


Sample Students Papers: Grade A, B, & C**ENG 10803.001****Fall 2009****Sample A Paper**


Green Mangoes and Grueling Mountains

God thought He was pretty funny when He made ten girls share two toilets and two showers. He thought it was a genius plot twist when He took away another toilet, flooded the “good” shower and eventually stopped all flowing water during the daytime. God split the sky and rumbled the trees with His laughter when the confused and deranged donkey bellowed his erratic howl at the height of our slumber, a howl that sounded as if the donkey was proclaiming a horrendous crime had been committed upon him.

He thought His act was the greatest; I thought God was the worst comedian I had ever seen. 

During the summer of 2009, I headed to Honduras for the second time—my backpack heavy and my feet heavier. I was leaving my family, friends, and luxuries for three weeks: much longer than I ever had before. Nervous isn’t the best word to describe myself, but it’s the first one that comes to mind.

We said our goodbyes at Dallas Love Field’s singular terminal and no one cried except for me.


On the plane, the flight attendant with the snaggle-tooth  us egg and cheese sandwiches and our choice of a soft drink.


When our plane landed at the San Pedro Sula airport, I couldn’t feel anything except the heat of sweaty travelers racing the clock as they caught their flights back to America. I was jealous of their excited faces. I wasn’t even in Honduras an hour and I wanted to go home.

Buena Vista, Honduras sounds like a tourist attraction, but it doesn’t even have t-shirts. The small village in southeastern Honduras has a trail built by slaves during the Spanish

Inquisition, but no billboards to promote it. They have an unofficial soccer team that meets casually every evening after a long-day's work, but no uniform—or shoes—to play in. To put it simply, they lived simply. They simply lived.


Our personal caretaker was named Hilda, a name that suited her rough-skinned, sagging figure well. She got out of bed every morning and walked around her modest hut with a spring in her step, not uttering so much as a sigh. She made food for us *gringos*, and made sure our tummies were full to the brim with beans and eggs. We often went back for seconds before we discovered that our leftovers were served to her eager family.


Below the mountain village of Buena Vista was an orphanage for Honduran youth called La Finca. There college students who traveled from all over the United States spent their summers teaching children English, math, and experimented  Windows 98 on white, dusty giants. The Honduran children were well-rounded, polite and enthusiastic to help in any way they could. One particular week, missionaries from Tampa Bay, Florida came to La Finca to volunteer. They raked leaves, washed the school houses, and did arbitrary things that any Honduran could have done just as easily in less time.

They needed a place for their upcoming retreat, and somehow the small community center in Buena Vista—*our* temporary home—was chosen. We were warned of their arrival and knew of their passion concerning all things biblical, but we were also promised roasted marshmallows which, spoiler alert, never happened .


They arrived at our community center sweating profusely, panting, and smiling. They set their heavy backpacks on the porch—a place sacred to reading, talking, and thinking—and discovered that the community center had mango trees. Immediately, the most agile of the teenagers rolled up their sleeves and climbed the trees for the green mangoes.



“Careful,” one of our people told them, “you might get a stomachache if they aren’t ripe.”

“No, it’s really okay. We’ll be fine,” said a boy through his chewed mango, lips smacking like firecrackers .

And how would you know? I said to him in my head. His response in my head was apologetic followed by uncertainty, which was satisfactory. I smiled. 


Someone suggested a Tampa vs. Dallas soccer game on the trash-ridden field. I knew it was a bad idea from the start when they started the challenge off with all the horrible sports teams Dallas has. “Are all athletes from Dallas as horrible as the Cowboys?” they said, “And what about those Stars? How about a soccer game to prove your legitimacy?”


At first things during the game were light-hearted and kind; the ball would be intercepted and the opposing team would chuckle, slapping the backs and playfully griping the shoulders of their counterparts. Then a Tampa boy with mop hair and a rag-doll body pushed a Dallas girl to the ground and broke open the skin on her knee. It was on. 

The game was supposed to be fun, but it wasn't even pleasurable to watch. Red-faced Americans dashed between sharp and large es that littered the field, fighting for the soccer ball as well as bragging rights for the next 24 hours. I don't remember who won, but I assume the answer is no one since everyone left the field frowning. I believe it got significantly less fun when someone yelled, “Make ‘em bleed!” from our side of the cheering squad. We were far from saintly competitors.  The Hondurans just shook their heads as if they knew not to get involved.

