internet without finding much on the subject of notable black women cooks. I searched at the public library, and after some digging, I found an article about a woman called Edna Lewis.

Edna Lewis's search for taste, as well as her story, stuck with me. A black woman from the South, Miss Lewis moved to New York to start a whole new life, first as a laundress, later as a seamstress and restaurant chef. She was never formally trained, but she had grown up cooking in rural Virginia, was hardworking, and loved wholesome food made with fresh ingredients. This sounded like many of the women in my family before me. As the opening chef at Café Nicholson in New York in the 1950s, she showcased simple food and was heaped with praise for it. Through Miss Lewis I realized that there was a history of black women, like me, in professional kitchens, and that I wasn't alone.

This passage is excerpted from an essay by Carl Phillips, an American poet and writer, and was published on a website produced by the Academy of American Poets.

Writing has always been for me an entirely private act — I don't share poems with other writers, I've no particular interest in having my work workshopped. Writing is one of the few spaces where I can be alone and not be questioned as to why or how I choose to be myself. Reading has also been that, from the start. I think it's true to say that, through childhood, the one thing I most looked forward to was being permitted to go upstairs to my room and read. Partly it was the privacy itself, but also the chance to see — in books — that it was okay not to love baseball, a boy could lose his dog and cry about it, and often enough there was fantasy, to show that nothing could be called impossible. It turns out, of course, that there are some limits to possibility; but childhood seems the right time not to know this. Books confirm at the least anyone's right to dream.

In the course of reading, a taste gets shaped — for what appeals or doesn't. And a writer's aesthetic set of principles guiding the work of a particular artist gets not so much shaped as informed. I've learned as much about writing from what I don't enjoy as from what I do. Even as joy is understandable finally only after its opposite, too, is known. Moreover, it is by extended acquaintance with both pleasure and pain that we begin to grasp the notion of degrees. And so it is with reading, whereby the self and the writing that comes from that self acquire both dimension and resonance, by the steady increase of which we win the right to exercise that lately suspect thing, authority. We do have the right to an opinion because it comes from more than ourselves, from a self that understands its own context within the history of being human, and within that of the literature by which we express being human.

To have read Homer's *Iliad** is not the same as having seen combat. That is, it would not be enough, only to read—that would be experiencing everything via another's experience. Equally, it would be inadequate to know the world only through one's own actual encounters with it. So, balance is important. It is hard to believe that Emily Dickinson** never came across the subject of death in her reading; and certainly she had seen more than her share of dying by time she could say — and mean — "I like a look of agony."

* an Ancient Greek epic poem about the Trojan War, likely written around 800 BCE

** 19th-century American poet who wrote more than 500 poems on the topic of death

Range is important. Often, young poets want most to know which poets they should be reading — and yet, any poet worth reading probably read everything that came to hand, out of that insatiable desire to know, that curiosity that makes us want to grapple with the irresolvable and memorable and transcribe it in lines.

What I most remember of deep winter 1983 is that I read all of John Milton's*** prose and poetry (in English, anyway) and — yes, from cover to cover — *The Joy of Cooking*. Some small part of a self is surely changed for having learned the best method for skinning a squirrel and having read the *Areopagitica***** in roughly the same space of time.

Everything counts. I've no intention of canceling my subscription to *People* magazine any more than I'd stop getting the *New York Times* each morning.

I don't think there are any "shoulds" in the case of reading — that would lead to the usual thorniness of literary canons. Sure, I find it difficult to imagine writing — or indeed reading in an informed manner — without knowledge of classical mythology, say, or some grounding in the Old Testament; but another might say as much about the *Bhagavad-Gita******, which I have yet to read.

There is nothing wrong with asking for reading suggestions, so long as that request doesn't really mask a desire to have a sort of blueprint provided — an instinct that I fear writing programs tend to encourage, perhaps unintentionally: this notion that there is a "way," — a structured means by which to become a writer, as if officially. As I say to my students, craft is teachable, vision is not. To read is to get a sense of the many ways in which vision has manifested itself in the past and continues to do so. We are wasting our time, though, if we believe that we shall thereby gain access to our own vision.

Also, asking what to read in order to be a good writer is rather like asking someone, "What should I do, in order to know life well?" The answer is obvious, to me at least: do all that you can do and care to do. Thankfully, there's no one model for any of this — it leaves the possibilities refreshingly, thrillingly wide open.

*** 17th-century English poet and author

**** 1644 work by John Milton defending freedom of speech

***** group of authors or works generally deemed by a consensus of scholars and teachers to be worthy of study

***** well-known Hindu scripture, likely written around 200 BCE