

AP Lit, Q3 Commentary for Benchmark Set

9 A The Grapes of Wrath

- Clear focus on the prompt
- Insightful analysis of Tom Joad's response to justice
- Articulate and insightful analysis
- Beautifully written with a strong, confident voice and excellent control over language

8 II Beloved

- A strong essay that fully engages the prompt and stays focused on the text
- Contains lots of textual details
- Writer exercise considerable control over language
- Although a really good essay, it weakens toward the end and is therefore an 8

7 S Crime and Punishment

- Competent essay that features a good argument
- The analysis is good, but not as full developed as top -tier essays
- Clear organization, but the writing is not especially sophisticated

6 G Catch-22

- Good organization
- Some development, but sometimes lapses into superficiality
- Not particularly sophisticated, but covers the prompt well enough for an upper half score
- A rather workman-like quality characterizes this essay

5 J Hamlet

- Lot of plot summary, little-to-no analysis
- Not overrun with glaring errors
- Doesn't say much after all—pedestrian, superficial, the usual 5 descriptors apply

4 KKK The Scarlet Letter

- Very little analysis
- Clunky writing
- Writer does not control language well

3 FF A Lesson Before Dying

- Thin plot summary
- No analysis
- Pretty classic 3

2 BBBB The Kite Runner

- Summary, summary, summary
- Does comment on parts of the prompt
- Too short to move beyond 2

1 W Medea

- Unacceptably brief

In today's society, justice is almost exclusively viewed as an obligation of those who have chosen to become civil servants; however, John Steinbeck in his novel The Grapes of Wrath portrays justice, through the eyes of Tom Joad, as an inalienable human right, and it is often that the injustices that are committed against Tom and his family are carried out by their supposed guardians of that justice. As he progresses through the novel, Tom realizes that justice is no concrete set of laws and regulations, but instead ~~that it is~~ ^{the purpose of that} ultimately a facet of the human character, and that justice is to establish equality, not to be used as a device to subdue the weak by the strong.

throughout The Grapes of Wrath, Tom struggles with what is in fact ^{the question of} "true" justice - even at the beginning, when he first comes in contact with Rev. Casey, Tom maintains that he would "do what [he] done again" after committing the murder that landed in the McAtester penitentiary; as is obvious in this case, Tom's perception of justice differs significantly from the laws. This personal sense of justice overruling the established norm later manifests itself in Tom's decision to aid Floyd Knowles, who is being picked up by a local sheriff under the employ of a corrupt plantation owner - regardless of the danger to himself, Tom maintains that he "doesn't want to go" - his sense of personal justice overrides even his basic need for self-preservation. And again, at the climax of the novel, Tom again forsakes his own well-being in protest of the injustices committed against Rev. Casey, brutally beating his attackers before being driven off himself; in this way, the reader, through Tom, comes to see justice as a character value that cannot be imposed upon the human being by seemingly any outside source.



In conjunction with Tom's view that justice is the responsibility of the individual and not of the organization, Tom's final realization of justice results from his absolute departure from what his society established as justice; Tom remarks that he "will be everywhere" after he is forced to leave upon his disfigurement from defending Rev. Casey - Tom, in essence, becomes the embodiment of the justice he has so long been pursuing. He further remarks that he, as this justice, will be there when both there are instances of police abusing justice to persecute the innocent and when those innocent are no longer under the thumb of any higher authority - in this way Tom's justice is the justice of equality, rather than the justice of persecution as defined by the law enforcement organs he comes in contact with. In the scope of the novel as a whole, this sense of equality sheds light on Steinbeck's greatest message - the individual is greater than the collective; ~~what~~ were Tom to newly forsake his personal beliefs about justice, he would ~~manly~~ become the "beat bitch" he so desperately avoided becoming. In this way, Steinbeck demonstrates that Tom's ability to transcend the restrictions of mass justice as prescribed by the higher authorities is the ultimate demonstration of that individual overtaking the organization.

Tom Joad, and indeed the entire Joad family, in John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath search for, and eventual attainment of, the truth behind justice ultimately drives him to become the embodiment of that sense of equality, which demonstrates further Steinbeck's central individualist assertions that in order to truly be free, one must be willing to sacrifice the entirety of one's

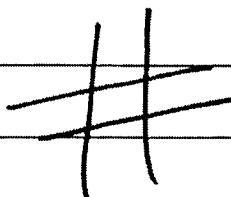


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He is in the pursuit of that personal justice. In essence, Tom's
search for justice ultimately ends with him being empty-handed, and
therefore he has to become the source of that justice he sought.



