

# Going for the Look

Reading selection for this module:

Greenhouse, Steven. "Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination." *New York Times*. 13 July 2003.

**English–Language Arts  
(ELA) Content Standard:  
Word Analysis, Fluency,  
and Systematic Vocabulary  
Development**

- 1.3 Discern the meaning of analogies encountered, analyzing specific comparisons as well as relationships and inferences.

**Writing Applications  
(Genres and Their  
Characteristics)**

- 2.3 Write reflective compositions:
- Explore the significance of personal experiences, events, conditions, or concerns by using rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, description, exposition, persuasion).

## Reading Rhetorically

### Prereading

---

#### Introducing Key Concepts

For Activity 1, bring a selection of ads for clothing stores (e.g., the Gap, Lands End, and Benetton) that feature models who reflect “the look” the company wants to project. Ask your students to work in groups or pairs to discuss “the look” they think the company wants to project. Then have the students narrow their lists down to three words. Ask the groups or pairs to share the words they have identified to describe “the look.” Write the words on the board or on an overhead projector. Then ask your students to categorize the words or choose a clothing store where a person having “the look” they have described might work. Categories would include physical appearance, dress, and attitude or personality.

#### **Activity 1: Introducing Key Concepts**

Your teacher will give you several magazine ads for clothing stores. Working with your group, list as many words as you can that describe “the look” of the model or models in each ad.

#### Getting Ready to Read

Now ask your students to work on Activity 2, a quickwrite, for five or 10 minutes.

#### **Activity 2: Getting Ready to Read**

**Quickwrite:** Should companies be able to hire only people who project the company image?

*Note:* The activities for students provided in the Student Version for this module are copied here in the Teacher Version for your convenience. The shaded areas include the actual activities the students will see. The use of italics in the shaded areas generally indicates possible student responses and may be interspersed with notes to the teacher that are not shaded. If there are notes to the teacher within the shaded areas, they are indicated by italics and parentheses.

**Reading Comprehension  
(Focus on Informational  
Materials)**

- 2.1 Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices.

**Reading Comprehension  
(Focus on Informational  
Materials)**

- 2.1 Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices.

An alternative to the quickwrite would be to have the students write a brief reflective essay on a topic related to the text. In that case, have your students use rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, description, exposition, persuasion) to explore the significance of personal experiences, events, conditions, or concerns as they write their brief essays.

***A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing***

If you are using *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing* with your class, begin Chapter 2 (Sentence Problems: Run-ons and Fragments) now. Do Exercise 2 (Guided Composition).

**Surveying the Text**

Ask your students to respond to the questions in Activity 3.

**Activity 3: Surveying the Text**

Discuss the following questions with your class:

1. What does the title of Greenhouse’s article, “Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination,” tell you about the topic of this article?

*I’m not sure what “the look” is, but it sounds like maybe it’s about trying to look stylish. I don’t understand why looking stylish could lead to discrimination. I need to read more to find out what the connection is.*

2. The article was published in *The New York Times*. What do you expect from an article published by this newspaper? Will it be interesting? Will you be able to believe what the author says?

*The New York Times is an important newspaper. I expect that an article published there would be very factual. The New York Times is also supposed to be pretty liberal, so the article might be slanted in a liberal direction. It would probably be long and hard to read. It could also be pretty boring.*

3. What can you tell about the article by looking at its length and the length of its paragraphs?

*The article isn’t as long as I expected, and the paragraphs are mostly really short, sometimes even just one sentence. But I guess that’s typical of a newspaper article, even one from The New York Times.*

**Making Predictions and Asking Questions**

Your students are now ready to complete Activity 4.

**Activity 4: Making Predictions and Asking Questions**

1. Read the first five paragraphs. What are they about? Now read the last paragraph. Melissa Milkie states, “Whether that’s morally proper is a different question.” What is it that she is wondering about?

*When Elizabeth Nill goes into an Abercrombie & Fitch store, managers offer her a job just because she looks good. But that means that if somebody doesn’t*

- 2.3 Verify and clarify facts presented in other types of expository texts by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.

*look good, especially if they aren't young and blond, they might not get the job. That doesn't seem fair.*

2. What do you think this article is going to be about?

*Now I understand the connection to discrimination. This article must be about hiring people because they are good looking, not because they are necessarily well-qualified.*

3. What do you think is the purpose of this article?

*I think the purpose of the article is to look at the arguments for hiring for looks that business owners might make, but also it raises the question about whether it's right to discriminate based on appearance.*

4. Who do you think is the intended audience for this piece? What other audiences might be interested in this topic?

*Since this article comes from The New York Times, I assume it's for a general audience. It's not going to just be for high school and college kids who like to shop, and it's not going to be for people who manage stores.*

5. Will the article take a position on the topic of hiring people to project a certain image? Why do you think so?

*I think it's probably going to talk about both sides of the issue. The title only says stores are "risking discrimination." I think it would probably be different if the article was going to just talk about how it's wrong to hire people because of their looks.*

6. Turn the title into a question (or questions) to answer after you have read the text.

*Why are stores "going for the look"? Why are they risking discrimination?*

### Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

- 1.0 Students apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately.
- 1.1 Trace the etymology of significant terms used in political science and history.
- 1.2 Apply knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to draw inferences concerning the meaning of scientific and mathematical terminology.

## Introducing Key Vocabulary

When you assign "Going for the Look," a good first step will be to list a few important words and phrases, and then ask your students to guess the meaning of those words and phrases from the context of the article. Key words and phrases for "Going for the Look" might be

- discrimination: treating one group differently from another;
- classic American look: a preppy look;
- retailers: stores that sell to the public, not wholesalers that sell to businesses;
- project the brand: reflect the store's image.

Have your students work together as a class to create semantic maps (or webs) for these key words and phrases. Write each one on the board or on an overhead projector, and then ask your students to generate related categories (or suggest the categories yourself). Then ask your students to generate specific examples.

Constructing semantic maps will help the students remember the meanings of the vocabulary words and understand the passages in which the

**COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS**

In addition to responding to the ELA standards, these activities are designed to develop the vocabulary skills assessed by college placement exams, such as the California State University English Placement Test and the University of California-Analytical Writing Placement Exam. Students should be able to do the following:

- Recognize word meanings in context.
- Respond to tone and connotation.

words are used. Semantic maps work best when the whole class or small groups create them because the students will learn other words generated by the class in the process.

Have your students engage in Activity 5. The following example is a map for the word “discrimination”:

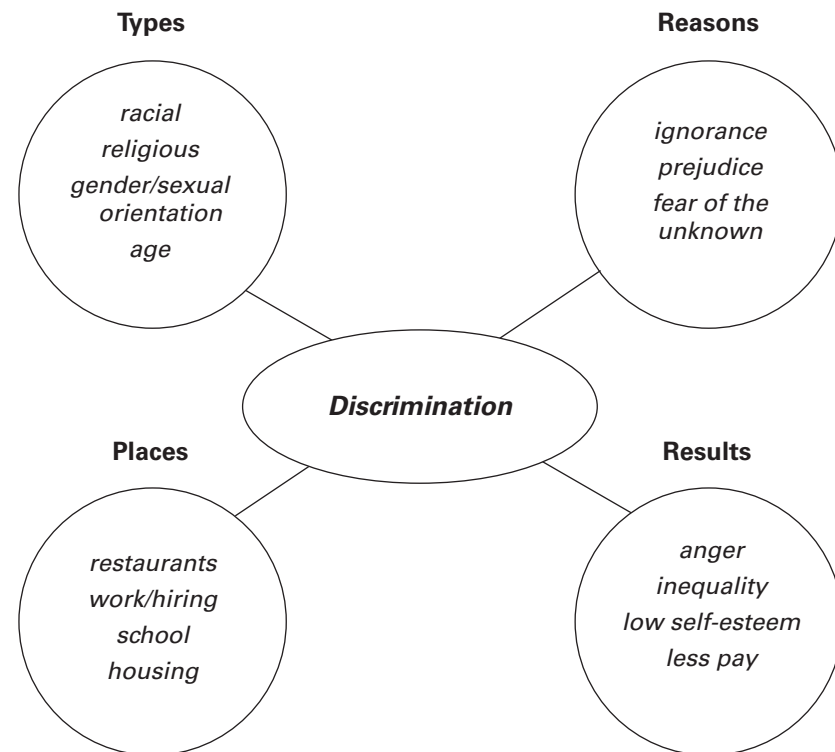
**Activity 5: Introducing Key Vocabulary**

A semantic map (or web) will help you organize the terms your teacher will give you for this activity.

**Directions:**

1. Write the topic in the center of the map.
2. Create categories based on the topic.
3. List words that fall under the categories.

