

ENGL 100 Live Chat 3



Zoom Meeting Information

- Zoom Meetings are about 60 minutes in length.
- Zoom Meetings are recorded.
- Recordings and PowerPoint presentations are posted on onQ (under “Activities” > “Zoom Meetings”).
- Participate in the discussion by using the “Chat” window or by raising your hand in “Reactions.”
- Your camera may be on or off.

ENGL 100 Zoom Meetings

	Writing Seminars	Essay Debriefs	Live Chats
Weeks 1-3	Writing Seminar 1 (Essay Structure)		Live Chat 1 (Short Fiction)
Weeks 4-6	Writing Seminar 2 (Thesis Statements)	Essay 1 Debrief (Strength/Weakness)	Live Chat 2 (Drama)
Weeks 7-9	Writing Seminar 3 (MLA and Plagiarism)	Essay 2 Debrief (Thesis Statements)	Live Chat 3 (Literary Non-Fiction)
Weeks 10-12	Writing Seminar 4 (Grammar and Style)	Essay 3 Debrief (Grammar and Style)	Live Chat 4 (Poetry)

Kamal Al-Solaylee (1964-)



- born in Aden, now in Yemen; grew up in Beirut and Cairo
- completed a PhD in English in London before moving to Canada to teach journalism at TMU
- political activist for persecuted people of colour and the LGBTQ community
- his first book, *Intolerable* (2010), is a memoir of his experiences as a gay man in the Middle East
- his second book, *Brown* (2016), deals with brownness as a racial identity (*LNF 92*)

The Elements of Literary Non-Fiction



- Truthfulness** *based in fact*
- Mode** *non-fiction subgenre*
- Sources** *research, immersion*
- Viewpoint** *narrative, narrator*
- Audience** *reading, readers*
- Scenes** *building block 1*
- Information** *building block 2*
- Narration** *recreation, reconstr.*
- Structure** *hook, frame*
- Theme** *abstract concept*

Theme

- not the subject of a work but the central idea, stated directly or indirectly (Cuddon 721)
 - an idea about the world, expressed by a literary text, of general importance to people (Headrick 26)
 - an abstract concept that is made concrete through an analysis of the Elements of Literature (SF 3)
 - must go beyond naming the concept and assert what the work is saying about it (4)
- Brown people are everywhere and yet somehow remain invisible or nameless. But ... We keep the world running. ... The words “work permit,” “legal status,” and “permanent visa” are music to our brown ears. The notes get discordant when we hear “minimum wage or below,” “dormitory-style accommodation,” “withholding passports,” or “deportation.” Our lives unfold as a constant battle to move from the second set of words to the first.... (101)

Mode

- **essay**: to understand some aspects of an idea or of the world (LNF 4)
 - **impersonal essay**: formal
 - **personal essay**: informal
 - **lyric essay**: in verse
 - **biography**: an account of a person's life (Cuddon 78)
 - **autobiography**: a person's own account of their life (60)
 - **memoir**: focuses on one aspect, period, or incident (Gutkind 58)
- Oliver!* ... was a big deal in Cairo, and probably an omen for a city whose future poverty levels and income inequality would make Victorian London look like a socialist paradise. I write that with the full benefit of hindsight. I was a nine-year-old boy growing up as part of an expatriate Yemeni family, so I can't say that I knew much about the economy or the distribution of wealth back then. (92)

Truthfulness

- must be verifiably true (Gutkind 167)
 - a hybrid genre
 - **creative**: compelling, vivid, dramatic
 - **non-fiction**: factually accurate prose
 - subjectivity vs objectivity
 - **subjectivity**: personal experience and feeling
 - **objectivity**: outside of and detached from subject matter (Cuddon 690)
- I remember the moment I realized I was Brown. (92)
- The brown migrant worker ... is best symbolized by the millions of Filipina nannies, caregivers, and domestic workers. Their tales of family separation, harsh living conditions, exploitation, and physical abuse transcend borders. According to one labour organization, employers ... who underpay or fail to pay domestics walk away with about \$8 billion a year in illegal profits. (100)

Sources

- **research**: the systematic investigation into and study of materials sources, etc. to establish facts and to reach new conclusions (OED)
 - **immersion**: the absorption or involvement in a particular activity or condition to understand or to relate to it more deeply (OED)
- ... a particular focus of this book are the experiences of the brown migrant and immigrant. Although each term refers to a specific group of people ... the lines between the two continue to be blurred as war and ecological disasters ravage parts of the Global South. ... We're a ... sizable portion of 244 million people living outside our countries of birth (a figure, the UN projects, that will reach 590 million by 2050). (99)