After the game we felt it necessary to keep as much space between our two groups as possible. They flooded our usually quiet dining area with their chitter-chatter, turned off the lights and lit their own candles as if to call the space their own. Despite all this, we left them alone, hoping and praying the night would calm their voices so we could fall asleep quicker. It did no such thing.

They built a fire and sang songs in English then translated every other verse to Spanish as to not exclude their Honduran friends. They ended each song with a loud “Yay!” which made the dogs howl each time. I imagined poor Hilda and her family, laying on their mats and rolling their eyes at the crazy white people one hundred feet from their door. “Shut up,” I imagined her saying in her native tongue. “My God, please shut up.”


I went to Catholic school all four years of my high school career and my entire family has been Catholic since the beginning of the beginning. I know how Catholics function: prayer at dinner, Mass on Sunday, occasional group rosary sessions. Catholics do not, however, partake in spontaneous reckless merriment like these Tampa Bay people. These Catholic missionaries were the most Baptist Catholics I had ever seen in my life 

There was a lull in their singing. They entered our sleeping chambers at around one in the morning, stole our unused foam mattresses and took them to the roof to sleep for the night. The “roof” was actually an unfinished top floor. It had no walls and a tall concrete staircase leading up to it. Someone got the mattress on the bunk above me, shaking the dirt on my half-sleeping face. “Sorry,” she said. I didn’t say anything back 

The following morning the Tampa Bay missionaries woke up earlier than us, with bigger smiles than us. They said they were going on a hike to a river, the very hike that we had gone on a couple days before. The very hike that began with one girl slipping on a rock and hanging Indiana-Jones-style from a wilted tree root, and ended with fifteen pairs of bloody and bruised feet.

“We went on that trail,” said someone from Dallas. “It was pretty difficult.”

One of the Tampa girls smiled. “I think we’ll be fine.”

“No, it was actually really bad. I almost died,” said the girl that almost died 

The same Tampa girl held up her thumbs and smiled wider. “We got it.”

It’s not that I have something against missionaries or anything against Floridians in general, but something about these people drove me to understand why the Romans preferred stoning over a humane justice system.

It’s just—their faith. Their faith in themselves, their faith in God, trumped every good-intentioned warning we gave them. They smiled because they felt fulfilled; they sang because it was the only way they knew how to truthfully express themselves. Their faith in their God annoyed me. They loved themselves while I was at the peak of my misery.

I wanted so much to see them come back from the hike with ruined faces, feeling dejected and cursing their God. Their God didn't give them strength directly, but His assumed presence brought them confidence. Because of their God, they thought they could conquer mountains they've never seen and mangoes they've never tasted. They did not worry; they did not care; they just believed.

Although my family introduced me to faith very early on in my youth, I could never see its relevance in my life. For years I prayed for sick family members, hungry children, and trapped people in cars crushed like tin cans on the side of the road, but I felt nothing. I didn't feel the same gravitational pull towards being religious that everyone around me felt. At first I thought I was Atheist. Then I thought I was in denial, that I would come around sooner or later. Now I don't know what I believe. And the sad part is I don't care.


When the Tampa missionaries went straight to La Finca and didn't come back at all, I was so angry that I didn't get to see them the way I wanted. It was then that I saw how pathetic my life had become. I went to sleep that night, and I cried.

Several nights later, we stole our foam mattresses from their creaking frames and carried them up the staircase to the roof, calling down to those below us that the third step was cracked, don't step on it. We went back down for blankets because we underestimated how much warmth our room retained for us. That night, our last night in Buena Vista, we decided the stars would be our night light and the sun would be our alarm clock.


It was cold. I woke up several times during the night to a dog we named Peanut Butter sniffing my face. I saw two shooting stars. They were magnificent, unreal, much better than they've ever been depicted in movies. When I looked at the stars, the millions and millions of stars much more visible than I, I panicked. I stopped breathing and I panicked.

I finally saw what made the Tampa Bay missionaries act in the way that they did. It wasn't God that made them so happy, it was opportunity. The stars were so infinite, so overwhelmingly vast, just like the opportunities of climbing mysterious mountains or eating

green mangoes. How beautiful it is, I thought, that I can make whatever I want out of a situation. Look at these stars! Look what I can achieve!

I remembered why I came to Honduras in the first place. It wasn't because I needed to spread the word of God, fully living up to the word "missionary",  was because I saw an opportunity to do something I've never done before—to go to a foreign country and find people I can love forever.

