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English Literature

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Introduction

Banner In The Sky is a novel written by James Ramsey Ullman. The novel talks about the journey of a boy named Rudi Matt in pursuing his dream of climbing the Citadel, the mightiest mountain in of all Switzerland. This dream also happens to be the dream of many other climbers like his uncle Franz, and Captain Winter. Rudi’s only obstacle is that his mother constantly keeps on forbidding him to become a climber. She believes she is protecting Rudi so he won’t suffer the same fate as his father, Josef Matt. However, just like Josef, climbing is in Rudi’s blood and his mother can’t stop him from pursuing his dream. The journey of accomplishing the dream can be seen as a controversy between pride/arrogance with wisdom/humility. These qualities are clearly shown as Rudi Matt, Franz Lerner, Emil Saxo and Captain Winter are about to climb the Citadel. Before they started to climb, Franz and Saxo had a quarrel about climbing together because they come from different villages. Captain Winter then convinced them to climb together, for they would form a stronger team. (p181) Pride and wisdom is shown within this incident. The wise Captain Winter was able to unite the two proud climbers to ascend together. They were then able to proceed with the journey. During the journey, there was a breaking point where Saxo betrayed the team and tried to escalate the Citadel alone. ( p235) What Saxo did was truly a very arrogant deed because he abandoned the sick Captain Winter in order to fulfill his own dream. Franz, on other hand who was willing to disregard his dream for the sake of Captain Winter. As the journey proceeds, Saxo’s selfish actions backfires on him. He had an accident and was severely injury. Rudi, who was there when Saxo got injured, chose to help him instead of climbing to the summit. ( p270) In this incident, Rudi finally matures from a selfish boy into a wise young man. He abandons his dream for the sake of a man whose not even from Kurtal. As the journey comes to an end, Rudi becomes more and more like his father. He was no longer the arrogant boy, instead is a young man filled with humility and wisdom. Therefore, this story convays how qualities like pride/arrogance and wisdom/humility are part of our everyday lives.

The True Meaning Of Basketball

*St. Francis Daily Newspaper*

*Atlanta, Wednesday 2nd August 2005*

*Once again, St. Francis High School suffers a tragic season. Just like last season, and the season before, the Huskies seem to have just lost their game. They simply can’t get the basketball into the hoop. How could a team win just once within a whole season? It’s just ridiculous! Word has it that the school board is thinking of hiring Coach Jackson to bring life to the team. Let’s just hope that Coach Jackson has what it takes to lead our Huskies to a better future.*

It was a quite Sunday morning. As the sun began to rise, the dark sky starts to brighten. The birds began to chirp beautifully. The trees rustled as the wind blew softly. Even though the wind wasn’t strong, the old window couldn’t sustain the pressure. Bam! The window slammed closed.

“What was that! Oh it’s the window.” Jason looked around his room. He noticed two things. The first was that the window was closed. The second thing was that his twin brother Kyrie was not in the room. Jason sighed.

“Even after such a terrible season, why doesn’t he ever give up? Oh well.” Jason got up, grabbed his jacket and ran downstairs. He knew Kyrie was outside running sprints.

“Practicing on a Sunday?”

“Yeah,” Kyrie answered while panting. “You should too, we had a horrible season.”

“Kyrie, I respect your hard work. But we both know that I’m way ahead of you, and even with my skills, we still kept losing.”

“But there’s nothing wrong in trying. Jason, we shouldn’t give up, this is our last year.”

Jason’s face changed. Anger starts to fill his eyes. “Don’t you understand Kyrie, we won’t ever win! Other than me, nobody on the team has talent! It’s useless to practise!”

“But Jason, you know what they say. Hard work beats tal—“

“Enough!” Jason shouted before Kyrie could finish. “I know what they say, but sometimes talent just can’t be beaten.”

Before Kyrie could say anything, Jason went back to the house. Jason had always been the star of St. Francis. Therefore, nobody was brave enough to face him or his arrogant ego because they all knew that without Jason, they wouldn’t stand a chance.

The next day was the first day for the new coach, Coach Jackson. It was a day that Kyrie was looking forward to. Kyrie and the other boys were already waiting in the gym. After a while the gym doors opened. Entering the gym was a big guy wearing a suit. We knew it was him, Coach Jackson.

“Hello! My name is Coach Jackson. I realize that you guys have been having a rough season. However, --“ Coach Jackson paused. He looked at the boys in front of him.

“There are only seven people on this team?” Coach questioned.

“Yes, I guess the others quit after last season,” Kyrie answered.

“Are you serious? You should ask them to return.”

“No, there’s no need for that! They’re just benchwarmers!” Jason proudly said.

Coach Jackson was startled. “Young man, what is your name.”

“Jason, man!”

“Sir! You will all address me as sir, and you should fix that rotten attitude of yours!”

“What?” Jason answered with shock.

“What, sir!” Coach Jackson shouted.

“What, sir,” Jason grunted.

“I am the new coach. On this team, we will show respect towards one another. Am I clear?”

“Yes sir!” The team shouted.

“Alright. To start off, run 30 suicides for me.”

Practice then started. For weeks the routine never changed. The guys had to run suicides, work on layups and shoot some balls. They practically just learned the fundamentals. Practice became a horrible time within the week. The guys were exhausted and their feet were always sore. Jason finally snapped.

“Sir, this is ridiculous! You keep making us sprint! Our first game is this Thursday. How do you expect us to win? Teach us some plays and fancy moves sir!” Jason spoke while catching his breath.

“Fancy moves? Are you messing with me? Jason I know you the best, however this is what the team needs. And –“

“No! It’s not what the teams needs!” Jason said abruptly. “What the team needs is my prodigious skills! Not your lame suicides!”

It was obvious that Coach Jackson was furious upon hearing this. However, he took a deep breath and said.

“Jason, you should fix this attitude of yours. Don’t be such an arrogant person, or you won’t be playing any games this season.”

Jason didn’t reply. He stared at Coach Jackson’s eyes and then left the gym. The guys knew he was infuriated. But there was nothing they could do, all they could do was to wait for the match on Thursday.

*St. Francis Daily Newspaper*

*Atlanta, Friday 18th October 2005*

*With a devastating score of 38 - 58, St. Francis Huskies dominated their first game againts the Woodlow Grizzlies! They are surely a different team! Coach Jackson had surely done a spectacular job! With 24 points, Kyrie Evans deserves to be called man of the match! He surely has improved a lot! However, his twin brother Jason, who’s considered to be the Lebron James of the team, was benched throughout the entire game. These are the exact words that Coach Jackson told us after the game.*

*“I will not play an arrogant and selfish player no matter how talented he is.” – Coach Jackson*

*Perhaps Coach Jackson isn’t only teaching the boys how to win. What is this man trying to teach? Anyway, let’s just hope St. Francis will keep winning. Go Huskies!*

Their first victory of the season provided the perfect motivation for the St. Francis Huskies. Everyone was thrilled and excited, everyone but Jason. Coach Jackson decided to have a word with him.

“Jason, you okay son?”

“What do you think? I don’t understand why you benched me? We could have won by more points!”

Coach Jackson sighed. “Son, basketball isn’t simply about winning and looking cool. The game has values like respect and humility. A proud showoff like you can’t possibly understand.”

Jason was stunned. He wasn’t sure how to respond. Before he knew it, Coach left the scene and started practise. The old Jason would have stormed onto the court and knocked Coach down. However, something different went through Jason’s mind this time. After a few minutes he walked into the gym.

“Sir, can I have a word with you?”

Coach Jackson noticed the difference on Jason’s face. He walked towards him and replied, “What is it, son?”

“Sir I want to apologize. I realize how arrogant of a person I was. Nobody has ever talked to me like that. Sir, I’m truly sor—“

“Its okay, son. I’m glad you’ve learned your lesson. You’re a talented player. What was holding you back was that pride of yours. It takes courage to confess and change who you are. Now I truly respect you, not only as a basketball player, but also as a man.” Coach Jackson smiled and patted him on the back.

“Alright boys, I believe it’s time to work on some plays!”

This was the true turning point for the St. Francis Huskies. Jason started to play as a different person. His astounding performance truly streghtened the team. They kept winning and winning. They defeated both strong and weak teams. Sadly, the day finally came where they played againts a stronger team.

*St. Francis Daily Newspaper*

*Atlanta, Friday 12th November 2005*

*49-51! What a close game! The winning streak is finally over. Our Huskies finally lost. Our boys showed remarkable effort, they certainly played their best game! But St. John’s point guard, Damian Williams was just able to make that last second shot! It was truly an incredible game! Both teams showed massive determination! Below, are some words from Coach Jackson.*

*“Not a happy ending for us. However I am not ashamed! I am proud of my boys! Throughout the season they have grown not only in skill but also heart. Basketball isn’t only about showing off your skills and winning. There’s more to the game. The game teaches us values and my boys finally understands this. So keep your heads high! There is nothing to be ashamed off! We may have lost on the outside, but we remain victorious within!– Coach Jackson*

*Wise words from Coach Jackson. We agree with you coach! We are proud of you, Huskies!*

THE END

**Criterion A: Content**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Level | Descriptors | Indicators |
| 0 | The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors given below. | * Story is incomplete or plagiarized |
| 1-2 | The student demonstrates very limited understanding of the topic or theme. The work lacks detail, development and support. Creative pieces do not reflect imagination and sensitivity. The student’s response to literature demonstrates little or no awareness of the author’s intention or techniques. | * Examples used to support the chosen theme are either inappropriate or not taken from different parts of the novel * Stated theme is evident through only one or two events in the story * Story is adapted from another story |
| 3-4 | The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the relevant aspects of the topic or theme. The work displays insufficient detail, development, and support. Creative pieces reflect limited imagination and sensitivity. The student’s response to literature sometimes demonstrates an awareness of the author’s intention and techniques. | * Stated theme is evident through occasional events in the story * Story is slightly imaginative, though mostly unbelievable |
| 5-6 | The student demonstrates a sufficient understanding of the relevant aspects of the topic or theme. The work displays adequate detail, development and support. Creativity pieces reflect a degree of imagination and sensitivity. The student’s response to literature demonstrates an awareness of the author’s intention and techniques. | * At least 1 example used to support the chosen theme are appropriate and taken from different parts of the novel * Stated theme is somewhat evident throughout events in the story * Story is somewhat imaginative, and some portions are believable |
| 7-**8** | The student demonstrates a good understanding of the relevant aspects of the topic or theme. His work displays substantial detail, development and support. Creative pieces reflect substantial imagination and sensitivity. The student’s response to literature demonstrates a good appreciation of the author’s intention and technique. | * At least 2 examples used to support the chosen theme are appropriate and taken from different parts of the novel * Stated theme is usually evident throughout events in the story * Story is imaginative and most parts are believable |
| 9-10 | The student demonstrates a perceptive understanding of the relevant aspects of the topic or theme. The work consistently displays illustrative detail, development, and support. Creative pieces reflect a high degree of imagination and sensitivity. The student’s response to literature demonstrates a sophisticated analysis of the author’s intention and techniques. | * At least 3 examples used to support the chosen theme are appropriate and taken from different parts of the novel * Stated theme is clearly evident throughout events in the story * Story is highly imaginative, yet believable |

**Criterion C: Style and Language Use**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Level | Descriptor | Indicator |
| 0 | The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors given below. | * Story is incomplete or plagiarized |
| 1-2 | The student’s use of vocabulary is often inappropriate and limited. Very frequent errors in spelling, pronunciation, punctuation and syntax persistently hinder communication. Little attempt has been made to use a register suitable to the intention and audience. | * Frequent spelling and/or grammar errors which persistently hinder understanding * Very few properly used descriptive words * Only one or two elements of the plot line are clearly evident in the story |
| 3-4 | The student’s use of vocabulary is sometimes inappropriate and somewhat varied. Regular errors in spelling, pronunciation, punctuation and syntax hinder communication. The student attempts to use a register suitable to intention and audience. | * Regular spelling and/or grammar errors which hinder understanding * Sometimes attempts to use descriptive words properly * Three elements of the plot line are clearly evident in the story |
| 5-6 | The student’s use of vocabulary is usually appropriate and generally varied. Some errors in spelling, pronunciation, punctuation and syntax sometimes hinder communication. The student often uses a register suitable to intention and audience. | * Some spelling and/or grammar errors which sometimes hinder understanding * Often uses descriptive words properly * Four elements of the plot line are clearly evident in the story |
| 7-**8** | The student’s use of vocabulary is appropriate and varied. Occasional errors in spelling, pronunciation and syntax rarely hinder communication. The student consistently uses a register suitable to intention and audience. | * Occasional spelling and/or grammar errors * Consistent proper use of descriptive words * Five elements of the plot line are clearly evident in the story |
| 9-10 | The student’s use of vocabulary is always appropriate and greatly varied with very infrequent errors in spelling, pronunciation, punctuation and syntax. The student has mastered the use of a register suitable to intention and audience. | * Very few, if any spelling and/or grammar errors * Use of descriptive words shows mastery * All elements of the plot line are clearly evident in the story (exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) |

Aditya – Despite some grammar issues, you did a good job with this essay. Some aspects of the story could have been clear. When the main character learns humility, it would have been better to put more detail into what was going on in his mind. That would have more clearly shown not only the theme, but added to the plot line as well.