

Name: _____ Date: _____

6B- _____

Writing: "The Moustache"

Essay:

Directions, Plan, Outline, & Draft

Task: Write a well-written, well-organized, and well-developed **4-paragraph theme essay** in which you identify the **theme topic** and **theme message** of "The Moustache" by Robert Cormier. **State the theme topic in your thesis; state the theme message as your insight statement.** In your body paragraphs, discuss **two different scenes** that most strongly support your interpretation of the theme. To do this, find the two best QUOTES that show the theme — **one quote must be from the CLIMAX**, the other, from the next most dramatic, significant, or revealing scene in the story. Both quotes must reveal the *same theme*, even if they don't express the same point about this theme. (For example: Both scenes might be about the theme of friendship, but one could show characters encountering obstacles to their friendship, while the other might show them figuring out their problems with friendship.) Once you have these quotes, **outline your body paragraphs in chronological order** (time order). In other words, put the quote that appears earlier in the story in Body ¶ #1; put the quote that appears later in the story in Body ¶ #2. Then develop both quotes using the SEE method. In your explanations (SEE), be sure to discuss the meaning of the quotes, specifically explaining what they say about the theme.

Directions:

1. Complete the Writing Plan.
2. Use the Writing Plan to complete the Essay Outline.
3. Use the Essay Outline to draft your essay. (See sample at end of this packet.)
4. Edit and Revise your draft.
5. Type on Docs and submit your essay.

Docs Title: Hilpert, Jonathan. 6B-1. "TM" Theme Essay. RED.

(over)

Writing Plan: USE PENCIL.

1. State the *theme topic* (love, trust, jealousy, cowardice, etc); your theme topic does not have to, but probably will, relate to your theme message from question 5 on “The Moustache” Guided Reading Questions: _____

2. State the *theme message* (the author’s point about the theme topic); your theme message does not have to, but probably will, relate to your theme message from question 5 on “The Moustache” Guided Reading Questions: _____

3. List the **two BEST quotes** that support your interpretation of the theme; your quotes must come from two *different* scenes, and **one of your quotes must come from the CLIMAX.** (See question 4 of “The Moustache” Guided Reading Questions.) You may use ellipses (...) to shorten your quotes, but include the beginning and end of the quote, as well as a pg. # for each. Put quotes in **chronological (time) order**:

• _____

_____ pg. #: _____

• _____

_____ pg. #: _____

(next)

Essay Outline: USE PENCIL. Use your writing plan to help you outline your essay.

Introduction

Hook: [~1-4 lines: Catch reader's attention on the THEME TOPIC.] _____

Line: [~1-4 lines: Include title, author, *very brief* plot summary of entire story (intro of characters & conflict?) that DOESN'T give away details of body ¶'s. Use introductory expressions to create "flow" with line and sinker.]

Sinker / Thesis: [1 sentence: Name the **THEME TOPIC** (*not* the theme message).]

(over)

Body Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence: [1 sentence: **MAIN IDEA** that supports thesis; focuses on evidence / quote; connects a scene (CLIMAX?) to your theme.] _____

Evidence [~1-4 lines. Write your first quote here. You may use ellipses.]

***Include tag:** Who said quote? To whom? During what situation?

- _____

_____ pg. #: _____

Body Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence: [1 sentence: **MAIN IDEA** that supports thesis; focuses on evidence / quote; connects a scene (CLIMAX?) to your theme.] _____

Use the following format:

1. Conclusive transition (See list below.)

- [illegible]

(over)

(next)

(over)

(next)

(over)

Sample 4-¶ Theme Essay: [Color-code and label.]

The Roman poet Quintus Ennius said, “Let no one weep for me, or celebrate my funeral with mourning; for I still live, as I pass to and fro through the mouths of men.” In her short story “Nadia the Willful,” Sue Alexander tells the tale of a young Bedouin girl, Nadia, and her kind and gracious father, the sheik Tarik, who lose their beloved family member, Hamed, and mourn his loss in contradictory fashion. Through this conflict, Alexander expresses the theme of coping with loss.

The author introduces this theme when Tarik first responds to Hamed’s death. Nadia and Tarik adore Hamed, so they are devastated when he dies. In response to the loss, Tarik removes himself from his tribe and sits in silence in his tent. Following this isolation, he emerges from the tent and, as sheik of the clan, says to his people, “From this day forward... let no one utter Hamed’s name. Punishment shall be swift for those who would remind me of what I have lost.” In essence, the loss of Hamed drives Tarik inward. First, he escapes to his tent and cuts off communication from his people. In doing so, he relies on denial to ease his pain. Next, he exploits his position of power by outlawing references to his dearly-departed son. Through his reaction, Tarik suggests that he is unable to accept the loss of his son. Clearly, he finds the concept of outward expressions of grief too painful to tolerate. Instead, he attempts to reject reality by pretending that Hamed has never existed — the idea being that, if Hamed has never lived, then Hamed has never died, either.

In the climax, when Tarik’s law becomes unbearable, Nadia confronts him about the death of her brother and fortifies the theme of loss. Despite Tarik’s law, Nadia talks about Hamed, eludes Tarik’s punishment, and achieves relief in the process. However, Tarik banishes a young shepherd for speaking of Hamed. Hearing the news, Nadia boldly addresses her father, who can no longer recall his son. Trying to help her father, she reflects on her memories of Hamed until Tarik smiles, at which point Nadia concludes, “Now you see... there is a way that Hamed can be with us still.” Basically, Tarik’s silence strips away from him all memories of his cherished son, leaving Tarik emotionally isolated, alone with his pain, without the resources to surmount his sadness. He becomes, in effect, like the barren desert

(over)

that has stolen his son from him, lifeless and willful. On the contrary, Nadia instinctively understands that silence will only worsen her pain. Ironically, by willfully speaking of Hamed, she conjures him, not just for herself, but for her people, too; in essence, her stubbornness is her strength. As if to notify Nadia that Hamed has made an emotional return, Tarik smiles symbolically. In doing so, Tarik implies that he, like the shepherd, has accepted Nadia's valuable lesson about loss, which suggests that memories of Hamed are an effective cure for the pain caused by his loss.

In effect, Tarik's harsh, isolating law and Nadia's bold refusal to abide by it establish the theme of dealing with loss. Ultimately, when Nadia reminisces about Hamed, she implies that life doesn't have to end with death. Instead, as Quintus Ennius once suggested, the departed can live in our words and our memories, revitalized by our mere mention of their names, because those who've passed away from the present still saunter poignantly through our recollections of the past.

