**THE ROAD: READING TEST
Short Response Essays**

On a separate sheet, please **respond to TWO of the prompts.**

**Choose one of the first two prompts, and one of the second two prompts.** Please clearly mark which prompts you are responding to at the start of your responses.

Responses should be one long paragraph, and should include evidence from the book to support your answer. In each short essay, **use at least three specific examples (evidence)** from the book, and be sure to **explain/connect each example clearly (commentary)**. You are expected to use specific quotations from the book; paraphrase ONLY if necessary.

The following items are **acceptable** to have with you during the in-class essay:

* This prompt paper and any notes written on it
* A hard copy of *The Road*
* One page of notes/evidence/outlines on a separate sheet

The following materials **may NOT be used** while writing the essay:

* iPads, phones, or any technology (*eReaders are acceptable*)
* Notebooks
* A pre-written essay

Your essay will be scored using the following rubric:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student** | **The Road: Essay Response**English 12 :: P2/4 :: Stoll |
| *Your essays should have included the following components; any missing components have been bolded* |
| **Form: *(Both essays utilize…)*** | **Content: *(Both essays include…)*** |
| * A clear main argument mindful of structure/diction
 | * A strong, direct main argument that fully answers the prompt
 |
| * Effectively integrated quotations
 | * 3 pieces of relevant evidence
 |
| * Correctly cited references to text
 | * Precise transitions between evidence
 |
| * Blended and balanced commentary
 | * Unique commentary that expands upon the main argument
 |
| **Score for FORM: \_\_\_**  | **Score for CONTENT: \_\_\_** |
| ***NOTES: -  -***  |

BEFORE YOU TURN IN YOUR ESSAY:
Please proofread and edit to the best of your ability for fragments, run-ons, and any other major errors in syntax or grammar that could affect the meanings of your arguments.

*WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WRITING, you may staple this page (AND any added notes) to your essay and submit it to the front of the class. GOOD LUCK*!

**Prompt 1 (\*\*\*MUST RESPOND TO ONE OF THESE\*\*\*):**

 Much of the connection that readers form with the major characters of *The Road* are based on the actions they take and decisions they make regarding the few minor characters. Because the book is offered from a third person limited perspective, the insights of the main characters are expressed through sparse dialogue and high-stakes action. Think about how characters’ motivations and decisions influence our analysis of them as you respond to one of these prompts:

1A: Before the mother takes her life, she tells the father, “I didn’t bring myself to this. I was brought. And now I’m done” (pg. 56). Why does she say this? What is her argument for taking the action she does, and how does this argument affect the man on his journey? Use specific examples in your response.

1B: After the father dies, the boy meets another man and must decide whether or not that man is trustworthy. When he asks the man, “How do I know you’re one of the good guys?”, the man responds with, “You don’t. You’ll have to take a shot” (pg. 283). Does the man prove that he is trustworthy based on what he does and what he says? How can the man’s words and actions be interpreted to mean that the boy can or cannot trust the man? Use specific examples of the man’s behavior to support your argument.

**Prompt 2 (\*\*\*MUST RESPOND TO ONE OF THESE\*\*\*):**

 The pivotal relationship in the *The Road* is that of two characters only known as “the man” and “the boy”; a father and his son. In the interview we watched before reading the novel, McCarthy explained that his relationship with his own son was very much the inspiration for *The Road*, going so far as to dedicate the novel to him and to consider his son as a co-author of sorts. Respond to one of the following prompts that explores the relationship between the father and son:

2A: The man sees himself as duty bound to his role as a father, and he tells the boy, “my job is to take care of you” (pg. 77). The very first line of the book references the man’s concern for his child. What are some ways in which he fulfills his duty as a father? How does the man’s idea of fatherhood go beyond just providing for the boy’s physical well being? Use specific instances or symbols from the book to support your answer.

2B: Throughout *The Road*, we never learn the names of our two main characters; they are only referred to as “the man” and “the boy”, or “the father” and “the son.” What effect does this have on the relationship between the characters, and on us as readers? Why does McCarthy do this? What are some instances from the book that may have impacted the reader differently if the characters had been named? Use specific moments from the book.