I understood the mysterious ways of the Tampa Bay missionaries and no longer hated them. I forgave them for their singing because I felt like singing myself. I forgave them for breaking their promise and not producing any marshmallows because I would have done the same thing. I no longer envied them because I realized I had the same thing they had all along: the opportunity to contribute to something bigger than myself.

The next morning, we took our leftover pineapple  Don Juan, the least affluent man on the mountain, and his family. His wife hugged and kissed us, thanking us for several minutes. His wide-eyed children with hungry, swollen stomachs clung to their mother's legs as she carried on, arms swinging as she talked. We told them goodbye, and that we'd never forget them.

We left Buena Vista on two blazing red pick-up trucks. We were driving to our next Honduran village, and Hip-Hop artist Flo Rida's *Low* came on the radio. As the first American song we had heard in several days, we all sang along, our heads jerking backwards with every bump in the road. I closed my eyes and immersed myself in this incredible opportunity.

Student Name


Second Draft





Author's Note


Since my peer review and my teacher review, I have realized what spots I need to work on specifically. Most of those spots include awkwardness and lack of development of ideas or descriptions. Another problem I had was not introducing myself earlier. I have fixed these problems and I think my essay is better, but still needs improved and developed more. My ending is definitely stronger than it was before, but is still not as memorable as the rest of the essay. Some of the jokes I made about God and religion are questionable and I'm unsure if I should use them, which probably indicates that I shouldn't use them.



Nice job [student]. Very good. You have a very strong voice in this piece, and its sarcastic tone is not only appropriate (in the form of a teenager) but is consistent throughout. You add just enough detail, and you transition into dialogue and exposition with ease. Your sentence structure, while not without a few problems, is at an advanced level. My only real criticism, which you picked up on in your author's note, is that it seems to go out with a fizzle. I'd like to direct your attention back to "One More Lesson" in the book and re-read her last line. It is short and simple, but it packs a wallop. Play around and see if you can find that one walloping (or two) sentence(s) for your piece.


Sample B Paper

Bad Seed or Bad Parenting 

The porcelain blonde with angelic blue eyes prances through the meadow gleefully humming a happy tune. "Why, hello there, sir." Carefully luring in strangers with the face of a doll and innocent voice  the settings  always beautiful; the children always delicate  and yet, who would find it possible that children at such a young age could be capable of the disturbing and horrific things so many do? Adults seem to underestimate children in their abilities, merely assuming brains of adults are more highly sophisticated than that of a young child  wever,

many do not consider the possibility of a complex brain filled with thoughts and ideas far beyond the surface. We all have observed children who might spark a red flag by certain actions or things they say 

I can recall one day when I was babysitting a little boy and girl down the street from me. The memory is still so  vivid. I walked in on the little boy, Chase, trying to strangle their cat. At first I was stunned and unaware of what to do. Thoughts flying light-years fast were swirling around my mind. *He's trying to kill the cat!* I thought as I watched in horror. My instinct carried me swiftly to Chase where I snatched the poor animal from his iron grip. As I held the rigid cat in my arms still stunned as to what I just witnessed, more thoughts flowed about what I was to do next. How do I punish him for almost killing an animal? Do I tell his parents? *What is wrong with him?!* Feeling both nervous and anxious for their arrival, I placed Chase firmly on the couch and ordered him to sit there until they came home. His mimicking and whining rang throughout the house for an hour that felt like seven. Finally, the noise I was waiting for reached my ears. As the garage door squeaked open I could see Chase start to squirm, awaiting the punishment he knew would be coming. Still struck with horror I felt torn as how to approach his parents with this kind of information. As I calmly explained the mishap, I could see the mother's face slowly fall into an immense frown, yet not a face of shock. *Did she expect me to say something like this?* I stood there silently, confused as to what would happen next. As she dragged the flailing little boy to his room, I released a sigh of relief knowing he would receive a well-deserved disciplinary action. Their father, not a man of many words, seemed a bit ashamed of me witnessing what his son did. He apologized continuously until the door latched shut with a, "I hope you can still babysit for us soon!" I wondered if he caught a glimpse of my eyes the size of baseballs as those dreaded words left his hopeful mouth 

