

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano

Olaudah Equiano

How does Equiano use a sequence of perceptions to show terror growing from uncertainty into understanding?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Chapter II - first experience aboard the slave ship

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo.
END	I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables;
PASSAGE ID	sec-equiano-01

THE MOVE

Trace how a first-person narrator builds meaning from incomplete information

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Equiano does not begin with full knowledge of the system around him. He records what he sees and fears as a child confronting unfamiliar technology and violent people. The sequence lets readers experience terror as an inference being assembled in real time.

MARK

Underline unfamiliar sights or sensations. Circle moments when Equiano guesses what may happen. Box evidence from the crew’s behavior that intensifies his conclusion.

NOTICE

- Which details does Equiano understand immediately and which does he misinterpret?
- How do physical sensations contribute to his fear?
- Why is the reader’s knowledge of the slave ship different from Equiano’s knowledge in the moment?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does Equiano use a sequence of perceptions to show terror growing from uncertainty into understanding? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

The passage builds terror by restricting readers to Equiano’s developing understanding. Strange sights and sensations come first, then violent behavior supplies evidence for increasingly frightening conclusions; the reader watches uncertainty become a plausible expectation of death.

EVIDENCE

Use one unfamiliar perception and one later piece of evidence that changes what Equiano thinks is happening.

WATCH FOR

Do not flatten the passage into a general description of the Middle Passage. Focus on how the first-person sequence reproduces a child’s process of inference.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 11 · LESSON 312

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How does Equiano use a sequence of perceptions to show terror growing from uncertainty into understanding?

WORK	The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano
TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Chapter II - first experience aboard the slave ship
PASSAGE ID	sec-equiano-01

Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo.

END

I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables;

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK Underline unfamiliar sights or sensations. Circle moments when Equiano guesses what may happen. Box evidence from the crew’s behavior that intensifies his conclusion.

2. NOTICE Which details does Equiano understand immediately and which does he misinterpret? How do physical sensations contribute to his fear? Why is the reader's knowledge of the slave ship different from Equiano's knowledge in the moment?
3. THINK Answer provisionally: How does Equiano use a sequence of perceptions to show terror growing from uncertainty into understanding?
4. WRITE Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. CLOSE Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.