Here is a sample semantic map.



In addition to the key words and terms, you may want to select from the text other terms related to marketing and the fashion industry that might cause the students confusion. Have your students discuss and map the terms, which might include any of the following words:

seller	clerk
buyer	salesgirl
shopper	owner of the company

CEO	store consultant
marketing representative	model
PR (public relations) representative	manager
lawyer	clothing designer
attorney	clothing manufacturer
business executive	merchandise
president of the company	trends
corporation	apparel
business	corporate
company	clothing industry

In this type of map, the vocabulary words are already listed, so your students will construct the categories on the basis of the similarity of the words you have provided. Possible categories include upper-level management and company representatives (owner, president, CEO, buyer for the company); store workers (clerk, salesgirl, store manager); customers (buyer, shopper); and related business associates (lawyer, clothing manufacturer). Students can create their own semantic maps to categorize these “company” terms.

### *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing*

If you are using *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing* with your class, continue with Chapter 2 now. Teach mini-lessons and assign exercises 2–8 as you move through the Reading and Postreading sections of this unit.

## Reading

### First Reading

Your students are now ready to read the remainder of the text. Ask your students to complete Activity 6.

#### **Activity 6: First Reading**

You have read the first five paragraphs and the conclusion. Now read the rest of the article silently. As you read, think about the predictions you have made, and then answer the following questions.

1. Of your original predictions, which were right? Which did you have to modify as you reread “Going for the Look”?

*I predicted the article would be about trying to look stylish, but I didn't understand the connection to discrimination. Now I realize that the article is about stores hiring good looking salespeople to project their image and possibly discriminating against people who don't fit “the look”.*

*I thought the article would be long and boring. Actually, it wasn't that long and it wasn't boring at all. I did think it was pretty critical of stores like Abercrombie's.*

**Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development**

- 1.0 Students apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately.

2. Find and underline the most significant sentence in the article. Why is it the most important sentence?

*“If you’re hiring by looks, then you can run into problems of race discrimination, national origin discrimination, age discrimination and even disability discrimination . . . ” (paragraph 9)*

3. What is the main idea of “Going for the Look”? Write it in the box at the end of the article.

*Companies have increasingly been hiring “for the look” because it helps their profits, but as a result they may get in trouble for discriminating against people who don’t fit “the look.”*

## Looking Closely at Language

Vocabulary acquisition occurs on a continuum. With repeated exposure, a student will gradually refine his or her understanding of the meanings of words and know the circumstances under which they are used correctly. The vocabulary self-assessment chart in Activity 7 will help your students think about whether a word is familiar and, if so, to what degree. It will also help draw your students’ attention to particular words that are important to know in order to understand the article. After your students have filled out the chart, have them discuss as a class their knowledge of the words. Introduce them to word families, such as “coincidence,” “coincide,” “coincidental,” and “coincidentally.” Point out such prefixes as *im-* and *in-* that are clues to word meanings. The self-assessment chart will also help identify words for which your students will need direct instruction. Now assign Activity 7.

### Activity 7: Looking Closely at Language

#### Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

This vocabulary self-assessment chart will help you think about whether a word is familiar and to what degree. It will also help draw your attention to particular words that are important to understanding the article. Use concise definitions to fill out the chart.

Word	Definition	Know It Well	Have Heard of It	Don't Know It
coincidence	<i>when two things happen together by chance and in a surprising way</i>			
aggressive	<i>forceful and determined to succeed</i>			
discriminating	<i>treating unfairly</i>			
pervasive	<i>found throughout</i>			
emphatically	<i>with emphasis, strongly</i>			
upscale	<i>for wealthy customers</i>			

reeks of	<i>smells unpleasantly of; strongly suggests</i>			
inadvertently	<i>accidentally</i>			
impermissible	<i>not allowed</i>			
incompetent	<i>not able to do the job</i>			
impacts	<i>has an effect on</i>			

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.7 Use systematic strategies to organize and record information (e.g. anecdotal scripting, annotated bibliographies).

**Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)**

- 2.2 Analyze the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by the patterns of organization, hierarchical structures, repetition of the main ideas, syntax, and word choice in the text.

**Rereading the Text**

Now move on to Activity 8.

**Activity 8: Rereading the Text**

Now that you know what Greenhouse’s “Going for the Look” is about, go back and reread it.

Using a highlighter or pencil, mark the following parts of the text:

- Where the introduction ends  
*At the end of paragraph 5*
- Where Greenhouse identifies the issue or problem he is writing about  
*At the end of paragraph 7: “hiring workers to project an image”*
- The examples Greenhouse gives
  - Abercrombie’s*
  - L’Oreal cosmetics*
  - W Hotel chain*
  - Gap*
  - Benetton*
- The argument of retailers
  - Mr. Serrano: “If we had the best-looking college kids working in our store, everyone will want to shop there.” (paragraph 57)*
  - Mr. Cohen: find a “brand enhancer” or “a walking billboard.” “A guy wants to hang out in a store where he can see good looking gals.” (paragraph 17)*
- The advice of the lawyer  
*Mr. Roppolo: “I tell employers that their main focus needs to be hiring somebody who can get the job done. When they want to hire to project a certain image that’s where things can get screwy.” (paragraph 23)*
- The customer’s viewpoint  
*Matthew Sheehy, a high school senior: “If you see an attractive person working in the store wearing Abercrombie clothes, it makes you want to wear it, too.” (paragraph 25)*
- The conclusion  
*Melissa Milkie: “Good-looking people are treated better by others. Maybe companies have noticed that hiring them impacts their bottom line. Whether that’s morally proper is a different question.” (paragraph 29)*

**Reading Comprehension  
(Focus on Informational  
Materials)**

- 2.1 Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices.
- 2.2 Analyze the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by the patterns of organization, hierarchical structures, repetition of the main ideas, syntax, and word choice in the text.

In the right-hand margin, write your reactions to what Greenhouse and the people he quotes are saying.

Now exchange your copy of “Going for the Look” with a partner. Read your partner’s annotations and reactions, and then talk about what you chose to mark and how you reacted to the text. Did you and your partner agree on what the main idea is?

## Considering the Structure of the Text

Now have your students break into groups to complete Activity 9, which will have them describe the content and rhetorical purpose of each section.

Then use an overhead projector and guide your students as a class to come to a consensus about the content and purpose of each section. Fill in the boxes as you discuss the contributions of each group.

Conclude by asking your students whether they think the text’s argument is explicit or implicit. Ask them to identify where the argument is stated.

### Activity 9: Considering the Structure of the Text

Fill in the spaces after each section with the content and/or purpose of the preceding paragraphs.

#### Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination

by Steven Greenhouse  
*The New York Times*, July 13, 2003

- 1 A funny thing happens when Elizabeth Nill, a sophomore at Northwestern University, goes shopping at Abercrombie & Fitch.
- 2 At no fewer than three Abercrombie stores, she says, managers have approached her and offered her a job as a clerk.
- 3 “Every time this happens, my little sister says, ‘Not again,’” said Ms. Nill, who is 5-foot-6 and has long blond hair. She looks striking. She looks hip. She looks, in fact, as if she belongs in an Abercrombie & Fitch catalog.
- 4 Is this a coincidence? A fluke? No, says Antonio Serrano, a former assistant Abercrombie store manager in Scranton, Pa. It’s policy.

**Content and Purpose:** *Describes how Elizabeth Nill is constantly offered jobs at A & F because of her looks. The purpose is to use a story about “hiring for the look” to grab the readers’ attention and introduce the topic.*

- 5 “If someone came in with a pretty face, we were told to approach them and ask them if they wanted a job,” Mr. Serrano said. “They thought if we had the best-looking college kids working in our store, everyone will want to shop there.”
- 6 Abercrombie’s aggressive approach to building a pretty and handsome sales force, an effort that company officials proudly acknowledge, is a leading example of what many industry experts and sociologists describe

as a steadily growing trend in American retailing. From Abercrombie to the cosmetics giant L’Oreal, from the sleek W hotel chain to the Gap, businesses are openly seeking workers who are sexy, sleek or simply good-looking.

- 7 Hiring for looks is old news in some industries, as cocktail waitresses, strippers and previous generations of flight attendants know all too well. But many companies have taken that approach to sophisticated new heights in recent years, hiring workers to project an image.
- 8 In doing so, some of those companies have been skirting the edges of antidiscrimination laws and provoking a wave of private and government lawsuits. Hiring attractive people is not necessarily illegal, but discriminating on the basis of age, sex or ethnicity is. That is where things can get confusing and contentious.
- 9 “If you’re hiring by looks, then you can run into problems of race discrimination, national origin discrimination, gender discrimination, age discrimination and even disability discrimination,” said Olophius Perry, director of the Los Angeles office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which has accused several companies of practicing race and age discrimination by favoring good-looking young white people in their hiring.