The definition of justice is elastic. Likewise, justice can take on many forms; justice is ~~not~~ morally ambiguous. ~~In Toni~~ Sethe, the protagonist in Toni Morrison's Beloved, seeks justice for her children by ~~attempting~~ attempting to remove them from a world she believes is designed to bring them to their knees. Sethe's search for justice shows how ~~love~~ love influences one's actions.

In order to save her children from a world, post-bellum United States, that is against escaped slaves like her, Sethe tries to kill them at a community gathering. Her subsequent murder of her nameless child, only called "Beloved," is the crux of the entire novel. Sethe's fiercely maternal nature stems from her view of love that's "too thick." Sethe believes that "Love is or it ain't. Thin love ain't no love at all," a view of love that is juxtaposed to Paul D's belief that you should "love everything, just a little bit" and ~~that's~~ ~~that's~~ Baby Suggs' message to love oneself.

^{Sethe} ~~Beloved's~~ desire to fiercely love her children and to do them justice by separating them from the world ironically results in severe fragmentation of the family: Baby Suggs dies because Sethe does not embrace Baby's view of love, Beloved is killed, Denver is isolated from the community and fails to develop as a normal girl, and Howard and Bigger flee 124 Bluesstone. The separation resulting from Sethe's actions is not only spiritual, but also temporal: Sethe ~~seems~~ is caught in the past and spends each day "fighting off the past." She bears the ~~weight~~ weight of the collective past through the symbol of the chain chokecherry tree scar on her back.

Since her ^{view} ~~view~~ of justice is skewed, Sethe fails to successfully find justice for herself or her family. In fact, her ~~one~~ "just" action of murdering Beloved haunts her ^{throughout} ~~past~~ the novel. The spirit of Beloved, the main symbol of the ~~past~~ ^{collective} collective past of African Americans in the novel, haunts 124 ~~later~~ Bluesstone and later is reincarnated as a girl when Paul D threatens ~~the~~ the past's (Beloved's) grip on Sethe. The symbolism of Beloved shows how Sethe's "just" actions have failed and how the past and



memories of a world of abuse and evil at the hands of white slave owners continues to perpetuate itself in the ~~conscious~~ conscious and unconscious world of Sethe.

As ~~previously~~ previously mentioned, the murder of Beloved serves as the crux of the novel. By isolating the family from the strong African American at Bluestone and ~~had~~ ^{not} allowing Beloved even a chance to live and grow, Sethe sabotages the lives of those around her ~~with~~ ^{under} unjustly. Perhaps then, it is truly Denver who must be the figure of justice in the novel. Although her growth is severely stunted throughout the novel, she is able to recognize the injustice of the past, as represented by Beloved's unjust occupation of Sethe's time and energy to such an extent that Beloved physically and metaphorically changes identity with Sethe: Beloved grows larger and begins to ~~be~~ ^{look like} resemble a pregnant woman while Sethe shrinks in size. By realizing the injustice, Denver gains the courage to ~~go~~ go out into the community and seek assistance. In the end, Denver serves as a savior of Sethe and liberates her from the ~~past~~ ^{past} by again connecting the family to the community and maturing into a ~~human~~ ^{human} in the process. So, although Sethe's search for justice is damaging to all those who ^{are} involved in it, Denver's search for justice heals the damage caused by Sethe's actions.

In Toni Morrison's Beloved, there are two searches for justice: a major one and a minor one. Although Sethe's search for justice ultimately backfires, as evidenced by Beloved's return from the dead and her oppressive hold on Sethe and ability to block out the healing influence of Paul D, Denver's search for justice is highly successful and offers resolution to Sethe's obsession with the past. However, even though Denver's just actions appear to be successful, as Beloved is reported to have "exploded" and ~~is~~ is never seen again, Sethe reverts to the same state of hyperlexia that Baby Suggs resented ~~to~~ after Sethe seemed to reject Baby's view of love with the murder of Beloved. However, Paul D, who is a symbol of the healing power of the future, ~~some~~ convinces



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Sethe that "you your best thing," meaning that the past does not compose Sethe's
identity. So, although Sethe's quest for justice is more significant, it is ~~ultimately~~
ultimately unsuccessful while Denver's more minor quest for an odyssey results in
Sethe confronting her present situation and the past's loss of power over her.
~~A search for justice A search for justice can shape a whole system of morality~~

