**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**American Studies English**

***The Catcher in the Rye* Creative Essay**

The poem “Coming Thro’ the Rye” by Robert Burns is alluded to a number of times throughout *The Catcher in the Rye*. The original lyrics “If a body meet a body/Coming through the rye” are mistakenly quoted by a young boy as “If a body catch a body/Coming through the rye”. Holden overhears the young boy’s distorted version of the poem, and it resonates with Holden on meaningful level about protecting childhood innocence. Holden’s reinterpretation of the lyrics becomes the title of Salinger’s novel.

Assignment: You will choose a poem that resonates with you on a meaningful, personal level. Consider the significance the Burns’ poem held for Holden. What is a poem that bears a similar significance for you?

**Part I: Selecting a Poem**

* Browse a poetry database, such as poemhunter.com or poetryfoundation.org and select a poem that you enjoy.
* Make sure that this is a poem that will lend itself to this assignment.
* Print two copies of the poem- one to submit with your essay and another to use for your presentation.

**Part II: The Creative Essay**

**Compose a three-paragraph essay that adheres to the following format:**

**Paragraph One:**

-Provide an overview of the poem (title, poet, topic, and structure of the poem).

-You may also want to research your poet (if you do bring in secondary sources, make sure that you cite them!).

**Paragraph Two:**

-Close-read the poem (What is the overall theme of the poem? What poetic devices are employed to develop that theme?).

**Paragraph Three:**

-Explain why you selected this poem (What is the personal connection?).

**Part III: Presentation**

**Prepare a brief five minute presentation to share with the class. You presentation should include:**

-A reading of the poem.

-A brief overview of the theme that the poem conveys.

-An explanation of why you selected the poem.

***The Catcher in the Rye* Creative Essay Rubric**

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Poem Selection** | Poem selection is extremely meaningful and is rich with opportunities for response and analysis. The personal connection between the poem and the writer is extremely clear. | Poem selection is meaningful and has opportunities for response and analysis. The personal connection between the poem and the writer is clear. | Poem selection  may lack meaning and significance; may lack opportunities for analysis.  The personal connection between the poem and the writer may be somewhat vague. | Poem selection  lacks meaning and significance; lacks opportunities for analysis. The personal connection between the poem and the writer is not clear. |
| **Close-reading** | Essay analyzes poetic devices thoroughly; the connection between the poetic devices and the theme of the poem is explored in detail. | Essay analyzes poetic devices; the connection between the poetic devices and the theme of the poem is explored. | Essay may fail to address some of the poetic devices present in the poem; the connection between the poetic devices and the theme of the poem is may not be clearly established. | Essay fails to address poetic devices present in the poem; the connection between the poetic devices and the theme of the poem is not established. |
| **Presentation** | Presentation is organically energetic, engaging, and informative. The entire class understands the significance of your poem. Volume and eye contact are excellent. | Presentation is energetic, mostly engaging, and informative. The class largely understands the significance of your poem. Volume and eye contact are good. | Presentation could be more energetic, engaging, or informative. The class understands the significance of your poem, with some lapses. Volume and eye contact may need improvement. | Presentation not energetic, engaging, or informative. The class fails to understand the poem’s significance—there are major lapses in the explanation. Volume and eye contact may be poor. |
| **Organization and Structure** | Ample background information is provided to contextualize the poem. Essay is extremely well organized; has complete and clear topic sentences that effectively answer the prompt; details follow in logical order. | Background information is provided to contextualize the poem. Essay is well-organized; mostly complete and clear topic sentences that effectively answer the prompt; most details follow in logical order. | Essay may be missing some relevant background information. Essay may have 1-2 errors in organization; details follow in a somewhat logical order but there may be errors in topic sentence structure. | Essay does not provide relevant background information. Essay has inadequate topic sentences that do not effectively answer the prompt; details that follow are not in logical order. |
| **Style: Word Choice and Sentence Structure** | Essay includes varied word choice and sophisticated and appropriately used vocabulary words; sentence structure is varied and contributes to the overall fluidity of the essay. | Word choice in the essay is generally varied, sophisticated vocabulary is incorporated throughout most of the paper although 1-2 words may need to be revised; sentence structure is generally varied, but 1-2 passages of the essay may be somewhat choppy. | Some words are repeated continuously throughout the essay; there is a need for more sophisticated vocabulary; sentence structure lacks variation in 3-4 passages and creates a sense of choppiness to the essay. | Essay lacks the incorporation of sophisticated vocabulary and varied sentence structure. |
| **Grammar & Spelling (Conventions)** | Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content of the essay. | Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content of the essay | Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content of the essay. | Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content of the essay. |
| **MLA Format/Elements of the Writing Process** | Assignment is in MLA format and all elements of the writing process are included. | 1-2 mistakes in MLA format; some elements of the writing process may be missing. | 3-4 mistakes in MLA format; some elements of the writing process may be missing. | Numerous mistakes in MLA format. Many elements of the writing process are not present. |

**SUMMATIVE FEEDBACK**

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| --- | --- |
| **STRENGTHS** | **AREAS TO IMPROVE** |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_Excellent poem selection.  \_\_\_\_\_ The personal connection to your poem is strengthened with strong examples.  \_\_\_\_\_ Sophisticated word choice.  \_\_\_\_\_ Nice connection to poetic devices.  \_\_\_\_\_ Meaningful insights into the theme of your poem.  \_\_\_\_\_ Your essay has clear topic sentences and is well organized.  \_\_\_\_\_ Precise attention to MLA and the writing process.  \_\_\_\_\_ Energetic, well-paced presentation. | \_\_\_\_\_ Pay attention to organization and topic sentence structure.  \_\_\_\_\_ Develop more dynamic word choice.  \_\_\_\_\_ Develop your close-reading.  \_\_\_\_\_ Enrich the personal connection to your poem by incorporating stronger examples.  \_\_\_\_\_ Be consistent with MLA and formatting rules.  \_\_\_\_\_ Proofread to be aware of issues with spelling, grammar and mechanics.  \_\_\_\_\_ Presentation skills need improvement. |