<table>
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<th>Passage and Page #</th>
<th>Inferences/Commentary</th>
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<td>“I first heard of Antonia on what seemed to me an interminable journey across the great midland plain of North America. I was ten years old then; I had lost both my father and mother within a year, and my Virginia relatives were sending me out to my grandparents, who lived in Nebraska.” (5)</td>
<td>To begin the book Carter immediately addresses the “who, what, where, when, and why” of the story. She begins with who the book is about, the character starts off by saying “I” and the name of the book, “Antonia”. This proves that he is the narrator telling the story and will personally have something to do with Antonia. She then moves on to what is happening during the story, he is on a journey across the midland plain of North America, this also covers where it is taking place. The character states that he was ten years old when this story happened, giving us a time period in which to base the character on. Finally he explains the reason he went on a journey is because his parents died and he was going to stay with his grandparents. Carter uses these first two lines to give a brief synopsis on the storyline she will be writing about.</td>
<td>In her first few lines Willa Carter uses syntax and arrangement to pull the audience in. Addressing the main topics of the book in the introduction gives the audience an idea of what they will be reading, and hopefully entices them to read more. Carter breaks up all this information into two sentences, using many semicolons and commas to break it up even further. This allows the audience to take in important bits of information one at a time. If it was put into one long run-on sentence the audience would have no chance of retaining it. She also arranges the information within the sentences in a way that is easier for the audience to understand, it goes from who to what to where to when to why. This gives it a sort of flow to reading that build off of itself.</td>
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<td>“He wore the rings and pins and badges of different fraternal orders to which he belonged. Even his cuff-buttons were engraved with hieroglyphics, and he was more inscribed than an Egyptian obelisk.” (6)</td>
<td>At the beginning of the story the narrator tells the audience that he is ten years old at the time that this story is happening. Yet the language he uses to tell his story and describe the thoughts in his head at the time were not the type of language a ten year-old would be using. For example, no child would look at a man and compare him to</td>
<td>In this particular quote Carter uses both caricature and allusion to describe the passenger conductor. Caricature is a form of writing that exaggerates a specific feature of a character’s appearance. The main character did this about the man’s clothing and adornments. He described them in detail so the audience</td>
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an Egyptian obelisk. He would instead say that the man was very decorated, like a Christmas tree. It makes sense since this is a young adult novel, but it makes the character seem less realistic or believable in a way. The writing seems almost too formal and stiff in a way, considering it is supposed to be a memory from a child. I think the meaning and character would be better depicted if the writing style was looser and the language a bit more conversational.

was able to picture it for themselves. He even added an allusion comparing the man to an Egyptian obelisk, a highly detailed and ornate piece of culture. This stressing of how the man dressed was used to back up the character description that the narrator set in place. It was an example to show that he was so exotic and emanated a sense of awe.

“As I grew older, I came to believe that it was only because she was so often thinking of things that were far away.”(9-10)

While describing his grandmother the narrator broke into the storyline. This means that he threw in a thought that happened after the time period in which he was originally talking about. He clarified a description of his grandmother, answering his own wonderings from the time he was a child with what he had learned now. This gives it a sense that he is writing this for his own purposes as well as for the audience, sharing his own thoughts when they come to him. He first made note that this story was written later when he said that this happened when he was “ten years old then” (5). This also shows that the story is being told in retrospect. He is looking back on things that have already happened, instead of telling everything as it was going on. This leads the audience to wonder, what was

The type of writing the author is using through the narrator is a form of flashbacks. Instead of writing in present time, describing events like they are happening right now, the narrator proves that it happened in the past. This gives a feeling of finality; everything that has happened in the story is already over. Nothing can change it now, the narrator is simply retelling events that are done and in the past. He has also started to add new information that he knows now, but doesn’t know when it was happening, like why his grandmother looked the way she did. These flashbacks give the audience more information and insight that wasn’t available for him at the time He is giving them the tools to understand it better. But he has not stated exactly how old he is now though, as he is retelling the story. Will that come into the
so significant about this time in his life? It states in the first sentence of the book this is when he first heard of Antonia, but is that the only reason? Or does something else drive him to write specifically about this time?

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“His face was ruggedly formed, but it looked like ashes- like something from which all the warmth and light had died out.” (18)
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As the narrator met his Bohemian neighbors he described each of them in detail. The way he tells their physical appearance gave hint to what their personality would be like too. In this quote Jimmy is describing the father. He says how the man is tall and white, well-shaped, and seems to move with a sort of grace. But the light has gone out of him. This seems as though he once was a man capable of doing great things, but has since given up or worn himself out. Another example was the way Jimmy described Antonia. He said her eyes were “big and warm and full of light” (17) contrasting to what he said about her father, Jimmy used happy and welcoming descriptions when talking about Antonia. Will these descriptions of their physical features match up with their personality traits? Or will they be deceiving?

The way the author paints pictures of the characters in the readers mind is a form of imagery. This allows the audience to see the characters for themselves, which gives a more concrete feeling to the story. The author is adding an extra element to this imagery however. The way the characters are being described hints at what the characters are like. For example, since Jimmy used positive words when talking about Antonia, such as “warm” and “rich” it can be inferred that she will be a character in which Jimmy is fond of. On the other hand Jimmy says the boy Ambrosch’s eyes are “sly and suspicious” which gives him a more negative connotation, and makes the audience regard him with unease. This way of writing is very effective for building character profiles.

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“Presently he began to sing for us – a thin, rusty little chirp. She held him close to her ear and laughed, but a moment afterward I saw there were tears in her eyes.” (27)
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In *My Antonia* the storyline and nature intertwine seamlessly. The plot is set on a farm in the plains of Nebraska. This provides a picturesque setting in which to describe, and the author utilizes this to its full extent. Throughout the story the

Since the beginning of the book the author has used imagery to describe nature. She uses exact pictures such as the way the grass moves and how the fields stretch on forever. The descriptive words and phrasing she uses allows the audience to see the images
characters and constantly in awe of the nature around them, taking in its beauty and grace. This is a common theme throughout the novel. No matter how the characters are changing nature somehow seems to connect with them. Jimmy makes many references to the “red-copper fields” and in every situation it seems to match how he feels. This provides an interesting dilemma. The author has been describing all of these scenes in the autumn, but what will she do when it is time for winter? Will she only describe scenes from autumn? Or will she go into other seasons? And if she does, how will that affect the characters emotions? Jimmy describes scenes of the fall with such love that it’s interesting to see how it will change with winter.

for themselves. Nature and the way the characters see it has a direct correlation with how they feel and what they are thinking. From the expansion of the fields Jimmy gets a feeling of eternity and awe that the audience also feels. The dying cricket Antonia found in the grass reminded her of a woman she knew back in her home land. While describing nature using imagery the author is also describing how the characters feel. Emotions are tied in with nature. This makes the audience unable to notice one without noticing the other.

Three Discussion Questions:

- Since nature is such a big part of the novel, how will the story change when the seasons change?
- How old is Jimmy as he is retelling this story? Will that be an important factor in the book?
- For what purpose is Jimmy telling the story? Is it for his own sake? Will it ever be revealed?