Their son tried to strangle a poor animal and they want me to babysit again? I would consider it a possibility if I knew Chase  safely far away. As I walked aimlessly down my



street, engulfed in the memories of the recent event, I began to ponder. A child, at the mere age of 5, just tried to kill a living, breathing being. Not just a bug, but a house pet. This world in which we live in has become exponentially more terrifying with each new generation born. What does one normally think after seeing such things? *Wow, I wonder what discipline those parents give for a child like that? Or, possibly maybe he/she likes attention?* Have you ever contemplated something being mentally wrong? The controversial theory of bad parenting or bad seed has come up multiple times in society news. Can children really be born with a psychopathic mind? Chase's disturbing behavior prompted my investigation, leading me to find many researchers that provided theories on events I found similar to what I witnessed.





Scientists most commonly argue two opposing viewpoints; serial killers are born psychopathic, or they learn these behaviors through experiences such as bad parenting. Parents use most anti-social behavior, whether it's an absent father or an unfit mother. (Lykken 2). According to Lykken, the absence of nurture and an emotional relationship with parents disables a child from learning to have emotions and feelings of warmth and love; not having that security at such a young age, children become unattached from any emotion and guilt they might feel otherwise. However, as I looked at the family at hand, nothing about them stood out as dysfunctional in any way. As a stay at home mom, the mother was always there to take both children to and from the various activities they were involved in. The father, though he worked a 9-5 job, was frequently taking the children to the park or on runs with him. With both parents so actively involved in their children's lives, what could have caused Chase's behavior?

Psychopaths know right from wrong but don't care. They lack conscience and empathy and neither feel guilt nor remorse (Hittington-Egan 326). This theory seemed more plausible to me than the other as it did not blame the parents; many people can easily fault parents for how their children act; however if Psychopathy is indeed an abnormal brain defect from birth, it seems as though there would be no hope with even positive and loving parental guidance.

Protective factors are constantly stressed as needing to be of top priority when it comes to child psychopaths. Some of these factors scientists have created are a stable home life, positive peers and friends, nurturing from parents, and an education. Although protective factors are not the complete solution to psychopathic children, it has been proven they can largely help stop certain behaviors. With a prevention-intervention method, researchers believe these can either help stop psychopaths from progressing more or it can prevent children's minds from developing psychopathically in the first place (Garmezy 1962). By intervening at an early age, treatment is much more hopeful to be a success than if at a later age.

If protective factors fail, psychopathic children will be hard to reform. Repeat patterns are 50% from childhood to adolescence and 40-75% into adulthood (Ramsland 3). According to the numbers, it seems to me as though repeating criminal patterns is extremely likely into adulthood. For the 25% who don't repeat patterns, it is more common that they are the cases that are not born psychopathic, but rather they learned bad behaviors so it is easier for them to learn how to stop them. Does this mean Chase could keep strangling cats no matter what punishment his parents give him? It's disturbing to contemplate how a child can get gratification out of something such as attempting to kill an animal. If pleasure can arise from that at such a young age, it is likely to progress into adulthood with far worse things having higher risks. So, if Chase is not affected by protective factors, does that mean he cannot be helped? Fear, shock, and horror flooded through me as I tried to understand what could have been going through his mind at that moment. Both parents appear normal to where shouldn't have been a gene passed down from either, but if he is so young in a stable environment, he must have been born that way, right? Proving certain theories and researchers wrong by showing not all cases are caused merely by nurture. Protective factors he is so engulfed in, such as a positive home life, have not helped him in preventing this kind of behavior. With respect to the examination of protective factors, little evidence was found that showed parents and peers substantially influenced

individual changes (Pardini/Loeber 163). These facts once again favor the bad seed theory that argues psychopaths are born that way  as they grow older, their behavior becomes more extreme with experience and knowledge 

Whereas not all cases can have the exact characteristics to prove one theory, scientists  strongly disagree with the bad seed theory and put all blame onto parents and the environment that surrounds them. The development of the self is seen as dependent on preoedipal childhood experiences of caretakers. Two tasks needed for proper development are the caretakers delight in the infant's interests, and to provide  efficient support for the child when negative effects are experienced so they may learn to cope with painful feelings in the future (Fairbairn, Kohut 1193-1194). Even if a child grows up in a stable home life, without enough support from parents, they may become discouraged and not develop to a  positive potential. Feelings of inadequacy and shame are hidden by a facade of grandiosity and exhibitionism, hollow emptiness, envy and rage (Kernburg 1195  these researchers feel that children, who are born with a normal mindset, can be led down a psychopathic road by certain experiences at home. Divorce, abuse, and absent parental figures cause one to feel a sense of loneliness and isolation. Because they have not learned proper skills to deal with negative experiences, they use outlets to make themselves feel a sense of worth. This is how genetics and environment differentiate. If a child is born with psychopathic mentalities, a bad environment could only allow their dangerous behaviors to flourish more rapidly. If one is born normal, but constantly surrounded by negative experiences and parents, psychopathic behaviors will slowly develop so they, too, share the psychopathic mentality. Both types of children comparatively think they are superior to others in their life, which gives them the feeling of being powerful and dominant.

