

Choose **one** of the two writing examples below. Read it carefully, then explain how it was written, what style, what metaphors. What is the emotion behind the text? Then explain why it is written the way it is. What is the goal of the writing, what does it hope to achieve. Why is it critical?

1 The following passage is quoted from Hunter S. Thompson, 1971:

This country is so basically rotten that a vicious, bigoted pig like John Wayne is a great national hero. Thomas Jefferson would have been horrified by a monster like Wayne – and Wayne, given a shot across the time-span, would be proud to pistol-whip a “radical punk” like Jefferson.

John Wayne is a final, rotten symbol of everything that went wrong with the American Dream – he is our Frankenstein monster, a hero to millions. Wayne is the ultimate & perhaps final “American.” He beats the mortal shit out of anything he can’t understand. The brainwaves of “The Duke” are like those of the Hammerhead Shark – a beast so stupid and irrationally vicious that scientists have abandoned all hope of dealing with it, except as an unexplainable “throwback.” The Hammerhead, they say, is no different today than he was in One Million B.C. He is a ruthless, stupid beast with only one instinct – to attack, to hurt & cripple & kill.

That is the horror of it: That in 1995 the standard/text high school history books will not say that America in the 1960’s was ruled and effectively gutted by a gang of cheap thugs who also happened, for reasons of political necessity, to be Mass Murderers. ... The hired fixers will take over just as soon as this undeclared war is unofficially finished – just as soon as the last shark is called off and brought home for an angry rest. And not one of these blood-hungry Hammerhead scumbags will ever be nailed to the final whipsaw judgement they all deserve.

Not because of what they did. But because they did it in the name of a Dream & a Human Possibility that was fragile from the start, but strong enough to survive almost every abuse and cruel failure that human beings were capable of... except the Hammerhead Ethic, and the beasts who rode it to power. These were the swine who found their model in a brutal freak like John Wayne.

If it won’t salute, stomp it. Break it. Destroy the goddamn queer dirty thing. Rip its lungs out....

注意：背面有試題

所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：批判閱讀

- 2 The following passage is quoted from Walter Benjamin, "One Way Street." 1928

This Space For Rent

Fools lament the decay of criticism. For its day is long past. Criticism is a matter of correct distancing. It was at home in a world where perspectives and prospects counted and where it was still possible to take a standpoint. Now things press too closely on human society. The "unclouded," "innocent," eye has become a lie, perhaps the whole naïve mode of expression sheer incompetence. Today the most real, the mercantile gaze into the heart of things is the advertisement. It abolishes the space where contemplation moved and all but hits us between the eyes with things as a car, growing to gigantic proportions, careens at us out of a film screen. And just as the film does not present furniture and facades in completed forms for critical inspection, their insistent, jerky nearness alone being sensational, the genuine advertisement hurtles things at us with the tempo of a good film. Thereby "matter-of-factness" is finally dispatched, and in face of the huge images across the walls of houses, where toothpaste and cosmetics lie handy for giants, sentimentality is restored to health and liberated in American style, just as people whom nothing moves or touches any longer are taught to cry again by films. For the man in the street, however, it is money that affects him in this way, brings him into perceived contact with things. And the paid critic, manipulating paintings in the dealer's exhibition room, knows more important if not better things about them than the art lover viewing them in the showroom window. What, in the end, makes advertisements so superior to criticism? Not what the moving red neon sign says – but the fiery pool reflecting it in the asphalt.