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Lens 2 Reader-as-Writers

Walter Dean Myers uses many different forms of writing to get across the many themes that are found in Monster. While we hear of court cases all the time and can actually read them and find every single detail. We miss one thing. That is the conscious thoughts of the person being prosecuted. Myers uses a mixture between diary format and screenplay format. The screenplay format helps create a structure of truth for the novel while the diary format allows the reader to delve into the mind of the narrator and suspend all reason to feel the authentic thoughts rather than the unemotional telling of the screenplay.

This does many things to help mentor the reader. The first thing it does is show the reader that all narrators do not always have to be reliable. The reader learns to not trust every word that is told to them. On the opposite spectrum, the reader also learns how straight facts can seem cold and harsh and turn the reader away. This helps the student develop more as a writer rather than a reader. The student can learn from creating a similar text how to blend two genres of writing, how the audience perceives different types of narrators depending on the genre and writing style.

The styles Myers uses are especially important to the understanding of the novel Monster. The more truthful screenplay style in contrast with the more confessional diary style creates a dynamic that draws the reader in. The reader does not know whether to trust the cold hearted truth of the screenplay or the endearing warm hearted supposed confessions of the diary. This makes for an interesting choice that is left up to the reader in what to believe in.