The world we are creating for ourselves and our children is increasingly chaotic, uncaring, and violent. As a result, those are the genetic potentials (i.e., for violence and chaos) that are being actualized in our behavior (Bronfenbrenner par 6). Whether a child is born psychopathic

or they have learned their behaviors throughout childhood, the ones that turn into serial killers cannot be fully recognized by one theory. Every mind works in a different way, and we all deal with experiences differently as well. This topic is still open for interpretation because the answer cannot be narrowed down to one. Both unstable home lives and being born with mental psychosis are contributing factors to serial killers. Although most children who display factors that are almost positively going to result in dangerous activity are stereotyped to all having similar characteristics, one main cause is yet to be found.

Through my research I have studied both theories in depth and looked at numerous points of view. I lean towards one view, serial killers are born psychopathic, more than the other by evidence suggested and seeing real life examples, for it seems more plausible to me. If we look to the future there is unfortunately little cause for optimism because there is no reason to think that the phenomenon will fade away. It is, in fact, on the increase. Although it is easy to be discerning with hindsight, there is still hardly any understanding of such aberrant behavior, and however many points of similarity can be extrapolated from all the known cases, the condition remains impossible to predict or treat (Whittington-Egan 330).

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Author's Note




This draft is my final draft of the Discovery Essay. In this draft, my main goal was to show my research about the topic and give credited sources to support my thoughts. I want readers to feel a sense that they have a better understanding of whether serial killers are born psychopathic or it's a learned behavior. What I feel that is going well in my essay is the structure it lies in that makes it easier for readers to understand what I am saying without compromising higher vocabulary. As a whole this essay seems to flow well in my opinion. What I could have used some more help on was possibly more sources that gave me a direct answer. Many researchers have found this topic troubling to come to a conclusion, so I would have liked it to have a better answer I could present my readers with 

[student's name]: The paper felt thoroughly researched with attention paid to opposing sides. Well done. I feel that the paper's strengths lie in incorporating research with your eye-witness testimony. You transitioned from research to your personal story with ease. I would, however, like to see better organization of information, and, on the sentence level, more clarity with less wordiness. Nevertheless, I do not get any impressions that your "struggle" to express yourself. Oddly enough, there is a sense of flow all the while I say "work on organization." The only thing I felt lacking was a return to Chase in the end. Since he influenced your thinking so strongly, I wanted to hear your final thoughts about him. Have you kept in touch with the family? Do you know what has since become of him? If you resubmit, consider calling home and seeing if you can find out something—just to make the story feel "complete," and give the reader a felling of closure.

Grade B

Sample C Paper

To Wait or Not to Wait: That is the Question

"There is a great deal of political pressure to only talk about abstinence, and to deny support for condoms and education on using them. This policy will lead to the unnecessary deaths of many people." Although Hillary Clinton's statement may be a little exaggerated, the topic of abstinence and teen pregnancy has been a constant debate in the United States since the late 1980's. The present age group, young girls ranging in ages from 11-16,  to the help from the media, have become a sexually driven generation, in comparison to young girls in the past, complete with a lot more experimenting with the opposite sex  third of the nation's girls who get pregnant each year are under the age of eighteen  his results in more than half contract sexually transmitted diseases and also many young girls being left without any monetary support.

So what does a nation do with the rise of poverty and economical difficulty for these girls “free love” practical anymore for adolescent girls under the age of eighteen, practicing abstinence over safe sex is the safest solution to prevent the further spread of STD’s, reduce abortion rates, and stop fifteen year old girls from becoming mothers.