---

**Content and Purpose:** *Describes the trend of companies hiring workers “to project an image.” Gives examples such as L’Oreal, W hotels, and Gap. Explains that hiring for looks can run into problems of discrimination and lawsuits. The purpose is to let readers know that the article is going to discuss the pros and cons of “hiring for the look.”*

---

- 10 Some chains, most notably the Gap and Benetton, pride themselves on hiring attractive people from many backgrounds and races. Abercrombie’s “classic American” look, pervasive in its store and catalogs and on its Web site, is blond, blue-eyed and preppy. Abercrombie finds such workers and models by concentrating its hiring on certain colleges, fraternities, and sororities.
- 11 The company says it does not discriminate. But in a lawsuit filed last month in Federal District Court in San Francisco, some Hispanic, Asian and black job applicants maintained otherwise. Several plaintiffs said in interviews that when they applied for jobs, store managers steered them to the stockroom, not to the sales floor.
- 12 In interviews, managers like Mr. Serrano described a recruiting approach used by Abercrombie, which has become one of the most popular retailers among the nation’s youth.
- 13 “We were supposed to approach someone in the mall who we think will look attractive in our store,” said Mr. Serrano, who said he quit when told he would be promoted only if he accepted a transfer. “If that person said, ‘I never worked in retailing before,’ we said: ‘Who cares? We’ll hire you.’ But if someone came in who had lots of retail experience and not a pretty face, we were told not to hire them at all.”

- 14 Tom Lennox, Abercrombie’s communications director, emphatically denied job bias but acknowledged the company likes hiring sales assistants, known as brand representatives, who “look great.”
- 15 “Brand representatives are ambassadors to the brand,” Mr. Lennox said. “We want to hire brand representatives that will represent the Abercrombie & Fitch brand with natural classic American style, look great while exhibiting individuality, project the brand and themselves with energy and enthusiasm, and make the store a warm, inviting place that provides a social experience for the customer.”

---

**Content and Purpose:** *Explains that minority employees at A & F are suing because they did not get sales jobs. A & F denies they discriminated but wanted to hire people who “looked great” to represent the brand. The purpose is to give the reader an example of how a store chooses to hire good-looking salespeople to represent their brand but may discriminate in the process.*

---

- 16 Retailers defend that approach to hiring as necessary and smart, and industry experts see the point.
- 17 “In today’s competitive retail environment, the methods have changed for capturing the consumers’ awareness of your brand,” said Marshal Cohen, a senior industry analyst with the NPD Group, a market research firm. “Being able to find a brand enhancer, or what I call a walking billboard, is critical. It’s really important to create an environment that’s enticing to the community, particularly with the younger, fashionable market. A guy wants to go hang out in a store where he can see good-looking gals.”

---

**Purpose:** *The purpose is to give the retailers’ argument for “hiring for the look.” It suggests that young men like to shop at stores with good-looking female salespeople.*

---

- 18 While hiring by looks has a long history, some sociologists and retail consultants agree that the emphasis has increased—not at WalMart and other mass marketers, but at upscale businesses.
- 19 The federal government has accused some of the businesses of going too far. The hotel entrepreneur Ian Scharger agreed to a \$1.08 million settlement three years ago after the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission accused his Mondrian Hotel in West Hollywood of racial discrimination for firing nine valets and bellhops, eight of them non-white. Documents filed in court showed that Mr. Scharger had written memos saying that he wanted a trendier group of workers and that the fired employees were “too ethnic.”
- 20 Last month the commission reached a \$5,000 settlement with 36th Street Food and Drink, a restaurant in St. Joseph, Mo., after accusing it of age discrimination against a 47-year-old waitress. The waitress, Michele Cornell, had worked at the restaurant for 23 years, but when it

reopened after renovations, it refused to rehire her because, the commission said, she no longer fit the young, trendy look it had adopted.

- 21** “The problem with all this image stuff is it just reeks of marketing for this white-bread, Northern European, thin, wealthy, fashion-model look,” said Donna Harper, supervisory attorney in the commission’s St. Louis office. “We all can’t be Anglo, athletic and young.”
- 22** Ms. Harper said an employer who insisted on hiring only athletic-looking people could be viewed as discriminating against a person in a wheelchair. Employers who insisted on hiring only strapping, tall people might be found guilty of discriminating against Mexican-Americans or Asian-Americans, who tend to be shorter, she added.
- 23** Stephen J. Roppolo, a New Orleans lawyer who represents many hotels and restaurants, said: “Hiring someone who is attractive isn’t illegal per se. But people’s views on what’s attractive may be influenced by their race, their religion, their age. If I think Caucasian people are more attractive than African-American people, then I may inadvertently discriminate in some impermissible way. I tell employers that their main focus needs to be hiring somebody who can get the job done. When they want to hire to project a certain image, that’s where things can get screwy.”

---

**Purpose:** *Explains the legal issues involved in hiring for looks. The purpose is to help the reader understand that hiring for looks can result in discriminating against people who don’t happen to fit the store’s image.*

---

- 24** Image seemed very much in evidence the other evening at the Abercrombie & Fitch store in Water Tower Place, one of Chicago’s most upscale malls. Working there was a 6-foot-2 sales clerk with muscles rippling under his Abercrombie T-shirt and a young long-haired blond clerk, her navel showing, who could have been a fashion model.
- 25** “If you see an attractive person working in the store wearing Abercrombie clothes, it makes you want to wear it, too,” said Matthew Sheehy, a high school senior from Orland Park, a Chicago suburb.

---

**Purpose:** *Gives the point of view of a customer who likes to shop at A & F because they hire good-looking salespeople. The purpose is to give an example of why “hiring for the look” helps business.*

---

- 26** Elysa Yanowitz says that when she was a West Coast sales manager for L’Oreal, she felt intense pressure to hire attractive saleswomen, even if they were incompetent. In fact, she says, company officials sought to force her out after she ignored an order to fire a woman a top manager described as not “hot” enough.
- 27** “It was pretty well understood that they had to have magazine-look quality,” she said of the sales force. “Everyone is supposed to look like a 110-pound model.”

28 L’Oreal officials did not respond to a request for comment.

**Purpose:** Gives the example of a L’Oreal manager who was pressured to hire “for the look.” The purpose is to give an argument against hiring for the look. It shows that hiring for the look can mean hiring incompetent salespeople.

29 Melissa Milkie, a sociology professor at the University of Maryland who has written about perceptions of beauty, said: “Good-looking people are treated better by others. Maybe companies have noticed that hiring them impacts their bottom line. Whether that’s morally proper is a different question.”

**Purpose:** Quotes a sociology professor about why “hiring for the look” is good business but possibly wrong. The purpose is to conclude the article by acknowledging that “hiring for the look” may help a business but lead to discrimination.

#### Literary Response and Analysis

3.3 Analyze the ways in which irony, tone, mood, the author’s style, and the “sound” of language achieve specific rhetorical or aesthetic purposes or both.

#### COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS

In addition to responding to the ELA standard, these activities are designed to develop the close reading skills assessed by college placement exams, such as the English Placement Test and the Analytical Writing Placement Exam. Students should be able to do the following:

- Draw inferences and conclusions.
- Respond to tone and connotation.

## Analyzing Stylistic Choices

Activity 10 provides your students with vocabulary, sentence, paragraph, and essay practice. The “Word” part of this activity will give you another chance to teach vocabulary within the context of the article. Students with a more limited vocabulary will need to learn the meanings of such words as “ambassadors,” “enhancer,” and “entice” before they can understand the ways in which those words are being used to give a particular slant to the activity of the retailers. This activity is best done as a whole-class discussion so your students will have an opportunity to share their knowledge of the expressions and you will have an opportunity to supplement your students’ knowledge. One way to do so is for you to write in two columns some of the expressions you have identified. One column is for the denotative meaning of the word. Have your students write the sentence or phrase in which the word occurs, then have them explain why the writer chose to use that particular word.

For the sentence, paragraph, and essay portions of Activity 10, your students may complete the exercises individually or in small groups. Then discuss the results as a whole class.

### Activity 10: Analyzing Stylistic Choices

#### Words

Greenhouse’s “Going for the Look” is about American retailing, in which advertising jargon often substitutes for ordinary language. Discuss what the following phrases from paragraphs 15 and 17 *really* mean. Why do marketing experts use jargon?

