

# INSTRUCTIONAL TASK 8 MODEL

## TASK 8 ANALYZE AND COMPARE AUTHOR PURPOSE

**STEP 1:** Select multiple texts related to the same topic or focus question. These might be opposing viewpoints, secondary and primary sources, and/or various rhetorical styles. (Both From American Terrorism Collection)

**STEPS 2-3:** Students read and annotate the first text, summarizing in a single sentence the author's purpose for writing, and indicating support for this purpose.

### TEXT #1 THE INSURRECTION

Mercury | Charleston, South Carolina | 21 October 1859  
<http://history.furman.edu/editorials/see.py?sequence=jbmenu&location=%20John%20Brown%27s%20Raid%20on%20Harper%27s%20Ferry&code=sccmjb591021a>  
 Furman University Department of History

From the accounts given of the Harper's Ferry **business**, it would seem that it was **concocted** two months since at the Ohio State Fair, by Brown and other confederates, and that its object was to raise the slaves in that country, kill all persons interfering or in the way, and carry them off to freedom north of the Mason and Dixon's line. The number of whites directly concerned-- only twenty-three-- is small for the **great preparations** made in arms and ammunition. It is stated that recruits from the North were expected, but did not arrive in time, Brown having been precipitate in his movement. Three of the whites are said to have escaped with four hundred negros.

As we anticipated, the affair, in its magnitude, was **quite exaggerated**; but it fully establishes the fact that **there are at the** North men ready to engage in adventures upon the peace and security of the southern people, however heinously and recklessly, and capable of planning and keeping secret their infernal designs. It is a **warning profoundly symptomatic of the future of the Union with our sectional enemies.**

#### Summary:

*While the actual event itself was of little importance, John Brown's raider at Harper's Ferry demonstrated that there are Northerners willing to do violence in order to further their plans.*



*Dismissive tone, suggests it was thrown together hastily, not well-planned*

*SARCASM*

*Obviously a Southern publication bias towards the North*



# INSTRUCTIONAL TASK 8 MODEL (continued)

## STEPS 2–3 (CONTINUED)

### TEXT #2 (EXCERPTS) DID JOHN BROWN FAIL? by Frederick Douglass

Address Delivered in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia at  
the 14th Anniversary of Storer College | May 30, 1881

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/did-john-brown-fail/>

On the night of the 16th of October, 1859, there appeared near the **confluence** of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, a party of nineteen men – fourteen white and five colored. They were not only armed themselves, but had brought with them a large supply of arms for such persons as might join them. These men invaded Harper's Ferry, disarmed the watchman, took possession of the arsenal, rifle-factory, armory and other government property at that place, arrested and made prisoners nearly all the prominent citizens of the neighborhood, collected about fifty slaves, put bayonets into the hands of such as were able **and** **willing to fight for their liberty, killed three men, proclaimed general emancipation, held the ground more than thirty hours, were subsequently overpowered and nearly all killed, wounded or captured,** by a body of United States troops, under command of Colonel Robert E. Lee, since famous as the rebel Gen. Lee. Three out of the nineteen invaders were captured whilst fighting, and one of these was Captain John Brown, the man who originated, planned and commanded the expedition. At the time of his capture Capt. Brown **was supposed to be mortally wounded, as he had several ugly gashes and bayonet wounds on his head and body; and apprehending that he might speedily die, or that he might be rescued by his friends, and thus the opportunity of making him a signal example of slave-holding vengeance would be lost,** his captors hurried him to Charlestown two miles further within the border of Virginia, placed him in prison strongly guarded by troops, and before his wounds were healed, he was brought into court, subjected to a **nominal trial,** convicted of high treason and inciting slaves to insurrection, and was **executed.** His corpse was given to his woe-stricken widow, and she, assisted by Anti-slavery friends, caused it to be borne to North Elba, Essex County, N.Y., and there his dust now reposes, amid **the silent, solemn and snowy grandeur of the Adirondacks.**

#### Summary:

*The author describes John Brown's raid as a tragic, yet fully justified event.*

*Tone is reverent, awed*

*Sympathetic to JB*

*Shows they are justified in the writer's opinion*

*Unfair?*

*respect*

*ROBERT*

## INSTRUCTIONAL TASK 8 MODEL (continued)

<i>The Insurrection</i>	<i>Did John Brown Fail?</i>
<i>POV</i>	
<i>Pro South (published in Southern paper)</i>	<i>Abolitionist (written by Frederick Douglass)</i>
<i>Author's Purpose</i>	
<i>Persuade that the incident was trivial in scope, but that the North is uncivilized</i>	<i>Persuade that the incident was tragic and that Brown is a hero</i>
<i>Rhetoric/Word Choice</i>	
<i>slightly sarcastic, Condescending... "concocted" "great preparations" Serious tone at the end... "sectional enemies"</i>	<i>Eloquent, almost religious, reverent "confluence" fight for their liberty, now reposes amid the silent, solemn and snowy grandeur.....</i>