



The Bicycle Thieves Reading Analysis Essay

CONTEXT:

Film critic Dan Schneider once stated in regards to *The Bicycle Thieves*, “Even worse are those stolid critics with a political ax to grind. Marxists somehow got it into their heads that Antonio, who is clearly shown as living in squalor, is a member of the *bourgeoisie* (middle-class) simply because he wears a fedora, not a cap, or because his wife has clean bed sheets, thus when he gets a job, it is symbolic of governmental favoritism for an elite class, and the young bike thief, who wears a German hat, is a member of the international *proletariat* (working class), although he clearly is a member of the criminal class, and in that conflation much of Marxist theology bogs down...”

TASK: In a well-developed essay, **argue for Schneider’s position, argue against Schneider’s position, or qualify** Schneider’s position using evidence you have critically analyzed from:

- (1) The three critical essays for *The Bicycle Thieves* that serve as your secondary source material for this essay. Access all secondary essays at: <http://rhinehartenglish2016.weebly.com/bicycle-thieves.html>
- (2) Your notes organizer (film analysis – see how to analyze a film notes packet).

REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Minimum** 3 pages, double-spaced, length. **Absolute Maximum** – 4 pages.
2. A well-developed **position** thesis statement that follows a sentence within your introduction paragraph that specifies your analytical focus (this sentence would be an analytical thesis statement if you were not taking an extra step to then develop a position thesis statement).
3. “Research” cited in essay is required – Refer to your primary source (*The Bicycle Thieves*), and the 3 secondary sources from the cinematic critical essays you were to have read. You must cite from your secondary sources.
 - a. **PRIMARY SOURCE: *The Bicycle Thieves***
 - b. **3 SECONDARY SOURCES (Cite them as follows on your Works Cited page):**
 - i. Chesire, Godfrey. *A Passionate Commitment to the Real*. Criterion Collection: Movie supplemental booklet. 2007.
 - ii. Burnett, Charles. *Ode to the Common Man*. Criterion Collection: Movie supplemental booklet. 2007.
 - iii. Schneider, Dan. *DVD Review of The Bicycle Thief (sic)*. 2006.

These Secondary Sources are found at:
<http://rhinehartenglish2016.weebly.com/bicycle-thieves.html>
4. Internal MLA citation is required (see below for reference) **AND** a MLA formatted Works Cited page is required (see above for reference). Designate your sources for internal citations as follows:
 - a. **The Primary Source, the Film** – (De Sica, *The Bicycle Thieves*)
 - b. **Your 3 Secondary Sources** –
 - i. (Chesire)
 - ii. (Burnett)
 - iii. (Schneider)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES TO GUIDE YOUR WRITING OF THIS ESSAY TYPE:

The prompt requires you to demonstrate an ability to argue the other position regardless of which side of the debate you ultimately fall. You are taking a “middle-ground” approach that will allow you many opportunities to counter-argue Schneider’s position, thus allowing you an opportunity to demonstrate an ability to argue from both sides. In other words, you are developing a nuanced position.

This essay is primarily an argumentative position essay. This means that you will need to construct a **POSITION THESIS STATEMENT** along with a traditional introductory paragraph. Your specific analytical focus upon which your argument is based is specifically discussed in the introduction. Direct analysis is definitely present in this essay; analysis underpins the argument here, so what you have been doing in terms of analytical writing **is not** replaced here. It is merely blended into another context in which developing an argumentative position is the primary purpose.

This, along with the support of secondary texts (which need to be analyzed rhetorically to test the validity of the sources and how they truly fit into your argument), ultimately makes this essay a **SYNTHESIS ESSAY** that demonstrates an ability to blend information and analysis from multiple texts, and multiple forms of media, to develop a position in regards to a prompt or issue.