

Part 1: Copy and paste your selected passage, including title and author, in the space below. Use the organizer to make notes and observations about the elements of the author's style. Guiding questions are included to help you develop an in-depth analysis, but every question does not have to be answered in order to have an insightful analysis.

Passage: [Advice to Little Girls](#)

Author: Mark Twain

"Good little girls ought not to make mouths at their teachers for every trifling offense. This retaliation should only be resorted to under peculiarly aggravated circumstances.

If you have nothing but a rag-doll stuffed with sawdust, while one of your more fortunate little playmates has a costly China one, you should treat her with a show of kindness nevertheless. And you ought not to attempt to make a forcible swap with her unless your conscience would justify you in it, and you know you are able to do it.

You ought never to take your little brother's "chewing-gum" away from him by main force; it is better to rope him in with the promise of the first two dollars and a half you find floating down the river on a grindstone. In the artless simplicity natural to this time of life, he will regard it as a perfectly fair transaction. In all ages of the world this eminently plausible fiction has lured the obtuse infant to financial ruin and disaster.

If at any time you find it necessary to correct your brother, do not correct him with mud--never, on any account, throw mud at him, because it will spoil his clothes. It is better to scald him a little, for then you obtain desirable results. You secure his immediate attention to the lessons you are inculcating, and at the same time your hot water will have a tendency to move impurities from his person, and possibly the skin, in spots.

If your mother tells you to do a thing, it is wrong to reply that you won't. It is better and more becoming to intimate that you will do as she bids you, and then afterward act quietly in the matter according to the dictates of your best judgment.

You should ever bear in mind that it is to your kind parents that you are indebted for your food, and for the privilege of staying home from school when you let on that you are sick. Therefore you ought to respect their little prejudices, and humor their little whims, and put up with their little foibles until they get to crowding you too much.

Good little girls always show marked deference for the aged. You ought never to "sass" old people unless they "sass" you first."

Organizer

Element	Quote or Example from Text	Observation About Style
<p>Subject</p> <p>What is the text about? What is the rhetorical situation? If you have read other texts by the same author, is there an overlap in the subject matter? This will tell you if the author tends to write on a particular subject.</p>	<p><i>"Good little girls ought not to make mouths at their teachers for every trifling offence. This retaliation should only be resorted to under peculiarly aggravated circumstances."</i></p>	<p>The main focus of Twain's passage is how little girls should behave; however, he delivers it in a humorous style.</p> <p>In other texts I have read by Twain, they have as well been focused on children and freedoms, such as in <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> and <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>.</p>
<p>Syntax</p> <p>What types of sentences are used in the passage? How does the writer punctuate sentences, and how does the punctuation affect the meaning? How does the writer begin his or her sentences? How are words and phrases arranged within the sentence? What is the writer trying to accomplish through this pattern? What unique syntactical choices has the writer made, and what is their effect?</p>	<p><i>"Good little girls ought not to make mouth at their teachers..."</i></p> <p><i>"You ought never to take your little brother's chewing gum away from him by main force; it is better to rope him in with the promise of the first two dollars and a half you find floating down the river on a grindstone."</i></p> <p><i>"You ought never to sass old people..."</i></p>	<p>Twain implements parallel structure throughout the passage, frequently repeating "ought" and "you ought"; placing emphasis on how to "properly behave."</p> <p>Specifically, in terms of his approach, he states what it is they should not do, followed by some sort of exception to that. As a whole, it helps to add an overall sense of humor to the text.</p>
<p>Diction</p> <p>What type of diction does the writer use (formal, informal, dialect, slang, abstract, concrete, etc.)? What connotative words does the writer use? What is the cumulative effect of those words? What figurative language does the writer use and to what effect?</p>	<p><i>"In all ages of the world this eminently plausible fiction has lured the obtuse infant to financial ruin and disaster."</i></p> <p><i>"If at any time you find it necessary to correct your brother, do not correct him with mud -- never, on any account, throw mud at him, because it will spoil his clothes."</i></p> <p><i>"You ought never to sass old people unless they sass you first."</i></p>	<p>Through formal diction, added with humorous phrases, a sense of wit and comicalness is added to the passage. Twain as well uses much more amusing connotations of words, such as "sass," to further build that sense of humor.</p>

Element	Quote or Example from Text	Observation About Style
To which senses to the writer's words appeal? What is the writer accomplishing through this use of imagery?		
<p>Tone</p> <p>What is the cumulative effect of the writer's syntax and diction? What attitude is conveyed? How is the tone appropriate for the rhetorical situation? What words best describe the writer's attitude toward his or her subject?</p>	<p><i>"And you ought not to attempt to make a forcible swap with her unless your conscience would justify you in it, and you know you are able to do it."</i></p> <p><i>"You ought never to take your little brother's chewing gum away from him by main force; it is better to rope him in with the promise of the first two dollars and a half you find floating down the river on a grindstone."</i></p>	<p>Throughout the passage as a whole, Twain's use of syntax and diction, as mentioned before, aid in developing a humorous and comical tone.</p> <p>Since he is humorous towards this matter, it can be implied that he finds the way they are told to behave ridiculous, as it does not give them freedom.</p>
<p>Theme</p> <p>What does the passage say about life or other universal ideas (war, love, friendship, trials, etc.)? What meaning does the writer want readers to take away from his or her text?</p>	<p><i>"Good little girls always show marked deference for the aged."</i></p> <p><i>"Good little girls ought not to make mouths at their teachers for every trifling offence."</i></p>	<p>Overall, Twain goes against and ridicules the level of standards set into place for girl behavior. Through the humor he establishes, he effectively persuades his views towards it, and to establish the idea that it is important for them to have freedom of expression.</p>

Part 2: Write a paragraph analyzing the author's style. In your analysis, discuss the author's tone, diction, syntax, theme, and subject matter, and explain how those elements shape the author's style. Be sure to comment on how the author's style helps accomplish his or her purpose.

In *Advice to Little Girls*, Mark Twain makes mention to how little girls are supposed to behave, making mention of the standards placed on them. He ridicules these standards and utilizes humor to express the importance for freedom of expression, and how it is perfectly alright to act your own age. His use of syntax and diction does an excellent job of conveying this. Twain heavily implements parallel structure, repeating such phrases as "ought" and "you ought" to place emphasis, while being comical, on how little girls are "supposed to behave." As well, he does a precisely chooses words with humorous connotations, such as "sass," to further integrate a sense of wit and entertainment. Through all of this, Twain is able to achieve a comical and humorous tone, with overall helps in delivering his message of the importance for freedom of expression; that standards should not define the way you live your life.