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Started from the Bottom Now We’re Here!

Throughout my essay, I felt like I made a little improvement from my previous essay, from not summarizing too much to analyzing more. I feel like the main reason why writing this essay went a bit smoother was because there were a lot of quotes that supported my thesis. Since this is a novel, it was like there were infinite quotes I could use. For this essay, I had help from my tutor from the start of it until the end, unlike the exploratory essay, where I only had him from the very end of it. I was initially going to focus on Pecola, Cholly, Maurine, and Pauline. I was planning on talking about Freud’s analytic concept of the psychosexual stages of development, condensation, and displacement. But then I found myself talking about the doll scene, and how it is a representation of beauty. So then I tried focusing on Maureen and how her actions affected Pecola, and I found quotes for this scene. But as it turns out, my analysis of the concept and quotes supported the focus of beauty and the idea of colorism. At this moment, I decided to change my focus and substituted Cholly and Pauline for Claudia and Junior. I found myself being able to talk more about those characters and support my thesis at the same time.

Working with my tutor helped me a lot; he would read a sentence or a paragraph and ask me why and how does this relate to my thesis. He gave me excellent comments on what I should change to make better. The last peer review we did in class, passing our papers to the left and having multiple people check different paragraphs, was helpful. Not having the same person or a friend check my writing was a good change. I got to see what other people understood by reading my essay and the questions they would have. The questions they wrote helped me open up, allowing me to try to answer it through my writing.

While reading this novel, there were a few things that intrigued, surprised, and disturbed me. What intrigued me was how we were reading this book from a nine-year old’s perspective. I also found the ending to be satisfying, where there is a change of narrator, it goes from Claudia telling Pecola’s life story to Pecola telling her own. What surprised me was Cholly’s backstory, the fact that his parents gave him away, and his aunt then passing away. And the two white men having him at gunpoint, this all shaped him to who his now. What disturbed me was when Cholly raped Pecola and got her pregnant. What bothered throughout the story was how Geraldine and Maureen belittled the black community as if they weren’t black. My audiences are Professor Von Uhl and Professor Yankwitt. The purpose of this essay is to show my understanding of this novel and how I used Freud’s concepts and interpreted the character’s behavior and what they symbolized. The types of conversations that I had with my classmates about my essay are social aspects that affected my writing process. Hearing some of their thoughts and how they interpreted some quotes or used Freud helped me do the same. Especially in class, when we discussed some significant scenes and everyone sharing their ideas of that scene.