- Brand representative: *salesperson*
- Ambassadors to the brand: *salesperson*

- Natural classic American style: *a preppy style that looks like the clothes of wealthy, white Americans*
- Social experience for the customer: *making shopping seem like being with friends*
- Brand enhancer: *something that makes a brand seem more desirable*
- Walking billboard: *a person that acts like an advertisement for the store*
- Enticing to the community: *an environment that makes potential customers want to come into the store*

### Sentences

- Greenhouse writes about Elizabeth Nill, “She looks striking. She looks hip. She looks, in fact, like she belongs in an Abercrombie & Fitch catalog” (paragraph 3). Why does he repeat “She looks . . .”? Why does he say the third time, “She looks, in fact, as if she belongs in an Abercrombie & Fitch catalog”?

*Greenhouse is emphasizing Elizabeth’s looks and particularly the fact that she looks like an Abercrombie & Fitch model, which is why the store offers her a job.*

- In paragraph 19, why is “too ethnic” in quotation marks? How is this use of quotation marks different from their use with “classic American” in paragraph 10?

*It’s in quotes because it’s what Mr. Schrager said in his memo. It shows that the workers were fired because they were not white and therefore didn’t reflect the trendy look of the Mondrian Hotel. In “classic American” look, the quotes indicate that the writer doesn’t necessarily agree that what Abercrombie’s sells really is “classic American.” He’s not quoting any particular person.*

### Paragraphs

- Look at paragraph 16. Why do you think it has only one sentence?  
*It suggests that retailers think the argument for hiring “for the look” is simple and doesn’t require much explanation. They believe it is “necessary and smart” and don’t even acknowledge the moral and legal arguments against it.*
- How would you combine the short, journalistic paragraphs into longer ones that would each contain one main idea? Draw lines to show which paragraphs you would combine.

### Essay

- Greenhouse quotes several different people. Using the tone you think they would use, read aloud what they say. What kind of person do you think each one is? How much do you think you can trust what they say? Why?

#### 1. Mr. Serrano, a former Abercrombie & Fitch employee:

“We were supposed to approach someone in the mall who we think will look attractive in our store. If that person said, ‘I never worked in retailing before,’ we said: ‘Who cares? We’ll hire you.’ But if someone came in who had lots of retail experience and not a pretty face, we were told not to hire them at all.”

*I sympathize with Mr. Serrano. He was in a really tough position when he had to hire people who weren't qualified and turn away people who had experience. I trust what he says because he actually was involved in hiring people for their looks, and he quit because of it.*

**2. Tom Lennox, Abercrombie's communications director:**

"Brand representatives are ambassadors to the brand. We want to hire brand representatives that will represent the Abercrombie & Fitch brand with natural classic American style, look great while exhibiting individuality, project the brand and themselves with energy and enthusiasm, and make the store a warm, inviting place that provides a social experience for the customer."

*Lennox's tone is smooth, friendly, and a little pushy. I don't like the way he calls salespeople "brand representatives" and "ambassadors to the brand" and talks about shopping as "a social experience for the customer." We're just talking about buying jeans and tee-shirts. This makes it sound like something really big. I don't trust him very much because he's too slick. I think he knows he's discriminating but doesn't want to admit it.*

**3. Marshal Cohen, a senior industry analyst with the NPD Group, a market research firm**

"In today's competitive retail environment, the methods have changed for capturing the consumers' awareness of your brand. Being able to find a brand enhancer, or what I call a walking billboard, is critical. It's really important to create an environment that's enticing to the community, particularly with the younger, fashionable market. A guy wants to go hang out in a store where he can see good-looking gals."

*Cohen sounds like a used car salesman and a male chauvinist besides. He talks about people as though they were things when he uses terms like "brand enhancers" and "walking billboard." I wouldn't want to work for somebody who thought I was a billboard. I also wouldn't want to work for somebody who just hired me so men could look at me. I don't trust what he says at all.*

**4. Donna Harper, supervisory attorney in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's office in St. Louis**

"The problem with all this image stuff is it just reeks of marketing for this white-bread, Northern European, thin, wealthy, fashion-model look. We all can't be Anglo, athletic and young."

*She sounds pretty dramatic. I can just imagine her in front of a jury. She uses really loaded language with words like "reeks" and "white-bread" and her tone is argumentative. On the other hand, she is right when she says, "We all can't be Anglo, athletic and young." I don't completely trust her because I think she's only giving one side of the argument.*

- How formal or informal is "Going for the Look"? How would the text be different if it were intended for a group of retailers? What if it were intended for employment counselors who help people apply for jobs?

*The text is quite informal, beginning with the first words, “A funny thing happens when . . .” Greenhouse uses short paragraphs, short sentences, and slang such as “hip,” “pretty face,” “screwy,” and “hot.”*

*If he were writing for a group of retailers, he would be more formal and would probably leave out a lot of the examples and quotes. Instead he would spend more time talking about the reasons stores hire “for the look” and the legal issues that are involved.*

*If he were writing for employment counselors, he might want to alert them to the trend and advise them to tell job applicants about what they can do if they feel they have been discriminated against because they don’t fit a store’s image.*

## Postreading

### Summarizing and Responding

Your students are now ready to summarize the text. Encourage them to refer to the annotations they made in Activity 8 and the descriptive outline from Activity 9 as they create their summaries.

#### Prerequisite Seventh Grade: Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

- 2.5 Write summaries of reading materials:
- Include the main ideas and most significant details.
  - Use the student’s own words, except for quotations.
  - Reflect underlying meaning, not just the superficial details.

#### Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

- 2.2 Write responses to literature:
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the significant ideas in works or passages.

#### Activity 11: Summarizing and Responding

Write a summary of the article. When you finish, exchange your summary with a partner. Use the Peer Response to Summary Form to evaluate your partner’s summary/response.

##### Peer Response to Summary

- Does the writer include the author’s name in the first sentence of the summary? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 No \_\_\_\_\_  
*Writer: Include the author’s name.*
- Does the writer include the title of the essay in the first sentence of the summary? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 No \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is the title in quotation marks? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 No \_\_\_\_\_  
*Writer: Punctuate the title using quotation marks.*
- Does the first sentence clearly state the main idea of the article? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 No \_\_\_\_\_  
*Writer: State the main idea in the first sentence.  
 Make sure it is clear and accurate.*  
 You can improve your first sentence by \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does the writer include all of the important ideas or supporting points from the essay? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writer: *You left out an important point* (specify which): No \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does the writer use his/her own words? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writer: *You used the author's words instead of your own.*  
 (Tell where—give paragraph or line number.) \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the writer keep his/her own opinions out of the summary? Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Writer: *You mentioned your opinion in the summary.*  
 (Tell where—give paragraph or line number.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Remember to save your opinion for your response! No \_\_\_\_\_

(From *LS 15 Course Materials*, California State University, Sacramento; copyright 2003)

### Sample Summary and Response

**Summary:** *In “Going for the Look, but Risking Discrimination,” Steven Greenhouse explains that stores are increasingly trying to hire workers who are “sexy, sleek, or simply good-looking” in order to increase in their business, but this may be illegal discrimination. Companies are “hiring workers to project an image,” but this can be illegal if they discriminate on the basis of age, sex, or ethnicity. Some companies hire attractive people from many backgrounds and races, but others only want employees who are “blond, blue-eyed, and preppy.” Ethnic job applicants have filed a lawsuit against Abercrombie’s in San Francisco claiming they were only hired to work in the stockroom, not on the sales floor. A manager said they were told to hire people based on looks, not on experience. Tom Lennox, Abercrombie’s communications director, denied job bias, but said the store wants workers who are “ambassadors to the brand.” Industry experts say the approach is necessary to attract buyers. However, a hotel in Hollywood lost a racial discrimination lawsuit when it fired employees who were “too ethnic,” and a St. Joseph, Missouri, restaurant had to pay a settlement to a waitress who was not rehired because she was too old. A lawyer who represents hotels and restaurants says they need to focus on competence, not image, when hiring. However, a high school senior said he wanted to wear Abercrombie clothes when he saw an attractive person in the store wearing them. Even though hiring attractive people may be good for business, it may also be immoral.*

**Response:** *I’ve always wondered why Nordstrom’s sales people always look like models, sales people at J. Crew always look preppy, and sales people at REI look like mountain climbers. Now I know. I can understand why stores are tempted to hire people who are advertisements for what they sell. I think there are lots of people who don’t think about why they want to buy something and don’t realize it’s only because the clerk is wearing it. They may hate it when they get it home. On the other hand, I wonder if the clerks realize they have their jobs not because of their nice personalities, but because their boss wants them to be a “walk-*

*ing billboard.” That’s kind of insulting. I hope more people who don’t get hired because of how they look bring lawsuits. That’s the only way to make stores realize they need to hire people because they’re good workers and treat customers well, not because they look good.*

### Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)

- 2.4 Make warranted and reasonable assertions about the author’s arguments by using elements of the text to defend and clarify interpretations.
- 2.5 Analyze an author’s implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject.
- 2.6 Critique the power, validity, and truthfulness of arguments set forth in public documents; their appeal to both friendly and hostile audiences; and the extent to which the arguments anticipate and address reader concerns and counterclaims (e.g., appeal to reason, to authority, to pathos and emotion).

### COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS

In addition to responding to the ELA standards, these activities are designed to develop the skills assessed by college placement exams, such as the English Placement Test and the Analytical Writing Placement Exam. Students should be able to do the following:

- Identify important ideas.
- Understand direct statements.
- Draw inferences and conclusions.
- Detect underlying assumptions.
- Recognize word meanings in context.
- Respond to tone and connotation.

## Thinking Critically

For Activity 12, divide the class into groups of three to five students. Assign each student group one of this activity’s groups of questions. Designate a reporter to record the student groups’ answers. If your students have time after finishing the questions for their group, ask them to go on to the other questions. After most of the groups are finished, ask them to share their answers with the class.

### Activity 12: Thinking Critically

Work with your group to answer the assigned questions. Select a reporter to write down your group’s answers. If you finish early, go on to the other questions. Then share your answers with the class.

#### Group 1

1. Why did Greenhouse tell the story of Elizabeth Nill’s experience at Abercrombie & Fitch? What is your reaction to the story?  
*Elizabeth’s story shows how stores try to recruit employees for their looks. It never occurred to me that stores were so open about recruiting people to work for them who projected their image. I guess I just thought people who fit a certain image applied to that kind of store because they liked to shop there.*
2. In the conclusion, Greenhouse quotes a sociology professor, Melissa Milkie, who says, “Maybe companies have noticed that hiring [good-looking people] impacts their bottom line” (paragraph 29). What does this mean? Is it a good justification?  
*It means that employers have noticed that hiring good looking people can increase their profits. Obviously, companies need to make money, but there is no justification for discrimination.*  
*If I needed a job, it wouldn’t be fair for a store or restaurant to turn me down just because I didn’t fit their image. They need to hire me because I can do the work, not because of how I look.*
3. Who do you think makes the best argument either for or against hiring for “the look”? Why?  
*I think Roppolo makes the fairest argument. He recognizes that there’s nothing wrong in hiring someone who looks good. An employer would be crazy to hire who looked sloppy because that probably means they’d be a sloppy worker. We all know about “dress for success.” But hiring people just because they look like models is discrimination. That’s what he means when he said, “When they want to hire to project a certain image, that’s where things can get screwy.”*

### Group 2

1. Have you observed stores or restaurants that seem to have hired their employees to project a certain image? How do you feel about this practice?

*Yes, all you have to do is walk around the mall. Stores that want to attract young people have young, trendy-looking salespeople. Stores that want to attract people with careers have salespeople who look like that. Outdoor stores hire people that look like they climb mountains on weekends. I can understand why stores want to do this. But I don't think it's fair to discriminate. Also I'd rather have a competent salesperson than a beautiful one who didn't know what she was doing.*

2. Do you think that Greenhouse represents both sides of the argument objectively or does he appeal to the reader's emotions? Give examples of either the way he is objective or the way he slants the arguments.

*He seems fair since he never gives us his opinion one way or the other. But now that I look more closely at the people he quotes, I think he is slanting the argument against the retailers. For example, Olophius Perry sounds reasonable when he says that you can run into problems of discrimination when you hire for looks. I believe him. But I don't trust Tom Lennox because he doesn't just say what he means; instead he talks about "ambassadors to the brand" and providing "a social experience for the customer." Ugh! All the people who make the retailers' arguments are pretty obnoxious, so we aren't getting a fair view of why retailers would do this. He makes it seem like all they care about is the bottom line.*

3. Stephen J. Roppolo, a New Orleans lawyer, says if employers hire on the basis of people's looks, they "may inadvertently discriminate in an impermissible way" (paragraph 23). Is he implying that the employers are discriminating because they are greedy and want to make a bigger profit? Why or why not?

*No, he's saying they may discriminate, but that it's accidental. That's what "inadvertent" means. He works for the retailers, so he wants to give them the benefit of the doubt and not say that all they care about is money.*

### Group 3

1. Greenhouse says, "That is where things can get confusing and contentious" (paragraph 8). What does "contentious" mean? What is this paragraph saying about the trend toward hiring people on the basis of their looks?

*"Contentious" means that something is likely to cause arguments. It's saying that hiring attractive employees is not necessarily illegal, but it can raise questions about whether a company is discriminating based on age, sex, or ethnicity. It's confusing because it's not always clear when the employer has crossed over the line and is discriminating.*

2. What do you think of the argument that "a guy wants to go hang out in a store where he can see good-looking gals" (paragraph 17)? Do you think that statement is a fair way of making the retailers' argument?

*I think it's a terrible argument. I don't think stores should hire women just so men can look at them. That's really sexist. But I don't think Cohen is a good spokesperson for the retailers. I would be more ready to accept the argument if he had said that people want to shop at stores where the salespeople are attractive. I might still think this could lead to discrimination, but I wouldn't think it was sexism.*

3. Greenhouse says, “In doing so [hiring for looks], some of those companies have been skirting the edges of antidiscrimination laws and provoking a wave of private and government lawsuits” (paragraph 8). Do you think you would be justified in suing a company like Abercrombie’s if they turned you down for a job and you thought it was because you weren’t “blond, blue-eyed and preppy”? Why or why not?

*I think it would not be justified because what they did is illegal and besides, it's not fair; they shouldn't be able to discriminate against me just because I'm brunette. They should not be allowed to get away with discrimination because it will hurt not just me, but lots of other people too.*

Questions such as those used in Activity 12 would also make good quickwrites, which can be used in a number of ways.

You might read several of the quickwrites to the class to get a discussion started. You could have students read their own quickwrites aloud or have students exchange quickwrites and read each others’ aloud.

When a discussion becomes bogged down or unfocused, you might consider posing some of the following questions for discussion or as quickwrites: What are the main issues? What does the writer want you to believe?

Another option is to assign a quickwrite at the end of the session. Ask your students what they have learned from the discussion, and then have them write for five minutes.

---

## Revisiting Key Vocabulary

Students draw on their receptive vocabularies when they read. Your students may not know the precise meaning of a word (or the other words that must be used with that word), but they can understand what it means in the context of what they are reading. When your students write, they will need to use their active vocabularies. They will need more precise knowledge of what the word means and how it is used in a sentence with other words. For example, the word “project” is not followed by a preposition, unlike the word “discriminate.”

Activity 13 is designed to help your students become aware not only of the meanings of words but also of word forms. For this activity, write the following vocabulary words on the board or on an overhead projector:

### Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

- 1.0 Students apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately.

projected	incompetent
discriminating	image
consumers	compete
applicants	illegal

Then have your students complete Activity 13. (Depending on your students' vocabulary knowledge, you may choose to have them think of appropriate synonyms rather than giving them the vocabulary words.)

### Activity 13: Revisiting Key Vocabulary

Now that you have read and reread the article and have thought about the arguments it contains about hiring people according to their looks, it is time to look again at vocabulary. This time you are going to look at words you may want to use when you write about the issue. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the word that best fits the meaning from the list of words provided by your teacher.

1. Retailers want consumers to recognize their brand so they will buy products from their store.
2. Stores that hire only attractive employees run the risk of discriminating against other qualified applicants.
3. Abercrombie & Fitch offered Elizabeth Nill a job because they thought she projected the right image.
4. It does not make sense for a store to hire someone who is incompetent simply because that person is good-looking.
5. Retailers contend that hiring on the basis of looks is not illegal, but discriminating on the basis of age, sex, or ethnicity is.
6. Some job applicants claimed they were not given sales jobs because of the color of their skin.
7. Retailers compete aggressively for their customers' business.
8. The hiring of workers who project a certain image can be a part of a retailer's marketing strategy.

After they have completed the activity, ask your students to use the vocabulary words to create their own sentences. Then have them each share their sentences with another student to gain more practice in using the words and reviewing the text.

# Connecting Reading to Writing

## Writing to Learn and Using the Words of Others

Your students have already been “writing to learn” through the act of writing as they take notes, make marginal notations, chart the text, and answer discussion questions. Now your students are ready to use what they have learned to produce more formal assignments that can serve as outcomes of the reading process.

One of the most fundamental academic tasks is incorporating the words and ideas of others into the writer’s own text. Your students will need to learn how to quote, paraphrase, and summarize materials they have read and to respond to and use those materials as they make and support their own arguments.