More than four million girls contract deadly STD’s each year. Safe sex aids like condoms cannot always protect a young couple from catching STD’s like genital herpes, HPV, hepatitis, and syphilis. Most pubertal girls do not know what these diseases are, which are and are not

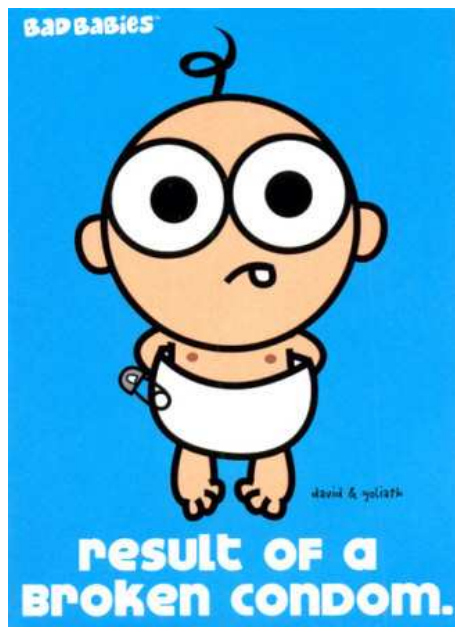


curable how they can affect them. STD’s can leave a poor young teen infertile in the long run, or be another link in the chain when he she finds another partner, who will then spread it to his/her next fling. Some STD’s are curable, and researchers are positive about finding cures for all STD’s

Condoms are 98% successful at preventing the spread of these diseases and unexpected pregnancies. But STD’s like HPV and herpes are not curable. Nationwide, at least 45 million people ages 12 and older, or one out of five adolescents and adults, have had genital HPV infection. Between the late 1970s and the early 1990s, the number of Americans with genital herpes infection increased 30 percent. The most successful way to not contract diseases is to practice abstinence until marriage. It sounds cliché to stop the spread of the bodily infections, we must teach young teens about the risks of having sex, instead of glorifying it as we see on everyday television. Most television shows students watch, like the “O.C.” or “One Tree Hill” focus on promiscuous sex, alluding to the fun and care-free attitude about the subject. The imminent threat of a life changing disease never once crosses the minds of producers or viewers

It's all fun and games... at least until someone gets hurt. Abstinence, although a tough feat, can be accomplished and help start the decline of life threatening diseases.

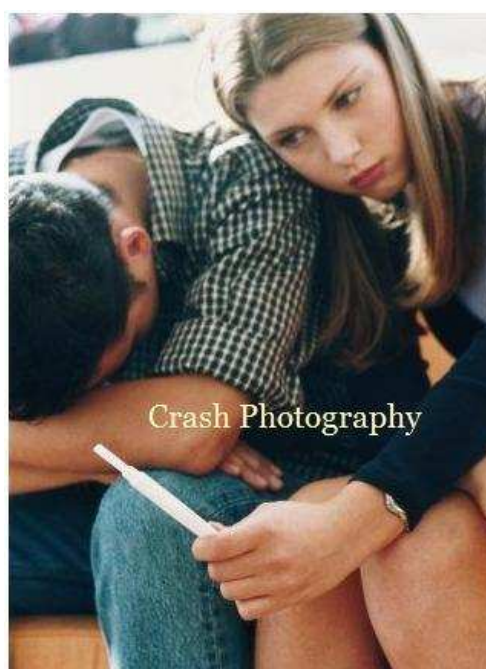
There have been many "abstinence only" programs created in the United States since drastic increases of abortions in 1990. Since Congress has passed many bills to help fund abstinence programs, pregnancies have dropped from 54% in 1991 to 47.5% in 2005. But despite a total of \$1 billion federal and state funds being spent on abstinence-only groups like Best Friends, RAIN, Planned Parenthood, no one knows whether or not they actually prevent teens from having sex. Liberals ask for more money towards sex education classes, which would



educate students about the use of condoms and safe sex. They question whether or not the abstinence and "virgin pledges" actually work? In March 2005, Peter S. Bearman, chairman of the sociology department at Columbia University and a prominent social scientist, released a follow-up report on teens who take formal pledges to remain chaste until marriage. He found that virginity pledges have the same rates of sexually transmitted disease as non-pledges. His earlier study had shown that although pledges on average initiate sex 18 months later than non-pledges, but they are one-third less likely than non-pledges to use condoms during their first sexual encounter. A counter study was done by the Alan Guttmacher Institute by Rachel Jones and Stanley Henshaw, who studied contraceptive use among U.S. women having abortions by surveying women of all cultures and backgrounds. Their research showed that more than half of the women obtaining abortions in 2000 (54%) had been using a contraceptive method during the month they became pregnant.

