

DIDLS for “Immortal Cells, Moral Issues”

Every writer has a unique style. Style is the combination of the writer’s choices, which are made to achieve a certain purpose. Use the graphic organizer below to analyze Keiger’s style.

Part A

As you read, look for these details...			How do you know? Cite specific evidence from the text.
D	Diction: author’s choice of words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for choice of strong words. Do you notice any repetition or patterns in the word choice? What do these words reveal about how the author feels about the subject? <p><i>The author uses a lot of jargon vocabulary, associated with the medical research field. He also refers to research subjects and the public as if these people were separate from his intended audience. This lets the reader know that the article is not intended for the general public or patients.</i></p>	<p><i>The author refers to “ethicists”, “informed consent”, and “bioengineering”.</i></p> <p><i>“The public understands that human biospecimens may be used by scientists purely for the advancement of knowledge and the development of new medical therapies, but they’re also used by business to generate profits; through technology transfer, they have the potential to generate profits for universities as well.”</i></p>
I	Imagery: Use of descriptions that appeal to the senses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What images are especially vivid? To what senses do these images appeal? How do these images affect your mood as a reader? <p><i>The author doesn’t really use imagery, except in the opening hook. This lack of imagery gives the reader the impression that this text values facts, logic, and reasoning, above telling a story.</i></p>	<p><i>“That’s when she was startled by the deceased woman’s chipped red toenail polish.”</i></p>

D	Details: Facts included or those omitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What details are emphasized or repeated? Look for facts. Are there any details that have been left out? How do the included details affect your mood as a reader? <p><i>The author quotes facts from many institutions and researchers, including the dean of research for John Hopkins, the director for public policy, and a “renowned” geneticist. He also uses quotes from informed consent and reasoning from ethicists.</i></p> <p><i>This continual use of ethos makes me think the author wants me to believe he is a credible expert on this issue.</i></p>	<p><i>“In 1999, RAND Corporation estimated, in a monograph titled Handbook of Human Tissue Sources, that 307.1 million human tissue samples were stored in various repositories throughout the United States.”</i></p> <p><i>“How does a research center or a for-profit company track down all of those donors to pay a royalty or fee? Says Nichols, the Hopkins vice dean for education,”</i></p>
L	Language: Characteristics of the body of language (slang, figurative, scholarly language, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could the language be described overall? What connections does the author make with figurative language? How does the language affect your mood as a reader? <p><i>The language is mainly scholarly. These make me feel as if the writer is reporting facts and wants the reader to rely on logic.</i></p>	<p><i>“Ethicists speak of a “common good model” in which tissue donors are not compensated because they donated pieces of themselves not in the hope of a future payday but to further science that contributes to the common good.”</i></p>

S	Syntax: The way sentences are constructed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are sentences simple, compound, complex, varied? What do these structures indicate about the author? <i>The author uses many complex and compound-complex sentences. The syntax suggests that the author views the subject as a complicated, academic debate.</i> 	<i>“The public understands that human biospecimens may be used by scientists purely for the advancement of knowledge and the development of new medical therapies, but they’re also used by business to generate profits; through technology transfer, they have the potential to generate profits for universities as well.”</i>
TO NE	Tone: The writer’s attitude or toward the subject.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on your analysis above, how would you describe the author’s tone? Sarcastic? Objective? Angry? Romantic? Urgent? Serious? Clinical? Lofty? How would you read the passage aloud if you were the author? <i>The tone is lofty. I would read the article aloud as if I were an anchor on a news analysis show.</i> 	<i>“The researcher took 50 entries selected at random and by cross-referencing the data with other public information was able to match a person’s name to 47 out of 50.”</i>

Part B: Each author uses word choice, sentence structure, and figurative language to create a unique style that will speak to specific audiences, occasions or purposes. Consider the words below, which would describe Skloot’s style?

Objective

Opinionated

Academic

Narrative

Nostalgic

Cynical

Humorous

Was Keiger’s style an effective way to portray the story of HeLa cells? Explain your answer by describing how the style did or did not achieve Keiger’s purpose.

Keiger’s academic style was not an effective way to portray the story of HeLa cells. The jargon vocabulary, such as “biospecimen” and “bioengineering” show that he was more interested in communicating with researchers than the person behind HeLa cells or the other patients who have unknowingly donated tissue for research. This style is also exemplified by the author’s reliance on experts from John Hopkins University and geneticists. At one point, Keiger makes his academic intent clear when he directly addresses his audience by writing, “If you are a scientist working with anonymized tissue samples taken from a repository ...” While this style is more effective way for academics to consider the implications of tissue collection from the researcher’s point-of-view, it does not effectively require

researchers to think of Henrietta or their patients as people with families of their own. Nothing can achieve that purpose better than telling the stories of the people, whose cells were used by scientists.