#

Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment," is not the story of a murder. It is the story of the tortured mind of the murderer, and the battle in his heart and mind for justice. Raskolnikov commits his murder on principle. In his mind, the killing of the "old hound" was totally justified. In his mind, he was one of the "extraordinary men" that right and wrong don't apply to. However, his murder eats away at him. No matter how hard his mind tries to justify the murder, his heart knows that he has done wrong. It is not the judicial process that achieves justice for Raskolnikov. It is his mind and sub-conscious. Raskolnikov proves that real justice is achieved, not through trial and punishment, ~~but by~~ ~~the judicial process~~ but in the mind where true retribution takes place.

Directly after the murder, Raskolnikov is in an intense state of delirium and fever. Sub-consciously he is unable to accept that he is a murderer. He wants desperately to be one of the "extraordinary" men that he wrote about, but he can't. In his mind he can totally rationalize the brutal murder of the old woman. However, he can't transcend the good and evil that his heart feels, and this torments him. Throughout the entire novel, he wrestles with this concept of the "extraordinary men." Sonya, who has the greatest influence on Raskolnikov, is the only character who could possibly be "extraordinary." She is a prostitute, but she feels no remorse, because she did what she had to. She is a devout Christian, and the Christian concept of asking for forgiveness has a



profound effect on Raskolnikov. Towards the end of the novel, Raskolnikov begins to embrace this Christian concept of justice.

Dostoevsky had a strong belief in Christianity instilled in him while he was in Siberia. This belief passes from Senya to Raskolnikov in the novel. After Senya compels him to admit to his murders, he is sent to Siberia as well, and this is where he finally begins to overcome his murders. In his heart, he knows the murders are wrong and has asked for forgiveness, but in his mind he is still trying to rationalize the murders. This explicit recognition of his sins is the only thing holding him back from the Christian idea of Justice through asking for forgiveness.

Raskolnikov has achieved a measure of justice. He may not be willing to admit, but he feels regret for what he has done. He was willing to face justice when he turned himself in, and his internal recognition of the murders will earn him peace with God. Raskolnikov's mind served as the place for his punishment, as well as the place where he gained retribution and ultimately, justice.

#

Although well-known for its humorous satire, *Catch-22* explores deep complexities of the human condition. The protagonist of the novel, Yossarian, responds significantly to the idea of justice and how his forced service in the ^{air force} ~~army~~ is unjust and undeserved.

Put simply, Yossarian's understanding of justice is that he has served his required number of missions for his country and deserves to go home. He is presented as paranoid, as he claims the other side is "out to get him," yet his ideas hold merit in that the other side is indeed trying to kill him. Yossarian thinks it is just to protect himself, and since he has done his duty, fair and square, feels no remorse in moving the attack assignments off his squadron's shoulders in the middle of the night.

Yossarian's attempts to secure justice are not successful overall, as he remains stuck serving in the air force. Still, he secures little victories that rob the institution of his skills as a bombardier such as taking month-long hikes into the hospital or slipping soap into meals to make the camp sick and postpone potentially terminating action.

The significance of Yossarian's quest for justice lies in the more poignant scenes of the



Justice is getting what is deserved. When someone has achieved justice, they feel as if a weight has been lifted and the world has been put in its right order. ~~and~~ and the truth is revealed. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, Prince Hamlet searches for justice about his father, King Hamlet's, mysterious death. ~~by~~ ~~avenging~~ ~~his~~ Hamlet's delusions or ~~possibly~~ actual sightings of his father's Ghost ~~and~~ drive him to avenge King Hamlet's death as he relentlessly accuses ~~him~~ Claudius until their deaths ~~at~~ at the end of the play.

Hamlet believes the only way to avenge his father's death is follow the Ghost's advice and kill Claudius. He sees it as an eye for an eye. Since Claudius (supposedly) murdered ~~in~~ King Hamlet, Hamlet must murder Claudius. His understanding of justice comes from the Ghost, not himself. He vows to follow his orders and to not tell anyone. Hamlet's view is too drastic and morbid and delusional. He does not question the Ghost and simply follows the orders, which most likely are his own desires in disguise.

