

Lou Gehrig's Farewell Address

Nicknamed the "Iron Horse," Lou Gehrig was a baseball player known for his talent and durability in Major League Baseball. The text below is his final speech to a sold-out Yankee Stadium on July 4, 1939. At the time, Gehrig had been diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), which is known commonly referred to as "Lou Gehrig's Disease." He would die soon thereafter. Considered "the Gettysburg Address" of baseball, this speech has become a central text in American sports rhetoric.

Read the excerpt closely. Note the **function** (rhetorical appeals) along the text and try to identify the **form** (how did he create that appeal?). Beside the prompt, complete a SOAPStone. At the bottom, write two sentences: (1) what is his **purpose**? (2) how did his language convey that purpose? I've done ONE annotation as an example.

Form

"bad break" is a euphemism—an understated and nice way of characterizing a terminal illness

Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about a **bad break** I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth.

I have been in ballparks for seventeen years and have never received anything but kindness and encouragement from you fans. Look at these grand men. Which of you wouldn't consider it the highlight of his career just to associate with them for even one day?

Sure I'm lucky.

Who wouldn't consider it an honor to have known Jacob Ruppert? Also, the builder of baseball's greatest empire, Ed Barrow? To have spent six years with that wonderful little fellow, Miller Huggins? Then to have spent the next nine years with that outstanding leader, that smart student of psychology, the best manager in baseball today, Joe McCarthy?

Sure I'm lucky.

When the New York Giants, a team you would give your right arm to beat, and vice versa, sends you a gift - that's something. When everybody down to the groundskeepers and those boys in white coats remember you with trophies -- that's something.

When you have a wonderful mother-in-law who takes sides with you in squabbles with her own daughter -- that's something.

When you have a father and a mother who work all their lives so you can have an education and build your body -- it's a blessing.

When you have a wife who has been a tower of strength and shown more courage than you dreamed existed -- that's the finest I know.

So, I close in saying that I might have been given a bad break, but I've got an awful lot to live for.

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Tone:

Function

He chooses a euphemism to minimize his impending death and focus on his blessed life.
(Pathos and ethos)

Purpose:

How: