**Rhetorical Analysis**

   I chose Pillsbury Crossing for my descriptions in this paper.  I enjoyed writing about Pillsbury Crossing because it seemed to offer many positive and negatives, and I had never been there before.  This allowed me to record my own first impressions, both pleasant and unpleasant.  The floodplain is very peaceful, yet it is scarred by humankind’s misuse of the nature park.

   I wrote my first sentence as an overt statement which explained the mood of the rest of the paragraph.  For my pleasant impression, I stated “Nature’s beauty surrounds me,” emphasizing the beauty on can find in a place such as this.  In contrast, for my negative impression, I wrote “Death has had her way here.”  The notion of death immediately makes the tone grim and unpleasant, even though death is also a fundamental aspect of the natural world.

   With my tone clearly established, I next had to consider my word choice very carefully.  In order to show the reader what I experienced, I had to choose words that fit the mood of the description as set by my overt statements of meaning.  In my pleasant description, I discuss the sun’s rays and how they are “crisp” and “relieving.”  These words make the sun’s rays seem pleasant and positive; however, in the negative description, the sun’s rays were “hazardous.”  This description emphasizes the fact that the sun’s rays can be harmful and dangerous.  I also describe the leaves in both paragraphs.  While the leaves were colorful, reflecting “green, yellow, and brown hues” in my positive description, they were “withering” and falling to the ground to create a leaf “cemetery” in my negative description.  This helps maintain the mood of each of my respective paragraphs.

   I also left out details from certain paragraphs to keep the mood and tone consistent.  In my pleasant description, I omitted the observation of garbage “decaying to the roots of hungry plants.”  I did not include the garbage in my pleasant paragraph because it did not fit into my description of the gorgeous scenery.  If I had included the garbage and trash in the positive paragraph, the reader would picture a nice place filled with a bunch of filthy waste.  This is not what I wanted.  In the unpleasant impression, I left out how the bugs whistled and chanted.  By simple describing them as “swarming” and omitting the beauty of their sounds, the bugs seem to be only an annoyance in the negative paragraph.

   Similes and metaphors were helpful as well, allowing me to create an impression that nature was either alive and comforting or dead and disturbing.  In the pleasant description, I wanted the impression to be welcoming and lively, so I wrote “the wind bristles the leaves as if they were applauding the breath of the land.”  I wanted to make Mother Nature have a personality.  By using similes like “symphony of nature,” it gives Mother Nature a graceful, caring attitude, which makes the description seem more pleasant.  In the negative paragraph, I compare thunder to a cannon, “echoing off the hills of the horizon.”  This portrays thunder as a menacing force, roaring through the landscape, making Mother Nature seem mean, stingy, and threatening.

   Throughout my descriptions, I also paid attention to sentence structure.  I start each paragraph with a short, tell sentence, to make sure the reader knows exactly what impression I have of this place.  “Nature’s beauty surrounds me” contrasts sharply with “Death has had her way here.”  In the rest of the paragraph, I used longer sentences, which allowed me to truly show the reader my place.  For instance, in the sentence “Different bugs whistle and chant around me, voicing their opinions and contributing to the symphony of nature,” I state the object being described, describe it, and try to elaborate as much as possible.