**Coming-of-Age Movies: The Writing Assignment**

Teenage years can be a scary experience. They can also be fun, passionate, daring, and hugely impactful. A coming**-**of-age story is about a journey from being a child to being an adult. It is a journey that takes a young person from naïve to wise, from idealist to realist, or from immature to mature. The path can vary from story to story, but there will usually be pain and suffering along the way - growing up isn't easy. However, no matter the narrative direction, the result is that characters grow from their experiences and in some way lose the childhood innocence that helped steer them toward adulthood.

***Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* Options: Pick one of the following as a basis for your thesis and analysis.**

* Compare your coming-of-age story to one of the characters in *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off*. Pick several categories (social life, friends, parental relationships, personality, **etc**.) and analyze the similarities and differences.
* What makes *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* a great coming-of-age movie? Pick essential characteristics from the film. Discuss how these elements are important and make the movie great. How does it fit or subvert the typical high school or coming-of-age genre?
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is the ultimate expression of the American idea of freedom.
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: As a privileged young white man from an affluent home "rebelling" against the "injustices" of a wealthy suburban school, Ferris Bueller is the picture of entitlement.
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: Tom and Katie Bueller love their children, but they don't understand either of them. At all.
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: Ferris's sole mission is to help Cameron become more confident in the face of his father's cruelty and materialism.
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: Cameron isn't afraid of his dad; he's afraid of the homicidal fury he'll unleash if he goes off on his dad.
* Thesis idea. Argue for or against the following: Cameron achieves freedom when he chooses to disregard his self-created problems.

Be sure to be specific in your essay. Include **precise details from the film** and explain how they relate to your selected thesis.

Your analysis should contain the regular elements of an excellent essay: an attention grabber, a solid thesis, well-developed body paragraphs, a clinching conclusion, but it may read or sound less like a standard 5 paragraph essay and more like a piece for a magazine or website.

**Other Movie Options:**

* Pick another great coming-of-age film. What makes it a great coming-of-age movie? Pick essential characteristics from the film. Discuss how these elements are important and make the movie great. How does it fit or subvert the typical high school or coming-of-age genre?
* Select your own thesis on a coming-of-age-film. You may adapt one of the options on *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* or be totally unique. Just get approval from me before you start.

**A partial list of “Worthy” Coming-of-age films**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *The Breakfast Club* | *The Spectacular Now* | *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* |
| *Sixteen Candles* | *Love, Simon* | *The Outsiders* |
| *Pretty in Pink* | *Easy A* | *10 Things I Hate About You* |
| *Say Anything* | *Lady Bird* | *Dazed and Confused* |
| *Stand by Me* | *The Way Way Back* | *Dead Poet’s Society* |
| *Mean Girls* | *Juno* | *Edge of Seventeen* |
| *Boyhood* | *Clueless* | *Booksmart* |
| *Call Me by Your Name* | *Boyz n the Hood* | *Dope* |