

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker An Exercise in Point of View

Point of view, or narrative perspective, refers to the person telling a story and the information that person gives to readers. For example, if we were looking at the story of “The Three Little Pigs,” we may be given different information based upon which character tells the story. Traditionally, the story is told from the perspective of the pigs, who live in fear of “the big bad wolf.” But what if the story were told from the wolf’s perspective? Would he refer to himself as “big” and “bad,” or would he just be an innocent bystander with a nasty cold who just happened to blow down two of the pigs’ houses? What information would he give us that the pigs wouldn’t? or couldn’t?

In the final scene of “Everyday Use,” the narrator (Mama) describes the conflict between her two daughters concerning some old family quilts. We get information such as what Mama heard, what she saw, what she was thinking, as well as her memory of what everyone said, but we don’t necessarily know what Dee or Maggie heard/saw/thought, or how they remember the conversation.

Your assignment is to re-write the final scene of “Everyday Use” from either Dee or Maggie’s perspective. Start on the top of page 16 and go to the end of the story. You cannot change the outcome of the story, but you should re-write the story from your character’s point of view. What does she hear? See? Think? Remember? Your re-write will be written using first-person pronouns (I, me, my) since you are retelling the story from that person’s perspective.

\*Write your character’s name in the middle of the top line of your paper.

### Scoring Rubric:

**50 points**—The story is re-written from the top of page 16 to the end; pronouns are used consistently throughout. The rewrite is not just a copy of the original, but provides insight into the individual’s actions and thoughts.

**40 points**—The assigned portion of the story is re-written, but may be missing some key elements or details. There are some errors in using pronouns, and some of the original text is left as-is with no changes.

**25 points**—The assigned portion of the story is not completely re-written and there are several missing elements or details in the portion which is complete. Errors in pronoun use hinder understanding of the narrative. Rewrite may only provide insight into a small portion of the individual character’s point of view.

**10 points**—An attempt is made to rephrase parts of the assigned section, but there are numerous missing elements or details. Correct first-person pronouns are missing, and the re-rite does not give additional information about the individual character’s point of view.

**0 points**—No attempt is made to re-phrase the assigned section. It is copied from the book and/or very limited in its completion. Rewrite contains no insight into the individual character’s point of view.