After each chapter, you will find an interchapter, which summarizes the preceding material and raises questions about three pieces of writing. Those pieces of writing, which appear in their entirety toward the end of the book, are

- the 1849 essay “Civil Disobedience” by Henry David Thoreau (pages 209–225).
- the 1982 poem “It’s a Woman’s World” by Eavan Boland (pages 226–227).

We’ve borrowed the title of Alice Walker’s short story for the title of this book, you’ll note.

By asking you to apply to the three works the concepts about rhetoric raised in the preceding chapter, each interchapter expects you to look at the essay, the poem, and the story from a different angle; together, the interchapters will cause you to become intimately familiar with what the authors had to say and how they said it. If you are using this book in a writing or literature class, your teacher may ask you to read other pieces besides these, but Thoreau’s essay, Boland’s poem, and Walker’s short story will give us a common set of works to explore together and to which you will respond as a rhetor—a person skilled at critical reading and purposeful and effective writing and speaking.

We hope that you’ll read these pieces of literature several times as you proceed through the interchapters. It’s always a good idea to read each one fairly quickly to get a sense of the whole piece and then begin to read in a more focused way as you engage in the activities and respond to the questions we present in the interchapter.

Overview of the Major Points in Chapter 1

- Rhetoric is not some complex art that only scholars and specialists know how to use. Rhetoric is a technique and a set of practices—which you can
Interchapter 1

ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
We suggest students read once fairly quickly through the essay, the poem, and the short story—to get a sense of each piece as a whole—before they engage in the activities and respond to the questions in this interchapter. We hope that students will then reread the selections in a more focused way as they work with this interchapter and, subsequently, with the five other interchapters.

For suggested answers to the activities and questions, see “Additional Notes for Teachers,” which begins on page 257.

ADDITIONAL WRITING PROMPTS
Prompt #1: Free Response: Analytical
Suggested Time: 40 minutes
In the first paragraph of “Civil Disobedience,” Henry David Thoreau attempts to define himself in the context of the greater American government. What rhetorical strategies does Thoreau use, and how does he define both the government and the individual? You may want to consider such rhetorical devices as diction, tone, and point of view.

The preceding prompt epitomizes the textual-analysis essay questions on the AP exam, and it even directs students to specific rhetorical devices. Keys to student success in responding to this prompt include describing Thoreau’s charged diction, such as acquire, experiment with, and master—to find all the available means of shaping people’s thinking, changing their minds, or influencing their actions in a situation that calls for you to speak or write.

- Rhetoric also refers to the actual features of a written or spoken text—its central ideas; its organization, emphases, and focus; and its syntax, diction, and imagery—that lead listeners or readers to pay attention to it and to take up the writer’s or speaker’s purpose.

- A rhetorical situation, one that calls for speaking or writing, contains six elements you can analyze, either in isolation or in relation to one another: the writer or speaker; the reader or listener (sometimes referred to as the audience); the subject matter, or content; the aim, or intention, of the document created; the context (the time, the place, and the community or forum) in which the written document or spoken text is operating; and the genre (the type of composition, its structure, and its organization).

You can analyze each of these elements by looking at specific features of texts and asking yourself these questions:

1. What kind of person does the writer or speaker seem to be?
2. Who is the audience for this text—in other words, whom does the speaker or writer seem to be addressing?
3. What seems to be the relationship between the speaker or writer and the audience?
4. What is the central idea that this text develops?
5. How is the text developed—through examples? descriptions? stories?
6. How is the text organized? How are its parts arranged? How are the parts connected? How does this arrangement of parts help the development of the text?
7. What is the context for the text? In what community, or forum, is this text operating?
8. How does the context influence the writer or speaker or the relationship of the writer or speaker with the audience?

Activities and Discussion Questions for Chapter 1 Use these questions and comments as guides for your own discussion and writing about these works.

