

## English Final Presentation

### **Read Duality is a Double-Edged Sword (SLOWLY, DON'T STUMBLE OVER WORDS!!)**

**Presentation:** My central argument was that duality has both pros and cons. I reiterated this point throughout my poem by starting each stanza with the phrase 'duality is a double-edged sword.' My hope with this reiteration was that even if my audience forgot every example I provided, they would at least remember my argument due to this repetition and would thus ponder this argument in their own minds. To prove my point that duality is in fact a double-edged sword, in each stanza I used keyterms or allusions regarding different course readings and how they demonstrated the multi-faceted uses and downfalls of duality. For example, in the first two stanzas, which were supposed to relate to Braudy's quote, I used the terms 'talked-of-self,' 'audience,' 'unexpressed self,' and 'famous,' to relate, in the audience's minds, my information with that of Braudy. Braudy's argument demonstrates that duality has a good and bad side because, while it allows conditional acceptance, it also limits our true self and steals our peace. The next three stanzas were related to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and I utilized a direct quote from Dorian Gray, referenced him multiple times, and used the term 'morality' to bridge the gap between my own argument and the information that is presented in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dorian Gray's story fit into my own argument because Dorian benefitted, for a time, from all that duality offered him, such as complete indulgence of all pleasures, but this duality eventually caught up with him, and thus duality had multiple sides in his own story, proving my point. Following these three stanzas, the next two were supposed to utilize *The Yellow Wallpaper* to provide evidence for my own argument. This was done by the word 'insanity,' which relates to *The Yellow Wallpaper* because by the end the main character's obsession with the wallpaper, and the other identities it held led her to insanity. I also referenced 'captors' and 'wallpaper cages' to connect the author's argument about societal pressures and stigmas placed on women during this time with my own argument that duality allows us to be accepted, but only conditionally, and is therefore two-faced. Stanzas 8 and 9 correlated

to *Passing* by Langston Hughes, and the terms I used to create this correlation were 'passing,' 'masking,' 'disguise,' and 'freedom.' These words were all used or implied throughout Hughes' short story and thus create a connection between my own poem and his story. This short story showed that duality has both a negative and positive side because in this story the main character is free from the confines of his race and therefore allowed to explore the world more freely, as I mention in my poem, but he can only do this exploration in this altered state, and thus duality did not grant him true freedom. Mannequins and fashion models were the focus of the next stanza, and the main connection I made between these things/individuals and my own argument was the word 'plastic.' Here I argued that duality is double-edged by demonstrating that these ideal standards we implement because of mannequins and models let us pretend we are more than we are (in the poem I relate being more than we are with the term 'gold'), but in reality, or in the case of fashion models, when the makeup and clothes comes off, we find that this exterior modification of self did not actually enhance us any, and it instead limited us because these standards do not allow for imperfection. The second to last stanza was supposed to be centered around the poem "Standing Female Nude." While the connections here are less obvious, by use of the word 'body' and talk about how an individual feels on the inside, the relation was made. The argument here concerning duality's two-sidedness was again based upon the idea of the exterior's appearance vs. our true form. In this case, the exterior was presented as unscathed, but the individual on the inside was not being cared for and thus duality is revealed to have a good and bad side. The final stanza was utilized to show the audience that duality is a fight against the self, and to provide them with the eerie notion that in our current society, there are few other options than to choose this duality even though it is double-edged. This presents the poem with a motive and leaves the audience to ponder why society is this way, and it hopefully encourages them to consider their own actions of duality and possibly change them.