### *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing*

Chapter 8 in *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing* provides extensive practice in process of incorporating the words of others into one’s own writing. Although it is based on Module 8, you might want to adapt some of the instruction and activities to use with your students at this point in this module.

## Writing Rhetorically

### Prewriting

#### Reading the Assignment

Many students have trouble with writing assignments because they don’t read the assignment carefully. Here are some strategies that might help students overcome this problem:

Read the assignment carefully with students. Many problems with student work, particularly in timed, high-stakes writing situations, arise because students fail to completely understand what the writing assignment asks them to do; the explanations in Appendix C in the Assignment Template can help clarify some key assignment words.

On-demand essay assignments require students to do three tasks:

1. Explain a writer’s argument. This should be a paraphrase that demonstrates that the student understands the argument, not simply quotations. The student must decide if the argument the writer makes is convincing and if the conclusion is justified.

#### Prerequisite Ninth and Tenth Grade ELA Standards: Writing Strategies

- 1.4 Develop the main ideas within the body of the composition through supporting evidence (e.g., scenarios, commonly held beliefs, hypotheses, definitions).
- 1.5 Synthesize information from multiple sources and identify complexities and discrepancies in the information and the different perspectives found in each medium (e.g., almanacs, microfiche, news sources, in-depth field studies, speeches, journals, technical documents).
- 1.6 Integrate quotations and citations into a written text while maintaining the flow of ideas.

#### Writing Strategies

- 1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the elements of discourse (e.g., purpose, speaker, audience, form) when completing narrative, expository, persuasive, informational, or descriptive writing assignments.

2. Take a position on the writer’s conclusion to the argument.
3. Construct an argument in response. The student can agree with the writer, disagree with the writer, or agree in part but not fully with the writer.

### Activity 14: Reading the Assignment

Reading the assignment carefully to make sure you address all aspects of the prompt is important.

#### On-Demand Writing Assignment

You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Explain Cohen’s argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading. Your essay should be as well-organized and carefully written as you can make it.

“Retailers defend the approach to hiring based on image as necessary and smart, and industry experts see the point. ‘In today’s competitive retail environment, the methods have changed for capturing the consumer’s awareness of your brand,’ said Marshal Cohen, a senior industry analyst with the NPD Group, a market research firm. ‘Being able to find a brand enhancer, or what I call a walking billboard, is critical. It’s really important to create an environment that’s enticing to the community, particularly with the younger, fashionable market. A guy wants to go hang out in a store where he can see good-looking gals.’”

Explain Cohen’s argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take the following steps for this exercise:

- Read the assignment carefully.
- Decide which issue you are going to discuss.
- Discuss the purpose of the assignment. What will you try to accomplish in your essay?

#### Writing Strategies

- 1.0 Students write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students’ awareness of the audience and purpose and progression through the stages of the writing process.

### Getting Ready to Write

The following activity will help your students read an on-demand writing assignment. A modified version of the “Ethos, Pathos, and Logos” questions provides a tool for your students to analyze arguments such as the on-demand writing assignment above and generate ideas.

### Activity 15: Getting Ready to Write

1. What are the author's major claims?

*Cohen asserts that hiring based on looks is necessary in order to compete with other retail stores. He says that stores have developed new ways to attract the attention of consumers to their brands. Hiring young women who are identified with the brand contribute to a store's atmosphere and is especially important for younger, style-conscious purchasers. He concludes that young men are especially attracted to stores that hire attractive young women.*

2. What are the strongest claims? What are the weakest?

*Cohen's strongest claim is that stores have to hire based on looks because their competition is doing it. Retail competition is cut-throat and stores are in business to make money, so they have to do what they have to do. The weakest part of the argument is his claim that hiring attractive young women is a way to attract male customers. It implies that stores should hire for looks, not competence, which ultimately won't help them make a profit because customers want efficient service most of all.*

3. Have arguments been left out?

*Two important arguments are left out. The first one is about competence. If stores hire only for looks, they are going to have employees that are incompetent. That's not going to help them make money. He also ignores the question of legality. It's against the law to discriminate based on looks. Stores that follow his advice could end up with expensive lawsuits.*

4. What can we infer about the author?

*We know that Cohen works for a market research firm. It sounds like he advises stores on how to make the most money. He seems like the kind of person who thinks the bottom-line is all that matters. He seems sexist and like he would discriminate against employees that he didn't think were attractive.*

5. How does he appeal to our emotions?

*I think Cohen tries to make me agree with him by sounding like someone who identifies with young people by using words like "hang out" and "good looking gals." He flatters me by implying that I'm part of the "younger fashionable market." What he's really saying, though, is that it's hard to make a profit in retail, so it's OK to discriminate.*

After analyzing the argument in the prompt, your students can then use invention strategies to arrive at their own arguments. Typical strategies include brainstorming, informal outlines, quickwrites, and "webbing" or "clustering." (Appendix D in the Assignment Template contains descriptions of several prewriting options.) It's essential that your students draw on their own experiences and come up with their own arguments rather than just rely on the arguments in the accompanying articles.

Students need to consider the audience for their essays. They should think about what most people know and think about the topic of their papers, remembering that their audience will not have read the same articles that

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.

they have. When they refer to the readings, students need to identify the source of the argument and briefly summarize it. If your students want to change the opinions of the audience, they need to think about persuasive techniques, both logical and emotional.

---

## Formulating a Working Thesis

Most students will find it helpful to formulate a working thesis statement at this point. Your students can go through their “invention” work to decide what statement or assertion they want to support. Although students can be successful with different approaches to writing, a strong, focused thesis statement keeps writers on track.

You might encourage your students in the following manner:

### Activity 16: Formulating a Working Thesis

Writing down a tentative thesis at this point is a good habit to develop in your writing process. Your thesis should be a complete sentence and can be revised several times. But a focused thesis statement will keep your writing on track.

Record your responses to the following questions in preparation for writing your tentative thesis statement.

- What specific question will your essay answer? What is your response to this question? (This is your tentative thesis.)
- What support have you found for your thesis?
- What evidence have you found for this support? For example, use facts, statistics, statements from authorities, personal experiences, anecdotes, stories, scenarios, and examples.
- How much background information do your readers need to understand your topic and thesis?
- If readers were to disagree with your thesis or the validity of your support, what would they say? How would you address their concerns (what would you say to them)?

Now draft a possible thesis for your essay.

*Sample working thesis for “Going for the Look” essay: Hiring for competence rather than for appearance is the best business strategy.*

After your students formulate a working thesis, giving them feedback (either individually or as a class activity) before they begin to write is important. Potential writing problems can be averted at this stage—before your students generate their first drafts.

# Writing

## Writing Strategies

- 1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.

## Composing a Draft

The first draft of an essay written under timed conditions needs to fully respond to the writing prompt and reflect the writer’s best effort at creating a convincing argument. This does not mean that it could not be further revised and edited to produce a more polished final draft. The writer needs to write the essay using notes from the prewriting process and the working thesis. (Time spent recopying is not time well-spent.)

### Activity 17: Composing a Draft

When you write an argument essay, choose an approach to the subject that matters to you. If you have strong feelings, you will find it much easier to gather evidence and convince your readers of your point of view. Keep in mind, however, that your readers might feel just as strongly about the opposite side of the issue. The following guidelines will help you write a good argument essay.

1. **State your opinion on the topic in your thesis statement.** To write a thesis statement for an argument essay, you must take a stand for or against an action or an idea. In other words, your thesis statement should be debatable—a statement that can be argued or challenged and will not be met with agreement by everyone who reads it. Your thesis statement should introduce your subject and state your opinion about that subject.

Greenhouse’s thesis is not explicit (he doesn’t say it directly), but you can infer that his thesis is that retailers need to hire for appearance in order to attract consumers and increase profits. This is Cohen’s position, and it is a debatable thesis. Some other statements about hiring for appearance would not be debatable and therefore would not be effective theses:

**Not debatable:** Today’s retailers operate in a competitive environment.

**Not debatable:** Retailers want to create a shopping environment that attracts consumers.

Both examples are simply statements of fact that most people would agree are true. They would not be effective theses because no one would argue with them.

2. **Take your audience into consideration as you write your essay.** When you write your essay, assume that your audience is well-informed generally but may not have the specific knowledge that you have gained by reading “Going for the Look” and the discussions you had about it. You need to provide your readers with information and your source for that information whether you are citing statistics or paraphrasing someone else’s argument. In a true timed-writing situation, you will not have access to sources other than short passages, but you can still refer to information you learned in a class, read in an article, or found on a Web

site. Just be sure to mention where you found it (not a formal reference but an acknowledgment that it comes from another source).

