

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

First, it must be said, that the paragraph below is exemplary in many ways. The opening sentence answers the assignment without being derivative. It sets the tone by being straight to the point and affirmative. The concluding sentence does much the same. As the paragraph concludes the author reaffirms the connection between sound and poetry by using new and fresh, vibrant and exciting language. The middle two sentences are truly the subject of the discussion here because the piece has so much untapped potential.

Galway Kinnell's "Blackberry Eating" is an excellent example of how sound enhances poetry. Kinnell's outstanding use of repeated alliterations gives the poem a different feel than many other poems. The constant use of soft sounds, interrupted quickly by a few hard sounds develops the feeling that Kinnell wanted the reader to feel.

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The repetitive use of certain words slows the reader down to allow them to cherish the poem, and the blackberries longer.

The beginning of the sentence correctly identifies a poetic device, which features prominently in the soundscape of the poem, but the sentence stops there. Saying that the poem has a "different feel than many other poems" works only if one has read as many poems as Donald Hall and I'm not sure anyone, even Donald Hall has read as many poems as Donald Hall.

The end of the sentence would be better served by introducing and tying an additional aspect of the poem to the alliteration. Without doing something more here the sentence feels empty at its conclusion.

Additionally, the value added language: "outstanding" is unnecessary.

The issues here are much the same as in the previous sentence except for the addition of the intentional fallacy. The reader can never truly know the intent of the author. Even if an author were to publish a piece in which he or she were to discuss the rationale(s) behind every decision made in a piece of writing, one should still not trust a person who creates stories for a living.

"Soft sounds, interrupted quickly by a few hard sounds" really cannot be improved upon in any tangible way. I would prefer "harsh" personally, but I'm not sure it matters. The largest issue here is that the beginning of the sentence ends up dangling and waiting for something to be connected to.

The fix in both these cases is to tie the device or definition of a device back to the piece and say something important about the work. What effect does it have on the work as a whole? What would the piece be missing without the device playing the prominent role that it does?