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

On a separate sheet, please **respond to ONE of the prompts in a short, one paragraph essay.** Please clearly mark which prompts you are responding to at the start of your response.

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 and **analyze at least one example of symbolism** from the book; paraphrase ONLY if necessary, and for no more than one piece of evidence.

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

* This prompt paper and any notes written on it
* One separate page of notes/evidence/outline
* A hard copy of *The Road*
* Blank paper on which to write your response

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

* iPads, phones, headphones, or any technology
* Notebooks
* A pre-written essay

Your essay will be scored using the following rubric:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student | Critical Analysis Essay: *The Road*  English 12 :: Fall 2017 :: Stoll |
| *Your essay should have included the following components; any missing components have been bolded* | |
| **Form:** | **Content:** |
| * Develops and connects main argument and evidence used | * A strong, direct main argument (thesis) that fully answers the prompt |
| * Includes integrated evidence | * 3 pieces of evidence used total |
| * Employs effective transitions between evidence | * Unique commentary that expands upon the main argument and uses symbolism |
| **Score for CONTENT: \_\_** | **Score for FORM: \_\_** |
| **Notes:** | |

**Reminders:**

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 in this order from top to bottom: 1) Prompt. 2) Essay Response 3) Notes page*

Also, remember that quotations used in the prompts below may be referred to, but will not be counted as evidence.

*GOOD LUCK!  
---Stoll*

**Prompt A and B: The Man and The Boy\***

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:

A: 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 and/or symbols from the book to support your answer.

B: 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.” Why does McCarthy do this? What effect does this have on the relationship between the characters, and on us as readers? What are some instances from the book that may have impacted the reader differently if the characters had been named? Use specific instances and/or symbols from the book to support your answer.

**Prompt C and D: Supporting Characters**

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:

C: The man and the boy have few interaction with strangers, but when they do, the results tend to be dramatic. From the marauder that’s shot, to Ely whom they help; from the “lightening man” they ignore, to the cart thief that man almost kills saying, “I’m going to leave you the way you left us” (pg. 257). Consider what these interactions with strangers tell us about the man and the boy, about their decisions, and about what they are willing to do to survive. Use specific instances and/or symbols from the book to support your answer.

D: 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 instances and/or symbols from the book to support your answer.