

English 12 Prose

Scale Point: 5

Comment

This paper was awarded a “5”. It reveals a thorough but not exceptional understanding of character development in the story. Quotations and specific references are used effectively. Student also uses transitions effectively. The language is not as sophisticated as is often found in a 6 paper.

In the passage, “The Rite of Passage,” the author develops his characters at the scene of a hockey rink. The author uses specialized language and drawn out images, to develop his characters and ultimately create an engaging piece of work.

The protagonist in the story, is a young boy, dealing with the awkward days one faces before one goes through puberty. We are first introduced to this boy, as an inexperienced, but eager hockey player. You get the sense, from the story, that he isn’t the best hockey player, because of the way he admires all his peers. It would be obvious if the boy was a professional, because he wouldn’t spend the time dwelling and detailing the techniques of others, and the author wouldn’t use images like, “.....chopped up the near-empty ice on my ankles.” (13)

At first, the boy seems unsure and doubtful about his skills as a hockey player. It seems that his style isn’t “up to par” compared to the other boys”, not to mention Mr. Ratchford’s. Scratch spent a lot of the time covering for him when he had missed yet another check. (17).

However, while the boy was playing the game and watching Mr. Ratchford’s shadow glide by him, every time he picks up a few things. Instead of throwing his stick to the ice, he keeps trying to prove himself in the game. He learns and picks up things, such as Mr. Ratchford’s patterns, and uses them to his advantage.

Consequently, at the end of the story, he gets the puck. All he has to do is get by his brother because scoring is just a mere formality. At the beginning of the story, the boy relishes on the skills of his brother. It is obvious that the boy respects his brother, and secretly knows that he is the better player. But his does deter him from trying to outmanoeuvre his brother. At the beginning of the story he may have believed that he couldn’t have succeeded in doing this, but at the moment of passage, the time when it was brother against brother he truly believed he could. This was the main character development in the story, because the boy matured and became confident, and succeeded in doing something that even he could admire. At the end from a boy, he developed into a man, because he gained the respect from his peers, his brother and most importantly himself.

Another character that is developed in the story is the character of Mr. Ratchford. When he is first introduced, the author describes him as a frail man, basically insinuating “not a hockey player.” He also wore clothing that made some of the players smile because they were a little unorthodox to say mildly. However the boys were taught that appearance is of no consequence: Mr. Ratchford style and grace on the ice, made the boys look at him, as a hockey god or hero. Mr. Ratchford is further developed when his son, Scratch hits him because as he glides into the snow bank he smiles. This tells the reader that under that stern, professional exterior, like in every father, Mr. Ratchford knew his son had the potential to defeat him.

The development of the characters, with the elements of suspense, imagery and colloquialism, the author succeeds in writing an engaging piece of writing.