

Little Brother Essay Topics

Assignment:

First, this should **NOT** be a book report where you simply outline the plot! Focus on a question or problem that the novel depicts and use evidence from the text to discuss it. This should be evident in the form of a thesis statement in the beginning of your paper. Your thesis should be a claim that you need to prove using textual evidence. Second, remember: the novel didn't just write itself. Think about why Doctorow makes the choices he makes and write about your insights.

Develop your thesis, but begin with an idea or observation:

Make some observations: i.e. "Many of the characters seem to have different identities with their family than they do with their friends" or "The teens depicted in this novel use more digital technology to communicate with a peer group that is often anonymous and geographically diverse." Then, move into analysis of those observations. What conclusions can you make through your analysis of your initial observations?

Starting Points:

Look at the language Doctorow uses to paint his fictional world. What repeated themes do you discover? What neologisms (newly created words) does he use to describe things unique to this moment in technological history?

Describe the characters involved in your selected topic. What personality traits and other qualities do they have? What emotions do his characters experience, particularly Marcus? How are those emotions conveyed? What are some of the main motivations of these characters?

Think about how Marcus Yallow navigates his world: Why does he believe hacking is a positive thing? How would you describe the society depicted in the novel? Why do you think Doctorow included a 9- 11 style attack in the background of the story?

How does Marcus use technology? How do computers, cell phones, X-net, the BART subway stations or emails work in the text? Think about how these technologies impact the daily lives of Marcus and his friends. Why is the novel so preoccupied with privacy rights and freedom?

OR: Use one of the following thesis statements for your essay. {IF you would like to write on something different or alter the thesis statement options, please see your teacher for help and approval.}

- a) The novel Little Brother by Cory Doctorow works to remind us of the importance of moral responsibility.
- b.) The character Marcus in the novel Little Brother by Cory Doctorow, is a young man who is a role model for youth today.
- c.) Although it is a piece of Science Fiction, Cory Doctorow's Little Brother serves to remind us of the dangers of power in our own lives.

As you can see, there are a variety of ways to approach this assignment, and I'm open to other topics as long as they are in some way relevant to the issues of the course.

