



Reading Warm-Up Selection I

“Behind Manti Te’o hoax about girlfriend lies a deep desire to believe”

...from ***The Washington Post*** By
Monica Hesse



What we will learn and practice

1 Determining what the **OBJECTIVE SUMMARY** is for a selection

2 Determining the **EFFECT** of the use of a **METAPHOR**

3 Identifying the narrator's or author's **CLAIM** for a non-fiction selection

4 Determining the **MEANING** of a **PHRASE** (group of words) in a selection

5 Identifying a **SYNONYM** that renames a word used in a selection

6 Determining the **EFFECT** and meaning for the use of an **ALLUSION**

(Note: We must first learn what an allusion is before determining the effect of its use.)

“Behind Manti Te’o hoax about girlfriend lies a deep desire to believe”

Behind Manti Te’o hoax about girlfriend lies a deep desire to believe

The Washington Post By Monica Hesse, Published: January 17, 2013

The Internet can be a blunt and brutal place. It’s built on unruly mobs moving across the virtual terrain, digesting stories and leaving behind carcasses. But it is also one of the last vestiges of wide-eyed, unfettered belief.

The former describes how it is that the strange and elusive case of Manti Te’o is being efficiently dissected on the Web. The latter describes how it is that people online could love girlfriends who do not exist.

Te’o, a star Notre Dame linebacker and runner-up for the Heisman Trophy, had made the story of his leukemia-stricken girlfriend, Lennay Kekua, an essential part of his personal narrative. She had a photo on Twitter, and he spoke poignantly about their conversations and exchanges. After learning she died, he went out and made 12 tackles against Michigan State, or so the story goes. Except that she didn’t die. Because she didn’t exist.



Kekua was either Te'o's creation — a publicity hoax — or someone else's prank. Either way, the story unraveled when Deadspin.com started pulling threads.

“To realize that I was the victim of what was apparently someone's sick joke and constant lies was, and is, painful and humiliating,” said Te'o in a statement issued Wednesday evening.

Immediately, people began to question this explanation. Te'o had claimed to have known Kekua for three years. How could he have been duped for so long? And how could he consider her his girlfriend, when they had never met?

One of the interesting aspects of the Internet is the way that the **veil of anonymity** has come to provide a false sense of authenticity. On the Web site Reddit.com, one of the most popular features is “I Am A” in which users describe their unique life experiences — “I am a firefighter,” “I am a guy who had a heart attack today,” “I am one of the 50 wounded in the Aurora theatre shooting” — and invite readers to ask anything they want. Sometimes proof of identity is demanded, but often the willingness to be present and be vulnerable is accepted as its own evidence. After all, in an anonymous forum, with nothing to gain, why would someone lie?



“I think he got **duped**.” Nev Schulman knows something about being duped online. Two years ago, he was the subject of “Catfish,” a documentary that **chronicled** his blossoming relationship with a young woman on Facebook who lived a thousand miles away — and who turned out to be a fraud. Now “Catfish” has become an MTV show; he and co-host Max Joseph travel around the country helping lovelorn individuals figure out why their online **paramours** don’t want to meet in real life. The person behind the keyboard is never the one in the picture. The show is a lost-love story for our modern times.

Schulman and Joseph are tangentially involved in the Te’o case — Schulman received an e-mail last month, only recently discovered buried in his inbox, from someone claiming to be involved. She said her image was being represented as someone else’s.



Joseph speculates that it would be especially appealing for someone like Te'o — a promising young man navigating a world of fame and hangers-on — to find solace in an online-only relationship. The relationship could have been compartmentalized from the rest of his life. “You’re talking to someone in privacy,” he said. “They become this kind of isolated person for you to trust — it becomes easy to talk to them, and they’re always there.”

There is a widespread sense, perhaps untrue, that people can be most “real” when they are most hidden — that all of us are Cyranos who can only speak our true minds when our faces and names are invisible. It’s a lovely notion. But it makes us oblivious to flaming red flags: A gorgeous female Stanford graduate who says she loves you should want to meet you. And a linebacker whose fame skyrocketed because of his tragic personal history? Someone should check and see whether that history is true.

At its root, this was a story about the deep need to believe. What complicates that is that it’s not clear whether Manti Te'o wanted to believe in a beautiful, fake girlfriend or whether we wanted to believe in him.



The impulse obviously isn't unique to the Internet — the rundown of never-was frauds sweeps back decades, including “Tony Godby Johnson,” whose middle-aged creator hoodwinked legions into believing she was an AIDS-stricken little boy. But the Internet has made it infinitely easier. Witness the 2011 story of Amina Arraf, a gay female Syrian blogger who was actually a straight American man.

This time, if the hoax was on Te'o, then the compartmentalized relationship has suddenly exploded, taking over the rest of his life and defining him as the man with the fake, dead girlfriend.

If the hoax was on us, then the gears of the Internet will continue to whir, **ferreting** out details of the betrayal and proving that, even if nobody knows you're a dog online, someone is going to eventually find out.

1 Determining what the **OBJECTIVE SUMMARY** is for a selection

Written Response: Read the news article. In two to three sentences, write an objective summary. An objective summary does not express opinions or include the bias of the writer.

