**English 1101**

**Sentences to Explore**

**Gloria Naylor, “A Word’s Meaning Often Depends on Who Says It”:**

Words themselves are innocuous; it is the consensus that gives them true power. (289)

Had he called me a nymphomaniac or a necrophiliac, I couldn’t have been more puzzled. (289)

When used with a possessive adjective by a woman—“my nigger”—it became a term of endearment for her husband or boyfriend. (290)

I don’t agree with the argument that use of the word *nigger* at this social stratum of the black community was an internalization of racism. (291)

**Etel Adnan, “To Write in a Foreign Language”**

When I was six or seven I remember my father had a fountain pen which he liked particularly; once in a while he had to fill out administrative papers, and since Arabic was the official language, he wrote, in a regular and distinguished way, lines and lines in a language which was for me neither foreign nor familiar.

So I remember that once in a while (did it last one year, two years, a single season? I can’t tell) I used to sit and copy—which means reproduce faithfully, words after words whose alphabet I understood, but seldom their meaning—never trying to understand what I was writing: I think that I loved the act of writing things I did not understand, and I pretended that I was learning a language without effort, just by writing it down.

Was I happy to dream of such an extraordinary thing, or was it an ideal excusenot to study Arabic?

I did not try to have them translated to me, I was satisfied with the strange understanding of them: bits here and there, sentences where I understood but ne key word; it was like seeing through a veil, looking at an extraordinary scenery through a screen, as if the screen did not erase images but toned them down and made them look even more mysterious than they were.