Kite Runner Character Sketch Essay

# Overview

This essay’s main purpose is to gain insight into why a particular character is the way he/she is.

# Outcomes Assessed

* Comprehend and Respond
  + CR 9.3 – I can use cues to make meaning and confirm it.
  + CR 9.4 – I can view and interpret a variety of visual and multimedia texts to get ideas suitable for an identified audience and purpose, and to synthesize and summarize ideas.
  + CR 9.7 – I can read independently and understand a variety of information texts.
* Compose and Create
  + CC 9.3 – I can use strategies of the creating process to communicate meaning
  + CC 9.4 – I can use to construct and communicate meaning
  + CC 9.9 – I can write to persuade.
* Assess and Reflect
  + AR 9.1 – I can assess my personal strengths and needs to develop and work on language goals.
  + AR 9.2 – I can assess my own work and the work of others for clarity, correctness, and impact.

# Topic

Because good stories stem from good characters, we’re starting the writing process with a character sketch. Choose a dynamic character from *Kite Runner*. In your essay, prove something about him/her.

# Format

The paper itself

* The paper should be typed on white 8.5” x 11” (standard letter) paper.
  + Double-spaced
  + Size 12
  + Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri
  + Leave only one space after periods and other punctuation marks
  + Margins are 1” all the way around
  + Indent the first line of each paragraph by pressing the tab button once
  + Header: your last name and the page number in the upper right corner of every page
  + Use *italics* when referring to the movie or the book. Use quotation marks when referring to a web article or handout.
  + Include a Works Cited Page as the last page. Use EasyBib.
* These guidelines are adapted from the Style Guide from the OWL at Purdue University. Check out their website for anything and everything MLA.

Length

* Introduction
  + Hook
  + Introduce your character.
  + Three key points in the order you will discuss them
    - All points MUST directly support your thesis
  + Thesis (the main argument of your essay)
    - This is ONE SENTENCE ONLY.
* Three body paragraphs
  + Write these in five finger paragraph style
  + Include transition words between paragraphs to enhance the flow or your essay
* Conclusion
  + Restate your thesis
    - Say the same thing, just using new words
  + Restate your three points in the order you discussed them
    - Ditto
  + Clincher
    - Wrap up your essay with something that makes the reader happy and satisfied, much like the dessert of your essay
  + Remember: Never EVER EVER EVER EVER introduce new information in your conclusion. That’s just cruel.

# Writing Style

* Third person
  + Do not use “I,” “we,” “you,” etc.
* Present tense
  + Even though the action happened in the past, discuss the events in present tense.

# Suggestions for Things to Talk About

* Look at the chart below and try to list as many details as possible. You may add details that are not listed. Remember that all of these things are important to who your character is. You must write it in paragraph form using complete sentences.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Physiological | Psychological | Sociological |
| Name  Gender  Age  Height/Weight  Color of hair/eyes/skin  Posture  Appearance  Style  Defects  Voice  Walk | Sexual experience/activity  Feelings related to physical self  Life experience  Moral Standards  Ambition  Frustrations/Disappointments  Temperament  Attitude toward life  Complexes  Abilities/Talents  Imagination  Judgement  Tastes  Habits  Fears | Economic class  Occupation  Education  Home life  Family  Friends  Culture/Nationality  Place in Community  Politics  Hobbies  Social life |

* Think about your character’s life and list ten attributes that come up often during the novel. They may be physical, social, or psychological. These attributes will be in your essay, but it is not enough to just list them, you need to PROVE THEM. In order to prove them you will impede a quote directly from the novel into your paragraph. You may not need all the points, but these will help you generate your *best points* for your essay.
* Once you quote something, you need to add two things.
  + 1) You must INTRODUCE the quote. Examples are, Dylan says, Jenna says that Dylan is, he states, he believes, he exclaims, he replies, etc.
  + 2) All quotations will end with a parenthetical citation. This citation proves that you are not plagiarizing and are giving credit to the author. An example is, (54). (It is just the page number in brackets with the period on the outside).
* Ensure that your paragraph is in logical order. Try to group certain traits, or start from the beginning of his/her childhood to now, or the beginning to the end of the book. You should have 2-4 paragraphs, and a minimum one page typed and double spaced. It cannot be shorter than my example.

Important Reminders

* Look over your essay for any mechanical errors. Ensure there is no slang or contractions.
* Read your paragraphs out loud. Your writing should not sound choppy. It should flow. For tips, see “This Sentence Has Five Words.”
* Have a classmate proof read your paper.

# Due Date

This miraculously awesome, glorious, and wonderful essay is due on . Please send it to me by email.

# Sample Essay

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ELA 9

Ms. Proch

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Example of a character sketch taken from *Road to Freedom.*

Ficus Owens, a boy from the series of novels by Jean- Paul Sartre called *Road to Freedom*, is a 17-year field hand living on the Powers Plantation in Bucks County Maryland. Ficus is “six-feet tall and has dark brown skin, made darker by his days in the sun” (34). He has an open smile and warm eyes, although his eyes are often marked by wariness when the overseer is around. The author describes Ficus as having a “huge scar running the length of his back that he got when the Master took a cane to him when he was seven-years-old” (56). The master hit him because he was not obeying, and don’t what he was told to do. Ficus has three brothers and two sisters. One of his brothers was sold “down south to work on a cotton plantation” to help pay off debts when Master Power’s father died (55). Working all day in the fields has made Ficus strong and others realize that “he is able to do the work of three men” (74). He knows that he is valuable to the Master, but is also afraid that he may be sold if things on the plantation do not improve. Ficus states “I do not want to be around here, but what choice do I have? (123).

Ficus has no formal education, although he knows how to hunt, fish, and use the stars to travel at night. When he is talking to his brother, his brother explains that “I survive a lot on what you taught me Ficus. I travel at night by the stars, and I take care of myself” (153). His mother also taught him passages from the Bible, which he has memorized along with some important gospel songs. These songs and passages “keep Ficus’ mind busy as he works” (45). Unfortunately, he is not allowed to sing anymore because of strict regulations following a slave uprising, but he “sings in his head all day long” (66). He has one set of clothing and a pair of shoes that he received last Christmas from the Master. Ficus is not very superstitious, but he does believe that spirits or “haunts” live in the woods. Ficus is not married. He would like to marry Letitia Smith, another slave who works in the Master's house but “he is afraid that if they were to have children, his children would also be slaves” (135). Ficus believes that “any form of slavery is wrong and he desperately wants to be free” (183). He is willing to do anything to gain his freedom, but he will not leave the plantation without Letitia.