You may also want to let your readers know who you are. Think about how you formed judgments about the various “authorities” that are quoted in “Going for the Look.” You can let your readers know, for example, that you are a high school student and that you have had friends who may have been offered jobs at stores because of their “look.” Your readers will understand that you are in a good position to make this observation.

You also need to assume that some of your readers will disagree with you (remember, your thesis is going to be debatable). Acknowledge some possible alternative positions and explain why they are not as strong as your own to help respond to potential objections. For example, Stephen Roppolo acknowledges that hiring someone who is attractive is not illegal. He gets that argument on the table before he goes on to his own argument that the “main focus needs to be hiring someone who can get the job done.” Cohen, on the other hand, doesn’t even acknowledge that arguments can be made against hiring based on image.

3. **Choose evidence that supports your thesis statement.** Evidence is probably the most important factor in writing an argument essay. Without solid evidence, your essay is nothing more than opinion; with it, your essay can be powerful and persuasive. If you supply convincing evidence, your readers will not only understand your position but perhaps agree with it.

Evidence can consist of facts, statistics, statements from authorities, and examples or personal stories. Examples and personal stories can be based on your own observations, experiences, and reading, but your opinions are not evidence. Other strategies, such as comparison/contrast, definition, and cause/effect, can be particularly useful in building an argument. Use any combination of evidence and writing strategies that supports your thesis statement.

In “Going for the Look,” most of the evidence is from authorities who have varying degrees of credibility and personal stories. Here are some examples:

#### **Statements from Authorities**

- Statement by Olophius Perry, director of the Los Angeles office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission about the danger of discrimination from hiring on the basis of looks (paragraph 9).
- Claims from interviews used as evidence in the lawsuit against Abercrombie & Fitch (paragraphs 11–13).
- Quotation from Stephen J. Roppolo, a New Orleans lawyer who represents hotel and restaurants (paragraph 23).
- Quotation from Melissa Milkie, a sociology professor who has written about perceptions of beauty (paragraph 29).

#### **Examples and Personal Stories**

- Elizabeth Nill’s personal story (paragraphs 1–5).

4. **Anticipate opposing points of view.** In addition to stating and supporting your position, anticipating and responding to opposing views are important. Presenting only your side of the argument leaves half the story untold—the opposition’s half. If you acknowledge that there are opposing arguments and answer them, your reader will be more convinced of your argument.

Greenhouse presents the retailers’ point of view that hiring based on appearance is “necessary and smart” by citing an expert, Marshal Cohen.

5. **Find some common ground.** Pointing out common ground between you and your opponent is also an effective strategy. Common ground refers to points of agreement between two opposing positions. For example, one person might be in favor of gun control and another strongly opposed. But they might find common ground—agreement—in the need to keep guns out of teenagers’ hands. Locating some common ground is possible in almost every situation. When you state in your essay that you agree with your opponent on certain points, your reader sees you as a fair person.

In “Going for the Look,” Roppolo attempts to find common ground. Instead of telling his business clients that what they are doing is illegal and immoral, Roppolo tells them that they “may inadvertently discriminate in some impermissible way” if they hire based on attractiveness. He implies that if they currently discriminate, it is by accident, not because they are bad or greedy. That makes it easier for them to then accept his advice to not discriminate when hiring.

6. **Maintain a reasonable tone.** Just as you probably wouldn’t win an argument by shouting or making mean or nasty comments, don’t expect your readers to respond well to such tactics. Keep the “voice” of your essay calm and sensible. Readers will be much more open to what you have to say if they think you are a reasonable person.

Roppolo uses a reasonable tone. Donna Harper, the lawyer in St. Louis, uses a more strident tone: “The problem with all this image stuff is it just reeks of marketing for this white-bread, Northern European, thin, wealthy, fashion-model look.” A retailer might be justifiably offended by her tone and therefore much less likely to take advice from her. However, she isn’t trying to persuade store owners; she’s trying to persuade a jury to convict store owners, so her tone is intentional.

7. **Organize your essay so that it presents your position as effectively as possible.** By the end of your essay, you want your audience to agree with you. So you need to organize your essay in such a way that your readers can easily follow it. The number of your paragraphs may vary (depending on the nature of your assignment), but the following outline shows the order in which the features of an argument essay are most effective:

#### **Introduction**

- Background information
- Introduction of subject
- Statement of your opinion

**Body Paragraphs**

- Common ground
- Lots of evidence (logical and emotional)
- Opposing point of view
- Response to opposing point of view

**Conclusion**

- Restatement of your position
- Call for action or agreement

The arrangement of your evidence in an argument essay depends to a great extent on your readers' opinions. Most arguments will be organized from general to particular, from particular to general, or from one extreme to another. When you know that your readers already agree with you, arranging your details from general to particular or from most to least important is usually most effective. With this order, you are building on your readers' agreement and loyalty as you explain your thinking on the subject.

If you suspect that your audience does not agree with you, reverse the organization of your evidence and arrange it from particular to general or from least to most important. In this way, you can take your readers step by step through your reasoning in an attempt to get them to agree with you.

Greenhouse's article follows the general outline just presented. Here is a skeleton outline of his essay:

**Introduction**

- Personal story of Elizabeth Nill
- Abercrombie & Fitch as an example of the trend toward hiring for looks

**Body Paragraphs**

- Discussion of the trend toward hiring workers to project an image and the legal issues it raises
- The Abercrombie & Fitch lawsuit
- The retailers' point of view that hiring for looks is necessary and smart
- Discrimination issues
- Additional examples of hiring for appearance in retail

**Conclusion**

- Quotation from expert focusing on the apparent conflict between a sound business strategy versus the morality of hiring based on looks

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.

## Organizing the Essay

Following are some guidelines for helping your students organize the material they have gathered into coherent essays.

### Activity 18: Organizing the Essay

The following items are traditional parts of all essays:

- An introduction (usually one or two paragraphs) that “hooks” the reader and provides a thesis statement or road map for the reader
- The body (as many paragraphs as necessary), which supports the thesis statement point by point
- A conclusion (usually only one paragraph) that summarizes the main points and explains the significance of the argument

The number of paragraphs in an essay depends on the nature and complexity of your argument.

Here are some additional hints to help you organize your thoughts.

#### Introduction

- You might want to include the following in your introductory paragraph or paragraphs:
  - A “hook” to get the reader’s attention
  - Background information the audience may need
  - A thesis statement, along with some indication of how the essay will be developed (“forecasting”). *Note:* A thesis statement states the topic of the essay and the writer’s position on that topic. You may choose to sharpen or narrow the thesis at this point.

#### Body

- Paragraphs that present support of the thesis statement, usually in topic sentences supported with evidence. (See “Getting Ready to Write,” above.)
- Paragraphs that include different points of view or address counter-arguments
- Paragraphs or sentences where the writer addresses those points of view by doing the following:
  - Refuting them
  - Acknowledging them but showing how the writer’s argument is better
  - Granting them altogether but showing they are irrelevant
- Evidence that you have considered the values, beliefs, and assumptions of your audience; your own values, beliefs, and assumptions; and whether you have found some common ground that appeals to the various points of view

#### Conclusion

- A final paragraph (or paragraphs) that includes a solid argument to support the thesis and indicates the significance of the argument—the “so what” factor

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the elements of discourse (e.g., purpose, speaker, audience, form) when completing narrative, expository, persuasive, informational, or descriptive writing assignments.

**Prerequisite Ninth and Tenth Grade ELA Standard: Writing Strategies**

- 1.9 Revise writing to improve the logic and coherence of the organization and controlling perspective, the precision of word choice, and the tone by taking into consideration the audience, purpose, and formality of the context.

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.4 Enhance meaning by employing rhetorical devices, including the extended use of parallelism, repetition, and analogy; the incorporation of visual aids (e.g. graphs, tables, pictures); and the issuance of a call for action.

---

## Developing the Content

Your students need to understand that body paragraphs explain and support their thesis statements as they move from writer-based to reader-based prose.

### Activity 19: Developing the Content

Here are a few highlights on essay development:

- Most body paragraphs consist of a topic sentence (or an implied topic sentence) and concrete details to support that topic sentence.
- Body paragraphs give evidence in the form of examples, illustrations, statistics, and so on and analyze the meaning of the evidence.
- Each topic sentence is usually directly related to the thesis statement.
- No set number of paragraphs makes up an essay.
- The thesis dictates and focuses the content of an essay.

## Revising and Editing

---

### Revising the Draft

Even an essay that is written in class should subsequently be revised to improve the focus, organization, and development. This practice will make your students more proficient writers when they are in “one chance” writing situations, such as college placement tests.

