ERWC Unit #2 English II Pre-Honors Name

Directions: Read and annotate the following article (3+ good annotations per page).

**Comments Unfit For a King: What LeBron Got Wrong**

By David Niven October 15, 2019 *New York Daily News*

LeBron James has shot the ball and missed more than 11,000 times in NBA games. But it’s the 11,000 shots that went in that he’ll be remembered for.

It doesn’t work that way in politics, however.

For all the respect James has garnered[[1]](#footnote-1) for demonstrating deep concern for gun violence, inequality and educational opportunity in the United States, James’ statements on the NBA’s relationship with China blithely[[2]](#footnote-2) advance the cause of repression.

Ever since Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey angered the Chinese government with a tweet supporting the democracy movement in Hong Kong, the NBA has been stuck in a spiral of ham-fisted[[3]](#footnote-3) damage control. Ten days after Morey’s tweet was posted and then quickly deleted, James reignited the subject with comments chastising Morey. “I believe he was either misinformed or not really educated on the situation,” James said.

James was apparently not questioning whether Morey had given proper thought to Francis Fukuyama’s writing on the globalization of democracy. Rather he had the bottom line in mind. The NBA plays games in China, sells media rights in China, makes money in China.

“So many people could have been harmed,” James said of Morey’s tweet, “not only financially, physically, emotionally, spiritually.”

*Financially*. Chinese Labor Watch found Foxconn factory workers making $2 an hour, working for weeks on end without a day off, urinating in bottles as they stood on the assembly line because they were denied breaks to use the restroom.

*Physically*. Freedom House estimates that China leads the world in the number of political prisoners.

*Emotionally*. More than a million members of an ethnic minority group in China, the Uighurs, are currently being detained for reeducation.

*Spiritually*. The Chinese government recognizes five official religions. Unauthorized churches are subject to being demolished by the Chinese government, and Bibles confiscated.

But it wasn’t really the financial, physical, emotional or spiritual well-being of the Chinese James had in mind in his comments; it was his own.

There is a big difference between James voicing his thoughts on gun violence or inequality in the U.S. and James voicing his thoughts on China. There is nothing self-serving in seeking peace and justice. There is something deeply unsettling about being the Chinese government’s stooge[[4]](#footnote-4) to advance the league’s interests in global distribution of its product and fatten one’s own wallet.

To be fair, James views basketball as a great cultural bridge. “The game of basketball has brought people together,” James said, “in so many different facets, so many different countries, so many different people that you would never, ever expect.”

And a good argument could be made that sports helped ease the tensions of a Cold War world. But now basketball and other sports have been coopted[[5]](#footnote-5) in service of repression.

When China hosted the summer Olympics in 2008, the Gallup Poll found American opinion on the country flipped from negative to positive. Now repressive governments in China, Russia, Qatar and elsewhere leap at the chance to host international sporting events to normalize their appearance to the world.

But away from the courts and fields, the unchecked power of the state goes unquestioned.

LeBron James enjoys the freedom to say he would never under any circumstances consider sitting down with a man he has referred to as a “bum” and the “so-called president” of the United States. People in Hong Kong and across China would go to prison for saying such things. James needs to recognize that stifling[[6]](#footnote-6) outspoken NBA voices should not be tolerated, no matter whether the subject is Donald Trump or Xi Jinping.

🡪 Chunk up the article (after initial reading) and identify the main points (intro, concession,…). Then, use the Precis template to write a Rhetorical Precis on the article.

**POST-READING Article Review Activity: SOAPS Tone**

What is the Subject? The general topic, content, and idea contained in the text

What is the Occasion? The time and place of the piece, the current situation

Who is the Audience? The group of readers to whom this piece is directed

What is the Purpose? The author’s reason behind writing the text

Who is the Speaker? The voice that tells the story; how he/she relates to the audience

What is the Tone? The emotional attitude the writer expresses toward the subject

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| S (Subject) | This article is about . . . |
| O (Occasion) | The events which led up to the writing of this piece include . . . |
| A (Audience) | One can assume the author’s intended audience is . . . |
| P (Purpose) | The main purpose of this article is . . . |
| S (Speaker)  &  Tone | The author is . . . |
| He/She establishes . . . |

4-sentence summary:

**Rhetorical Precis FORMAT/TEMPLATE** DUE

In his/her \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

*(type of text)* (*title of work*) (year of article)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(*author’s first and last name*) *(information about the author)*

that

(*claims/argues/asserts*) (*main argument*)

this claim by first

(*He/She*) (*supports/develops*) (*Explain what the author is doing: verb*)

Next, (s)he

Towards the end,

Finally, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

‘s purpose is to

(*author’s last name*)

establishes

(*He/she*) (*Describe the tone of the author*)

for

(*Describe the intended audience of the article*)

This work is significant because

Proofread your PRECIS and make sure it is in present tense and uses formal tone (no personal pronouns). Then, type it in MLA format and submit to turnitin.com by .

1. **Garnered**: collected, accumulated [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **Blithely**: in a carefree manner [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. **Ham-fisted**: clumsy, inept [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **Stooge**: (in this context) assistant, accomplice [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. **Coopted**: won over, appropriated, claimed [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. **Stifling**: suppressing, crushing [↑](#footnote-ref-6)