‘THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS” ESSAY

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| In Bernard Malamud’s short story, “The First Seven Years,” (120, *Holt*) characters show their views of love in different ways. Pick any two characters in the story and write a short essay comparing what they seem to be saying or showing about love. **Your essay should have a clear thesis, introduction, body paragraphs with appropriate and correctly embedded quotations, and a conclusion.** |

In writing this type of essay remember:

1. You can’t cover everything
2. Limit points of comparison to what’s most significant
3. Make sure you have (and show) a point in comparing the two
4. Keep the thesis at the center of their writing
5. Provide sufficient and useful evidence, all relevant to the thesis
6. Embedded quotations are carefully integrated
7. Write strong topic or transition sentences for each paragraph
8. Use organization to move the reader smoothly through ideas
9. Proofread.

**Writing Rubric**

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|  | **Advanced = 4** | **Proficient = 3** | **Basic = 2** | **Below Basic = 1-0** |
| **Response to the prompt** | **Addresses the topic clearly and responds effectively to all aspects of the task.** | **Addresses the topic, but may but may respond to some aspects of the task more effectively than others.** | **Distorts or neglects aspects of the task.** | **Indicates confusion about the topic or neglects important aspects of the task.** |
| **Understanding and use of the assigned materials**  **X 2** | **Demonstrates a thorough critical understanding of the assigned reading, activities and/or discussions in developing an insightful response.** | **Demonstrates an accurate understanding of the assigned reading, activities and/or discussions in developing a sensible response.** | **Demonstrates some understanding of the assigned reading, activities and/or discussions, but may misconstrue parts of it or make limited use of it in developing a weak response.** | **Demonstrates very poor understanding of the main points covered in class reading, activities and/or discussions, does not use any appropriately in developing a response, or may not use any at all.** |
| **Quality and clarity of thought**  **X 2** | **Explores a complex idea thoughtfully and in depth.** | **Shows some depth and complexity of thought.** | **May treat the idea simplistically, may lack focus or demonstrate confused or simplistic thinking.** | **Lacks focus and coherence, and may fail to communicate the idea.** |
| **Organization, development, and support**  **X 2** | **Is coherently organized and developed, with thoughtful reasons and a minimum of four well-chosen examples.** | **Is adequately organized and developed with clear reasons and three examples.** | **Is poorly organized and developed, presenting generalizations without adequate support (two), or details without generalizations.** | **Has very weak organization and development, providing simplistic generalizations without support.** |
| **Syntax and command of language** | **Has an effective, fluent style marked by syntactic variety and a clear command of language.** | **Demonstrates adequate use of syntax and language.** | **Has limited control of syntax and vocabulary.** | **Has inadequate control of syntax and vocabulary.** |
| **Grammar, usage, and mechanics (See list on back for details)** | **Is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.** | **May have some errors, but generally demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.** | **Has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that sometimes interfere with meaning.** | **Is marred by numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that frequently interfere with meaning.** |