While Hamlet eventually does kill Claudius in a duel, that is not where his justice comes from. When Hamlet hides in the church, ~~and~~ ^{he} overhears Claudius' confession ~~to~~ to poisoning King Hamlet. The full truth has been revealed, and Hamlet



was the first to know. He gets to complete his search for justice much later after he accidentally kills a friend of the family, Polonius and causes Ophelia to drown herself. ~~But now~~ During the duel, Gertrude, Hamlet's mother, ~~and~~ unknowingly drinks the poisoned wine. Thus, Hamlet ~~and~~ does avenge his father's death but the ~~kingdom~~ kingdom is turned inside out. King Hamlet and King Claudius are dead. The heir, Hamlet (prince) is dead. The queen is dead. In his search for justice, Hamlet's home falls apart. "There is something rotten in the state of Denmark." His justice brings about more problems of rot and decay than it attempts to solve. So, his search for justice is completed but not successful for nothing is in the right order. The heir to the kingdom that Denmark is sworn enemies with takes over Denmark.

~~The reason~~ As he persistently pursues justice for his father's death, Hamlet adds more to the decay in his kingdom. Any chance of the kingdom ~~or~~ returning to its ~~own~~ height during King Hamlet's days ~~is~~ is gone. The multiple unexcusable and unexplainable deaths keep adding up, proving how corrupt and morbid Hamlet's search for justice was.

#

Like "is a search for justice." Some people find it, others spend their whole life looking for it, and some never find it at all. In the novel, "The Scarlet Letter," Arthur Dimmesdale is perplexed by a desire for atonement. He is the illegitimate lover of heroine, Hester Prynne, who bears the scarlet letter over her breast, and he desires to reveal his sin but is too afraid to do so.

Arthur Dimmesdale, ~~is a minister who lives in~~ in the eyes of the Puritan society in which he lives, is the epitome of perfection. He was an Oxford graduate, a good looking man, and a very popular, young, Puritan minister. As such, his desire for justice was not realized early on in the novel. After Hester was publicly condemned and forced to wear the letter on her clothing, the only thing Dimmesdale wanted was to reveal his sin as well. He gave public sermons begging Hester to reveal him as her lover, and preached about what a sinner he himself was. The people, however, ^{only} took this as a further sign of his holiness.

Dimmesdale turned to physically beating himself because of his desire for justice to be brought unto him, and such a desire started to literally eat him alive. At the end of the novel, Dimmesdale



stands with Hester and their daughter, Pearl, ~~and~~ on a platform, and reveals his sin. In doing so, he frees himself from the one burden he truly had in his life, and when Pearl kisses him on the cheek, he dies. Hypothetically speaking, there is speculation as to the degree to which his search for justice was successful as he simply died after his sin was revealed. However, one must realize that Dimmesdale endured agonizing pain while he was ~~still~~ alive because justice had not been brought.

Dimmesdale's experiences illuminate the significance of the work as a whole because the author desired to reveal the corruption within Puritan society.

#

The book "A Lesson Before Dying" is a great book in which the main character searches for justice but is not successful. Jefferson is the name of this main character and he exemplifies this theme of injustice very well.

Jefferson was basically in a situation where he was going to be accused of what was going on. Jefferson went to go buy something at a local store and when he went there was a shootout and everyone was killed except him. He knew right off the bat that he would be accused of killing these people so he took some money from the register and left. They found him and not one person believed his side of the story.

He was thrown in prison and also had a death sentence. When he was put in the cabin where he was going to be killed people came to visit him, people that knew he was honest and that he told the truth. He was killed in the electric chair and it was all because he was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

##

In the novel, ~~the~~ "The Kite Runner," the main character Amir's best friend, Hassan, suffers the great injustice of getting raped ^{when they were children} with no help from Amir. This ultimately changes their lives forever.

Later on in the book they are grown and Amir decides to redeem himself and reconnect with Hassan. Amir comes to find that Hassan is dead, and thinks his search for justice and redemption is over until he learns Hassan had a son. Amir then decides to find Hassan's son and raise him.

The way Amir's search for justice ~~is~~ ^{is significant} to the work as a whole is that it's basically the whole story. It sets the entire theme of the novel of how true justice and redemption does not come without a great cost.

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W.

In the play of "Medea", the protagonist, medea, murders her children and her ex-husband's wife in order to get revenge on him for leaving her, which demonstrates the act of injustice.

Justice and Injustice are two very ambiguous terms.

IDGAF.

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Question 3

HH,

In the novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird",
the search for justice was

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