The text appears on pages 209–225. In a discussion with a group of your classmates, or in a well-developed, well-organized essay, address one or more of the following questions.

1. Based on your reading of “Civil Disobedience,” what kind of person does Henry David Thoreau seem to be? How would you characterize his state of mind and emotion as he composed “Civil Disobedience”?
Cite specific examples from “Civil Disobedience” to support your claims about Thoreau’s voice and persona.

2. What does Thoreau do in “Civil Disobedience” to urge his readers to believe in him as a trustworthy, credible person? Point out specific passages where you felt Thoreau was (or was not) particularly believable.

3. One device a writer can use to get a point across is metaphor, a comparison of two dissimilar objects or ideas that does not use the words like or as. Thoreau uses metaphor extensively in “Civil Disobedience.” Notice, for example, what he compares machinery to, or how he uses gaming metaphorically. Select one or two metaphors and explain, citing specific examples from the text, how they help Thoreau’s central idea become more vivid for his readers.

4. How do you think Thoreau wanted his readers to react to “Civil Disobedience”? What did he want them to feel? think? believe? do? How do you know? Again, point to specific places in the essay that help you determine Thoreau’s purpose.

Eavan Boland, “It’s a Woman’s World” (published 1982)

The text appears on pages 226–227. Discuss the following ideas in your small group, or choose one and write a well-developed essay of your own. Remember that poetry depends so much on sound for its message that you should listen to someone read “It’s a Woman’s World” aloud or read it aloud yourself.

1. Create a character description for the speaker in the poem. What might she look like? What kind of work does she do? What are some words in the poem that suggest how she feels about women and their roles? What clue does the title give you about her attitude?

2. Consider the speaker’s ethos. How does she make herself believable? Find specific places in the poem where you hear the speaker establishing her own right to speak. Notice especially how she uses pronouns. Why is it important that she uses first-person plural?

3. One striking feature of this poem is the way that the speaker uses details. Pick a few of the details she uses and comment on how they contribute to the meaning of the poem and to the attitude of the speaker toward her subject. Pay attention to the way she uses verbs and the way she makes verbs out of nouns—for example, in “milestone our lives”—as she creates these details.

4. Repetition is an especially useful strategy for poets, since it aids both in stressing meaning and in creating rhythm. Find places where repetition helps reinforce the speaker’s purpose or create effect.

5. Explore how the speaker makes connections to her readers. What does she want readers to feel at the end of the poem? Are there particular words in the text that suggest how she wants readers to react?
Alice Walker, “Everyday Use” (published 1973)

The text appears on pages 228–234. In a discussion with a group of your classmates, or in a well-organized essay, address one or more of the following questions.

1. “Everyday Use” was written in the 1970s, a time when civil-rights issues had begun to focus on matters of ethnic pride and heritage. How does knowing that context help you to comment on the conflict this story presents as well as on its message?

2. Which character do you feel the most sympathy for? Explain why, using lines from the story to illustrate your position.

3. Although there are no white people who are obvious characters in the story, racial difference and racism are subtly made part of the story’s context. How do you see that racial context in the story, and how does it contribute to the meaning?

4. As you think about the writer’s intention, consider why this story begins with the dedication “for your grandmama.”

Prompt #3: Free Response: Argumentative

Suggested Time: 40 minutes

In “It’s a Woman’s World,” Eavan Boland writes:

It’s our alibi for all time that as far as history goes we were never on the scene of the crime.

Consider the ramifications of Boland’s claim, and consider the claim in the context of your own knowledge, reading, and experience.

This prompt epitomizes the “free-response” essay questions on the AP exam, and it asks students to draw on their personal collection of information. Keys to student success in responding to this prompt include

- a mature presentation of one’s own experiences, avoiding claims that seem stereotypical or immature.
- specific and accurate accounts from their own readings in literature or history that appropriately apply to Boland’s claim (for instance, to say that no one is to blame for the racism in society today is an oversimplification that begs historical accuracy).