

Final Exam Essay #1

Question:

What is the theme of *Moby Dick*? (Note: you may not use the theme of good vs evil). Provide three specific examples from the film to support your position. Remember, there is a difference between theme and subject. The subject is what something is about; the theme is what the work says about the subject.

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Throughout a story there is usually a hidden message that one can notice if they look closely at the work. This hidden message is usually known as the theme of the story. However, a story can in some cases have more than one major theme and have many minor themes. In the story of Moby Dick one of the major themes that took place is the obsession for revenge and the consequences that take place because of that obsession.

As the movie progresses it becomes clear that Ahab wants only one thing, and that one thing is revenge against Moby Dick. Moby Dick took Ahab's leg on a previous whaling trip. In other words, the most obvious reason that Ahab wanted to seek revenge against Moby Dick was because Moby Dick took Ahab's leg on a previous whale outing. From the beginning of the voyage Ahab wanted to seek revenge against the thing that took his leg.

As the story progresses though Ahab becomes obsessed with Moby Dick and wants to find the whale and kill it. Another example of why Ahab wanted to kill Moby Dick was because he starts to think of Moby Dick as more than just a whale. Ahab starts to think of Moby Dick as the source of all evil. So, Ahab becomes consumed with Moby Dick and starts to be driven by the thought of just killing Moby Dick. Ahab thinks that he will kill all evil if he kills Moby Dick. Ahab then started offering his crew more pay if they were the one to kill or see Moby Dick.

Another example, of how Ahab becomes so obsessed with Moby Dick was when Ahab's ship comes across another ship. While the captains of the ship were talking he warns Ahab about staying away from Moby Dick they lost one of their men to the whale. However, Ahab is so obsessed with the whale that he disregards the other captain's warnings and proceeds with his hunt for Moby Dick.

Ahab's struggle for revenge is a fairly long one, and it is also evident that Ahab would not stop for anything since he took his ship halfway around the world just to find this whale. Ahab was given ample notice that he should not proceed with his obsession to kill Moby Dick but he disregarded them. When someone becomes so obsessed with something that it is the only thing that actually makes them function then the only thing that can come out of it will only be bad.

When the ship finally was able to track down Moby Dick, and since Ahab was so obsessed with getting revenge on the whale he jumped on the whale. The final outcome of this ordeal was that Ahab was strangled by the harpoon that he was trying to kill Moby Dick with. Although, Ahab wanted to seek revenge against the whale the whale ended up killing Ahab. Then Moby Dick then destroyed the ship and killed everyone on the ship except for one person.

The main theme of this story is the obsession of revenge against something and the consequences that can become of such an obsession. This story clearly warns the reader that if you become obsessed with something then only bad things can happen. In this case everyone but one individual lost their lives on the ship.

Throughout every story that we read, watch on tv, or hear about there is usually a hidden message that the author wants to get across. The hidden message is known as the theme of the story. In most cases a story can have more than one theme, and each theme can give a different message to the reader.