4.5 Lessons

Unbreakable: A Personal Essay

INTRODUCTION



In this assignment, you will write a Personal Response essay on the film, *Unbreakable*. Think about how a specific character you have watched in the film would deal with the following topic: Would that character agree or disagree with the statement: **fitting in, or "knowing your place in the world" is necessary for finding happiness in life?** What actions can you point to that prove that the character would feel this way? For example, if one of your paragraphs deals with the idea that "people need to face their reality instead of hiding from it", you might choose to write that Elijah, from *Unbreakable*, would probably agree with the statement. Then you could use the example of his troubles with injuries and kids teasing him to prove it. You could point out that, in spite of his problems, he eventually chose not to continue hiding away from the world, and he became a successful gallery owner, and this proves that he would agree with the statement: **fitting in, or "knowing your place in the world" is necessary for finding happiness in life?** Elijah desperately wants to find his place in the world. But does it lead to happiness in his case?

Then you try to decide whether you, or someone you know, would agree or disagree with the statement, and you try to think of an example of an action that you or that person took that would to prove you or they feel this way. For example, you might claim that your friend's dad is an example of someone who decided he needed to face reality. You might explain that he was very unhappy in his job, even though he was making enough money, and that he finally had to face the fact that he wanted to do something that involved working with computers. You could explain that his decision to get a loan and go back to school shows that he found he had to face his own reality and take action, thereby finding his true place in the world.

Between your literary examples and your personal experiences, you should have three different examples to discuss for your three body paragraphs:

1. Either two different characters that have dealt with the topic and one of your own personal experiences
2. Or one character example and two personal experiences.

This will make up three paragraphs and become the **body** of your essay. Then you just write an introduction for the beginning and a conclusion for the end and you're finished. Easy, isn't it?

UNBREAKABLE ESSAY OUTLINE

Rules are destined to be broken. Strong writers won't need the basic plan below, but will develop their own approach. However, if you're looking for the basics, and would like some rules to follow, this is a good place to start…

Introductory Paragraph: Explain whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement, and give some basic reasons. You can choose to partly agree and partly disagree, but this can make writing a clear essay more difficult. Also, close to the end of your introduction, you should have a thesis statement that mentions the examples that will prove your point. For example, a thesis statement for the example essay topic might be, "Elijah's decision, my friend's dad's choice to go back to school, and my own experience with a long homework assignment all support the idea that people need to face their own reality in order to have a chance at happiness."

Body Paragraph 1: Explain your example of a character from literature who has faced this issue. Be careful not to just retell the story, though; explain specifically <u>why</u> this is an example that proves the character's opinion.

Body Paragraph 2: This paragraph should either be similar to Body Paragraph 1, but with a different literary character (**preferably from a different piece of literature**) or similar to Body Paragraph 3, except with a different personal experience.

Body Paragraph 3: Explain how an example from your own personal experience shows how you or someone you know would deal with this issue. Again, make sure you aren't just telling a story. Explain <u>why</u> this example proves that you or the person you're talking about either agrees or disagrees.

Concluding Paragraph: Remind the reader whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Then give a brief, one or two sentence summary of each of your three examples. Finish the paragraph with a final thought or question to leave the reader with.

Of course, you don't have to follow this outline specifically, but if you plan on taking a different approach, you should discuss it with your teacher first. **Also, please make sure each of your body paragraphs is at least 7 sentences long.**

INSTRUCTIONS

Here's your essay topic:

What is your opinion of the idea that fitting in, or "knowing your place in the world" is necessary for finding happiness in life? Use evidence from the film, *Unbreakable*, as well as from your own experience to form the basis of your argument.