Viewpoint

- **narrative:** a coherent account of a series of interrelated events; a story
 - **narrator:** the voice or viewpoint that relates the story; the narrative perspective
 - **first-person:** subjective; pronouns “I,” “we”
 - **second-person:** subjective-objective; pronoun “you”
 - **third-person:** objective; pronouns “he,” “she,” etc.
- We’re on the move, uprooted, always elsewhere.... You’ll find us at airports, border crossings and ports, aboard trains, ferries, and cars, with our luggage and boxes held together by duct tape and sheer willpower.... Some of us are surgeons, university professors, investors, tech wizards, and creative artists, but many, many more have found a calling in life by doing the work that affluent local people no longer wish to do. (99)

Audience

- **readerly text (*texte lisible*):** a work to which a reader’s response is more or less passive
 - reader is passive “consumer” of meaning
 - **writerly text (*texte scriptible*):** a work that makes demands on the reader to work things out, look for and provide meaning”
 - reader is active “producer” of meaning (Cuddon 588-89)
- As the 2015 federal elections in Canada proved, when a political party lags behind in the polls, nothing whips its base into a frenzy of racial discrimination faster than depicting Muslims as a stain on Canadian values. (99)
- The then-ruling Conservative party promised to establish a police hotline to allow citizens to report “barbaric cultural practices.” This proposal was widely condemned as Islamophobic. (99n)

Scenes

- one of the events in a narrative or story
 - **action:** something happens to impel narrative forwards
 - **structure:** beginning, middle, and end
 - **details:** abstract images symbolizing or acting as metaphors
 - **dialogue:** people talking to each other realistically (Gutkind 114-23)
- In 2004, when I told an Indian friend in Toronto that I’d booked my first-ever trip to Southeast Asia, she asked if I could bring her back some skin-whitening creams.... Had I known such concoctions existed, I would have forked over all my allowances and begged for more to get hold of them.... I spent three weeks travelling through ... gorgeous landscapes ... but I tracked the journey less by the change in scenery and local cultures and more by the gradual darkening of my skin. (98)

Information

- additional details, facts, figures, statistics, etc. to help advance theme (Gutkind 94-95)
 - **scientific data:** empirical information
 - **definitions:** technical terms
 - **historical context:** events in time
 - **statistics:** numerical data
 - **facts:** events in reality
 - **quotations from experts:** authority to ideas
- Facing a mirror and examining not just my hair but my exact shade of brown turned into a lifelong preoccupation.... I know I’m not alone. Who hasn’t obsessed about their body, hair, face, skin—whatever colour the latter may be? Didn’t James Joyce write that “modern man has an epidermis rather than a soul”? (98)
- See Joyce’s essay “The Universal Literary Influence of the Renaissance” (1912). (98n)

Narration

- **recreation and reconstruction:** the ways in which writers pattern their scenes and information (Gutkind 138-39)

- **scene-focused:** mostly scenes, little information
- **information-focused:** mostly information, few scenes

- **scene-with-information:** scenes with embedded information

- **scene-then-information:** alternating scenes and information

The film [*Oliver!*] aired just a few months short of my tenth birthday. Life in Egypt had returned to normal after three weeks of fighting ... the Israeli army.... The end of hostilities meant a return to regular programming and a break from the rotation of military- and nationalist-themed songs and documentaries. My father, a lifelong anglophile, probably insisted that we children watch this slice of Merrie Olde England.... (93)

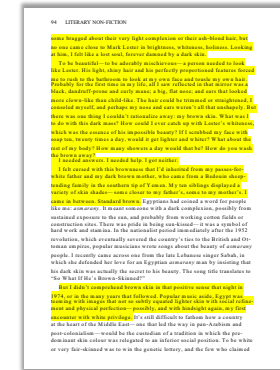
Structure

- **hook:** a compelling opening sentence that grabs the reader's attention (Gutkind 204)

I remember the moment I realized I was brown. My brown face, my brown legs and my curly black hair began to weigh on my mind in a way they never had before. Let me take you back to Cairo, early 1974. For several days, one of Egypt's two state television channels had been promoting the small-screen premiere of *Oliver!*, the 1968 film version of the British musical. (92)

“The Highlighting Test”

Highlight the scenes with yellow, just the scenes.... Then return to the beginning and review your handiwork. Chances are, anywhere from 50 to 70 percent ... will be full of yellow blocks.... Because the building blocks of creative non-fiction are little scenes or stories. (Gutkind 107)



Structure

- **frame:** the central method of organization
 - **chronological:** by time
 - **flashback:** moves backwards
 - **compressed:** only most important events
 - **bookending:** different beginning, end
 - **parallel narratives:** weaves together two or more narratives (Gutkind 218-23)

I recall a Syrian student who refused to join a picnic with other doctoral candidates ... because the sun was too bright that particular July weekend.... Another friend of Indian descent invited me to a curry restaurant ... where she proceeded to treat the dark-skinned waiter ... abominably, dismissing my concerns on the grounds that “darkies” like him were used to this abusive behaviour from the community. (97)

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