19% of the women studied were adolescents and 31% were single. Obviously even though some virginity pledges may not last until they get married, contraceptives do not always work to help prevent abortions. Adolescents who decide to remain abstinent are less likely to find themselves with a baby on the way, and not have to make the choice to keep the child or not.

When most girls dream about becoming mothers they usually picture being cuddled up in a nice warm house, perhaps in a rocking chair, their loving husband next to them and a sweet baby in her arms- a happily ever after image. The sad truth is that that is not the fairy-tale ending for most young teenagers who get pregnant. From more than a third of young women getting pregnant in the United States each year contribute to the number of drop-out rates in our local schools. Such statistics have serious social consequences, both for the individuals and for the country as a whole. The teaching of abstinence is becoming a dire need to help save our young people's futures. Teen mothers are less likely to finish high



school and more likely to end up on welfare. Also their children are at greater risk for abuse and neglect. "Twenty percent of teen mothers have a second child before the age of 20," says Sarah Brown, president of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. "For single mothers, it's very tough to go to school. In a society where two to four years of higher education is necessary, she's now economically behind the curve." Young mothers do not have the economic ability to take care of their children, which means that they will most likely live in poverty. The poverty rate in the United States is already at its peak, and every year more and more young ladies join

that group with no job, or help from families since most have kicked them out. “Innocent” teen mothers, due to one night first of curious experimentation, have to live a life that they just are not ready for. Emphasizing the success of staying abstinent during girls teen years will guarantee them to at least finish high school and go onto college, have a greater image of self-respect for themselves, and aid the decrease the growing poverty rate.

Abstinence among teenage girls is a commonly debated subject through-out our nation, and has been for the past thirty years. Parents fight for their right to protect their children while young teens want their personal and sexual freedom due to the phrase “safe sex” both sides of our political parties want to help but each promotes a different agenda, leading to a greater divide between parents and students. But no matter what one side says, abstinence is the only way that works 100% to cut down teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. There is no other answer that works 100%, 100% of the time. Besides, 11-18 years old girls should not have to grow-up that fast. We want the best for our children, because they are the future of our great nation. As a young nation we had to learn patience; waiting for the right moment to exert our freedom of personal choice. Waiting, just a little bit longer, could save the next generation.

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Pollack, Robert H. and William M. Tanner. "The Effect of Condom Use and Erotic Instructions on Attitudes toward Condoms." *The Journal of Sex Research*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Nov., 1988), pp. 537-54. **(COUNTER-ARGUMENT ARTICLE)**

Henshaw, Stanley K. and Rachel K. Jones. "Contraceptive Use among U.S. Women Having Abortions in 2000-2001." *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, Vol. 34, No. 6 (Nov. - Dec., 2002), pp. 294-303

[Student's name]: Where is your author's note? Is this your final version? It reads like it is still in the draft stage.

Major concerns with the paper:

- cohesion and adherence to paper's focus
- clarity on the sentence level
- brevity of the paper (Word Count: 1288. Assignment calls for "**Final Draft: 1,800-2,300 words (5-7 pages), plus a works cited page.**")
- Paper feels underdeveloped—argument is not convincing

Here is how I saw the outline of this paper:

Introduction: Thesis: ? For adolescent girls under the age of eighteen, practicing abstinence over safe sex is the safest solution to prevent the further spread of STD's, reduce abortion rates, and stop fifteen year old girls from becoming mothers.

Parag. 1: Safe sex doesn't protect teens from STDs

Parag. 2: Abstinence programs possibly don't work—then maybe they do

Parag. 3: Dire financial future of teen moms

Conclusion: Abstinence only way to cut down teen pregnancy and STDs.

- Cannot locate some cited sources in the Works Cited; cannot detect that all five sources are used in the paper.

Grade: B-/C+

The criteria for an A, B and C -range Portfolio are described below:

A-range Essay 1 Portfolio:

An A portfolio is excellent on all or almost all counts for the requirements of Essay 1 and other portfolio contents.