Multiple Choice: **Which of the following statements best expresses an objective summary for the selection?**

- A. A Notre Dame football player has been caught up in a story questionable ethics regarding the uncertain existence of an online girlfriend.
- B. College football players should be cautious not to make misleading statements to the public due to later consequences.
- C A college football player is at the heart of a hoax potentially designed to embarrass him for having a nonexistent online girlfriend.
- D.A college football player , who lied on purpose about having a online girlfriend, is now in the spotlight for his poor decision

2 Determining the **EFFECT** of the use of a **METAPHOR**

Read section # 1:

Words to know:

Unruly: disobedient, rowdy, poorly behaved

Virtual: nearly, practically

Carcasses: a decayed, dead body left unburied (ie- road kill)

Vestiges: a trace, remnant, or small amount

Unfettered: unrestricted, unlimited

3 Identifying the narrator's or author's **CLAIM** for a non-fiction selection

A CLAIM is an author's viewpoint on a topic. The author uses facts, opinions, and even anecdotes (short stories told to make a point) to convince the reader of this viewpoint.

Question # 3: Which of the following statements supports the author's CLAIM regarding the Internet?

- A. "After all, in an anonymous forum, with nothing to gain, why would someone lie?"
- B. "The person behind the keyboard is never the one in the picture."
- C. "One of the interesting aspects of the Internet is the way that the veil of anonymity has come to provide a false sense of authenticity."
- D. "There is a widespread sense, perhaps untrue, that people can be most "real" when they are most hidden."

4 Determining the **MEANING** of a **PHRASE** (group of words) in a selection

A question about the meaning of a phrase could reference a traditional idiom or a phrase unique to the selection. **Question: Which of the following statements explains the meaning of the underlined phrase?**

“One of the interesting aspects of the Internet is the way that the veil of anonymity has come to provide a false sense of authenticity.”

- A. The group of words refers to the lack of video on some Internet communication, creating a cloak around their identity.
- B. The phrase means that all people should be honest when communicating digitally.
- C. The phrase indicates the Internet is the perfect mode of communication for being dishonest.
- D. The group of words refers to the manner in which people can deceive others, masking their identity, without always being discovered.

5 Identifying a **SYNONYM** that renames a word used in a selection

Questions: **Which of the following words is the best synonym for the underlined word?** “Two years ago, he was the subject of “Catfish,” a documentary that chronicled his blossoming relationship with a young woman on Facebook who lived a thousand miles away — and who turned out to be a fraud.”

A. recounted B. explained C. continued D. glorified

“Now “Catfish” has become an MTV show; he and co-host Max Joseph travel around the country helping lovelorn individuals figure out why their online paramours don’t want to meet in real life.”

A. lovers B. friends C. enemies D. relatives

6 Determining the **EFFECT** and meaning for the use of an **ALLUSION**

An allusion is an implied or indirect reference. Allusions can be part of literature or non-fiction. They usually refer to a historical or literary individual or a well known event from history. Allusions can also be taken from modern culture, such as television shows, films, or modern books.

Common allusion sources:

- A. The Bible
- B. Greek and Roman mythology
- C. Characters and events from classic novels
- D. Well known events and famous people from history

6 Determining the **EFFECT** and meaning for the use of an **ALLUSION**

Why do writers use allusions? -- Writers use allusions for a reason. In writing, authors can make their point, describe a situation, or develop a character in a more interesting and creative manner. Writers have many tools to add creativity, such as similes, metaphors, personification and of course allusions. In order for an allusion to have its desired effect on the reader, the reader must understand what or who is being referred to. An allusion to Zeus won't impact the reader if he or she isn't familiar with the reference.

Example **without** an allusion: The police approached the unruly mob and with only a few words, the crowd around the accident parted in two quickly.

Example **with** an allusion: As if he were mighty Moses himself parting the Red Sea, the policeman's words split the crowd in two around the accident scene.

Which one is more interesting? Why?

6 Determining the **EFFECT** and meaning for the use of an **ALLUSION**

Cyrano A gallant, extravagantly chivalrous and romantic swashbuckler, one of the great characters in literature. Cursed with an enormous nose, **Cyrano** used his own eloquence **to** woo the woman he loved on behalf of another.

Cyrano de Bergerac was a real person, a 17th-century French novelist and satirist. He wrote fantastic adventures about visits **to** the sun and moon, and fought many duels over insults **to** his very large nose. **Cyrano** was recreated in heroic scale in modern times by Edmond Rostand in his verse drama *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897).

In the play, **Cyrano** is the boldest of the bold and utterly true **to** his honor. He deeply loves the beautiful Roxanne, but does not speak his love **to** her when she tells him of her fascination with the handsome young Christian. Instead, **to** serve the happiness of his loved one, **Cyrano** uses his eloquence in composing speeches and letters on behalf of the dim, tongue-tied Christian. Christian dies in war; Roxanne mourns for years, and realizes too late that the eloquent voice and noble spirit she loves belong **to** **Cyrano**, who dies in her arms.

As we see here, references **to** **Cyrano** often simply play upon the theme of the monstrous, disfiguring feature; others refer **to** his romantic eloquence on behalf of another, and still others **to** his panache, the fearless poet and warrior. All are **Cyrano**.

6 Determining the **EFFECT** and meaning for the use of an **ALLUSION**

Today's question is a constructed response practice item. Be sure to answer the question fully and completely. Explain your opinions. For the examples, always use two direct quotes from the text. Place the examples (evidence) in quotation marks.

Question: **Explain the meaning of the allusion to Cyrano in this excerpt from the selection. Use two details to support your answer.**

“There is a widespread sense, perhaps untrue, that people can be most “real” when they are most hidden — that all of us are Cyranos who can only speak our true minds when our faces and names are invisible.” * [Cyrano allusion link](#)