Your students should produce these drafts based on systematic feedback from others. These drafts will be more “reader-based” than the first drafts because the students will take into consideration the needs of the readers as they respond to the text.

#### *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing*

If you have been integrating Chapter 2 in *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing* throughout this unit, you should be ready to assign Exercise 9 (Correcting Run-ons and Fragments in Student Writing) and Exercise 10 (Editing Your Guided Composition). In these exercises, your students will select paragraphs from their essays and identify and edit sentence fragments and run-ons.

### Activity 20: Revising the Draft

You now need to work with the organization and development of your draft to make sure it is as effective as possible.

#### Peer Group Work

In groups of three or four, each student should read his or her essay aloud to other members of the group. Then, for each essay, complete Part I of the Evaluation Form your teacher will supply.

- 1.5 Use language in natural, fresh, and vivid ways to establish a specific tone.
- 1.9 Revise text to highlight the individual voice, improve sentence variety and style, and enhance subtlety of meaning and tone in ways that are consistent with the purpose, audience, and genre.

### Paired Work

Work in pairs to decide how you want to revise the problems that group members identified.

### Individual Work

Revise the draft based on the feedback you have received and the decisions you have made with your partners. Consider these additional questions for individual work:

- Have I responded to the assignment?
- What is my purpose for this essay?
- What should I keep? What is most effective?
- Where do I need more details, examples, and other evidence to support my point?
- What could I get rid of? Did I use irrelevant details? Was I repetitive?
- What should I change? Are parts of my essay confusing or contradictory? Do I need to explain my ideas more fully?
- What should I rethink? Was my position clear? Did I provide enough analysis to convince my readers?
- How is my tone? Am I too overbearing or too firm? Do I need qualifiers?
- Have I addressed differing points of view?
- Does my conclusion show the significance of my essay?
- Have I used key vocabulary words correctly to represent the ideas from the article? Have I used words that refer to specific facts from the text?

**Teacher Feedback:** Sometimes it is most beneficial to give feedback on the first rather than the final draft (the response to the final draft can simply be a summary grade). When responding to a first draft, your guidance can come in the form of suggestions for improving the essay—a formative evaluation—rather than a final, summative evaluation. Feedback at this stage does not need to include a grade at all.

## Editing the Draft

Your students now need to focus on grammar and mechanics (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) to make sure that their language is effective and conforms to the guidelines of standard written English.

In this case, your students will benefit most from specific instructor or tutor feedback rather than from peer evaluation.

This work can be preceded by mini-lessons on common issues in grammar and mechanics. Provide your students with a copy of the editing checklist from the Evaluation Form (Appendix F in the Assignment Template).

### *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing*

If you have been integrating Chapter 2 in *A Text-Based Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing* throughout this unit, you should be ready to assign Exercise 11 (Editing Your Own Writing). Your students will edit

#### Prerequisite Ninth and Tenth Grade ELA Standards: Written and Oral English Language Conventions

- 1.1 Identify and correctly use clauses (e.g., main and subordinate), and phrases (e.g., gerund, infinitive, and participial), and mechanics of punctuation (e.g., semicolons, colons, ellipses, hyphens).
- 1.2 Understand sentence construction (e.g., parallel structure, subordination, proper placement of modifiers) and proper English usage (e.g., consistency of verb tenses).

- 1.3 Demonstrate an understanding of proper English usage and control of grammar, paragraph and sentence structure, diction, and syntax.

#### Written and Oral English Language Conventions

- 1.1 Demonstrate control of grammar, diction, and paragraph and sentence structure and an understanding of English usage.
- 1.2 Produce legible work that shows accurate spelling and correct punctuation and capitalization.
- 1.3 Reflect appropriate manuscript requirements in writing.

their entire essays, focusing on using complete and varied sentences rather than on general editing as described below.

### Activity 21: Editing the Draft

You now need to work with the grammar and mechanics of your draft to make sure that your use of language is effective and conforms to the guidelines of standard written English.

#### Individual Work

Edit your draft based on the information you have received from your instructor or a tutor. Use the editing checklist provided by your teacher. The suggestions below will also help you edit your own work.

#### Editing Guidelines for Individual Work

- If possible, set your essay aside for 24 hours before rereading to find errors.
- If possible, read your essay out loud so you can hear your errors and rough spots.
- At this point, focus on individual words and sentences rather than overall meaning. Take a sheet of paper and cover everything except the line you are reading. Then touch your pencil to each word as you read.
- With the help of your teacher, figure out your own pattern of errors—the most serious and frequent errors you make.
- Look for only one type of error at a time. Then go back and look for a second type, and if necessary, a third.
- Use the dictionary to check spelling and confirm that you've chosen the right word for the context.

## Reflecting on the Writing

When you return essays to your students, a good practice is to ask them to reflect in writing about the process of writing the essay, what they learned that they can apply to their next assignment, or how they feel about the comments that you gave them on the essay.

### Activity 22: Reflecting on the Writing

When you have completed your own essay, answer these six questions:

1. What was most difficult about this assignment?
2. What was easiest?
3. What did you learn about arguing by completing this assignment?
4. What do you think are the strengths of your argument? Place a wavy line by the parts of your essay that you feel are very good.
5. What are the weaknesses, if any, of your paper? Place an X by the parts of your essay you would like help with. Write any questions you have in the margin.
6. What did you learn from this assignment about your own writing process—about preparing to write, about writing the first draft, about revising, and about editing?

## Evaluating and Responding

---

### Grading Holistically

Reading student papers holistically is also called “general impression” grading. It allows you to give a student a single score or grade based on your impression of his or her management of the entire writing assignment. The basis of this type of evaluation is a rubric or scoring guide, which is used, along with sample papers, to “norm” the readers before they read student papers. In the “norming” process, readers score sets of sample essays. The leader asks how many readers gave each score on each paper, and those who gave a certain score raise their hands when it is announced and are counted. This process is repeated for each score point for each essay. The process continues until almost all the hands are consistently going up at the same time. In a holistic reading, readers then read and score papers very quickly, without marking errors or making comments. You might consider using the English Placement Test (EPT) Scoring Guide printed in Appendix G in the Assignment Template as your grading criteria for this exercise. Alternatively, you can use the rubric printed at the end of the unit, which is adapted from the EPT Scoring Guide.

Grading a set of papers holistically with other faculty members lets you discuss the grading criteria and “norm” yourselves to a single set of scores. This is an excellent exercise to keep a conversation going among department faculty about grades and assessment.

Assigning your students to grade a set of papers holistically gives you the opportunity to have the students work in groups to explain why a paper received a certain grade. Then you might have your students revise their papers based on their group’s assessment.

---

### Responding to Student Writing

Responding to your students’ writing is the final stage of the writing process. You have several ways to respond.

- Use a preprinted evaluation form to respond to your students’ writing. (See Appendix F in the Assignment Template.) Make sure you include notes in the margin to support the marks on the evaluation form.
- Annotate the paper, and make a summary comment at the end of the paper. In this case, make sure the marks on the paper explain the comment at the end.
- Meet one-on-one with each student and review the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. In this situation, you might keep an index card on each student with your personal notes on each paper.

---

## Using Portfolios

Asking your students to keep all their writing in a folder so you can discuss it throughout the term is a very good way to get the students to see their own progress as writers. You might even consider assigning some portfolio activities.

- Ask your students to explain their progress through the course, using pieces of their own writing to support their claims.
- Ask your students to find their best and worst papers and explain the difference between the two pieces of writing.
- Ask your students to revise their worst papers and summarize the patterns of their changes.

## Rubric

# “Going for the Look” Essay

### Focus and Content

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the writer clearly explain Cohen’s argument?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Does the essay demonstrate an understanding of the issues in the reading passage?                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Does the essay indicate the extent to which the writer agrees or disagrees with Cohen’s position?                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Do the following paragraphs provide specific evidence to support the writer’s position?                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Is there enough commentary (examples, explanation) to help the reader understand why the writer holds this position? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Does the writer provide enough details about each of these examples?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Does the writer use other sources effectively to support the thesis?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

### Organization

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the essay have an effective introduction, an adequate body, and a solid conclusion?                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Does the introduction state the specific topic and have a clear thesis?   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. Does each body paragraph include a topic sentence, supporting details, and analysis of the significance of these ideas? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Are coherence devices used effectively within and between paragraphs?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Does the conclusion support the thesis and tie together the ideas of the essay?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

### Grammar and Mechanics

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are verbs correct (correct form, agree with subject, correct tense)?                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Are nouns accurate (articles, plurals, possessives)?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Is word choice precise? Are word forms correct?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Does the writer use effective and varied sentence structure and avoid fragments and run-ons? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Other: _____   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

### Comments

### Priorities for Revision of Essay

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.