An “A” Essay 1 Polished Essay is *consistently* excellent on these counts:

- the writing has a clear controlling idea (even if it emerges later or at the end of the text) that is complex and takes risks and has a particularly fresh idea to explore that surprises the reader; the essay has a narrative where ideas build in engaging or unexpected ways to help readers understand the controlling idea (i.e.: it “flows” for readers)
- the essay achieves the purposes of the assignment by writing a personal essay that displays genuine inquiry about a topic and takes it to the next level by genuinely grappling with a topic (not necessarily having all the answers and ending the essay too neatly).
- the essay’s controlling idea supported through specific moments or scenes, and there is sophisticated meaning-making about the significance of the specific moments in the essay (i.e.: the “so what” question is satisfied for readers) in ways that aren’t too obvious or clichéd.
- The writing displays sophistication on the sentence level with sentence variety and a sense of the writer’s “voice” (meaning the paper doesn’t read in a generic way like anyone could have written it), the paper is basically error-free

Other portfolio elements should be in the excellent range as well. Specifically:

- Participation and engagement in class and during workshops are stellar—student shows genuine interest in his/her work as well as the work of classmates, shares insightful comments in workshop and discussions, and brings others into the discussion by not dominating discussion.
- In-class writings show engagement.
- Process is also stellar—drafts met or exceeded the quantity required, author’s notes demonstrate that the writer gets how the writing process works for him/herself, and revision is done substantively, demonstrating a willingness for the writer to “re-see” the piece as opposed to making slight surface changes. The A essay shows writing that gets out of the comfort zone for the writer and succeeds in trying something new with the draft while meeting the requirements of the assignment.
- When applicable, the Revision Plan for the post-pencil grade revision is thoughtful and shows a commitment to high order and low order concerns of revision.

This portfolio ranges from good to very good, and shows above-average achievement in the course.

A “B” Essay 4 Polished Essay is good to very good on these counts:

- The essay achieves the purposes of the assignment by creating a complex persuasive essay that seeks to convince others the author’s opinions are worthy of consideration by: 1) focusing implicitly or explicitly on a research question; 2) providing evidence (through a number of ways that may incorporate *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*: personal experience or observations, secondary research, primary research, etc.) that is specific and appropriate to the topic and for the audience; and 3) the author doesn’t fully provide and challenge for readers the counterarguments about the topics as s/he could. The paper meets or exceeds the minimum page length.
- The writing has a controlling idea that is complex and, according to Ballenger, “is clear about what it is asking readers to do or believe” (*The Curious Writer* 286). The topic is

appropriately narrow, not too broad (gun control) or too simplistic (drunk driving is bad). The author navigates her/his sources well to build her/his claim and acknowledges her/his own biases. The essay's organization is good, building and demonstrating the controlling idea ("flow"), but seamless.

- The essay incorporates five sources correctly using MLA format in the text and in the works cited.
- The writing is generally strong on the sentence level with sentence variety and a sense of the writer's "voice" (meaning the paper doesn't read in a generic way like anyone could have written it); the paper is generally error-free.

C-range Essay 4 Portfolio:

This portfolio means the student did a satisfactory amount of work required with average or adequate achievement by meeting minimum requirements of the assignment.

A "C" Essay 4 Polished Essay is average:

- The essay mostly achieves the purposes of the assignment by creating a persuasive essay that seeks to convince others the author's opinions are worthy of consideration by: 1) focusing implicitly or explicitly on a research question (though this is not done as effectively as it could be); 2) providing evidence (though the author doesn't employ as many kinds as s/he could to make a complex and effective argument or the sources aren't credible or balanced) that is specific and appropriate to the topic and for the audience; and 3) minimally (not sufficiently) addressing a counterargument offered by those who take a different position than yours. The paper is the required length or *just* shy of it.
- The writing has a controlling idea and, according to Ballenger, "is clear about what it is asking readers to do or believe" (*The Curious Writer* 286). The topic is a bit broad or unwieldy to cover effectively in 5-7 pages. Further, the author acknowledges her/his own positionality and biases in the sources s/he uses. The sources employed in the paper aren't as well integrated with one another or the author's voice as well as they could be (likely inserted rather than in conversation with one another). The essay's organization is adequate and doesn't build upon (i.e.: "flow") and demonstrate the controlling idea as well as it could.
- The essay incorporates sources correctly using MLA format in the text and in the works cited.
- The writing is adequate on the sentence level, sometimes lacking a sense of the writer's "voice" (meaning the paper doesn't read in a generic way like anyone could have written it), and there may be error problems that were pointed out during the semester and not addressed.