



OUT OF THE DUST

ASSIGNMENT 2: CHARACTERS, RELATIONSHIPS & STYLE

Learning Intentions: To appreciate how authors create effective characters and relationships and use them to communicate with the audience. To understand the methods that authors use to communicate messages such as themes. To understand how tools such as setting and style are used by authors to communicate information to audiences. To realise that in order to be effective as a writer and speaker, you need to know what tools you have and how to use them.

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose ONE question/topic from each section to complete (3 total)

CHARACTERS – 400 WORDS:

1. Write a monologue from the point of view of one of the characters in the novel that reveals their feelings about an event from the novel.

A monologue is where one character is giving a speech about their life to an audience. What they say represents their inner thoughts and feelings. A monologue is not a conversation, just one character's point of view. When you write this monologue, decide what this character is thinking and feeling inside. What would they tell the world if it would listen? Also, set the scene. Before the monologue, in a short paragraph, explain who the speaker is and where he/she is (set the scene visually). In one or two sentences, tell what has happened in the life of this character so far. Make a point of revealing the character's personality in your writing.

2. Write a letter from one character in the novel to another.

The letter can be to or from any character in the novel, including those who have died or gone away. It should be honest and personal, including any details that your character would know. To help you decide what to write about, consider the relationship between two characters in the novel – what might one of them might wish they could say to the other? Think about any thoughts or feelings that they didn't reveal to each other over the course of the novel, and what was holding them back from speaking about it. Make a point of revealing the character's personality in your writing.

3. Write a eulogy for one of the characters in the novel. This can be a character who died in the novel, or a character who did not die in the novel.

A eulogy is a speech given at a funeral by a family member or close friend of the deceased, someone who knew them very well. A eulogy is generally very personal, as the audience is made up of all the deceased's closest friends, family, and acquaintances. The main purpose of a eulogy is to honour the life of someone who has died. It often includes several anecdotes (stories) of conversations or incidents between the deceased and the person giving the eulogy – things that stood out, or things that are characteristic of this person, that encapsulate their personality or values. Make sure you think about which character is giving the eulogy and how they would present it; don't just think about the character who has died.

4. Write a journal entry about one event in Out of the Dust from the point of view of a character OTHER THAN Billie Jo.

A journal entry is someone’s personal account of events that have happened to them. It includes intimate details about how they think and feel about the people and situations in their life. It is a place where they can discuss things they care about deeply, being completely open and honest about their true feelings in a way they might not feel comfortable speaking aloud. The entire journal entry should be from one character’s point of view. Write your entry in the same style as Billie Jo does – using the structure of free verse poetry (it doesn’t need to rhyme).

RELATIONSHIPS – 600 WORDS, ESSAY STYLE

1. Imagine that things went differently, and Ma got injured but did not die. How would this have affected the relationships in the novel? Think about the relationships between 1) Ma and Daddy, 2) Ma and Billie Jo, and 3) Daddy and Billie Jo.
2. Examine the relationship between Billie Jo and Arley Wanderdale. How does it change throughout the novel? Explore how Arley treated Billie Jo and helped her overcome her difficulties both before and after the accident. You could also talk about how Mad Dog influenced Billie Jo and inspired her to do better – this was orchestrated by Arley to an extent.
3. Examine the relationship between Billie Jo and her father over the course of the novel. How does it change throughout the novel? What difficulties did they encounter after Ma’s death, and how did this make Billie Jo feel towards her father? What was his behaviour like, and how did Billie Jo react – what were her own feelings and actions? How did these difficulties resolve, and how can you describe the relationship by the novel’s end?

THEMES / SETTING / WRITING STYLE – 300 WORDS

1. **Choose a theme from the novel and write 300 words on what the author is trying to say by using this theme. Remember to draw attention to the author and their decisions.**

Examples of themes could be hope, love, trust, hardship, family, or another of your choice. For this question you must write one paragraph FIRST, not included in the word count, explaining how you can tell that this is an important theme in the book by listing multiple examples where it is present in the text. When writing your 300 words, include your examples from the book.

2. **Draw (or create a model of) a setting from the book. Write 300 words explaining why this setting is important and how it affects the reader’s understanding of the story. Remember to draw attention to the author and their decisions.**

Examples could be the Kelby home, the Palace Theatre, the hardware store, or the schoolhouse. It should be obvious that you have put a lot of effort into your drawing/model, and your explanation should clearly reference any details you have included and why.

**3. Explore the different ways that the novel's style helps make the story more effective.
Remember to draw attention to the author and their decisions.**

Explore how the novel is written in poetry, taking particular note of phrasing and the way lines are structured. A notable example is the chapter about the accident (p.60). How does the style of the book tell the story in so few words? You should also discuss the effect point of view has on the story (we only see Billie Jo's perspective). Look also at the tone of the novel. There are negative events, but is the tone of the novel negative? Why/why not?

MARKING RUBRIC

A = WOW! B = Meets expectations well C = Satisfactory D = On the way

Performance Standard	A	B	C	D
Character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters are accurately portrayed and clearly recognisable from the novel • Shows a good understanding of the character, and expresses their ideas in a realistic and convincing manner • Sophisticated and correct expression with no errors 				
Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct essay structure & use of academic language • Evidence used effectively to support and extend points made – 5+ examples of events or conversations from the novel which demonstrate the characters' relationships • Sophisticated and correct expression with no errors 				
Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective analysis of how authors create effective themes, settings, and writing styles. • Clear explanation shows analytical depth of understanding of these concepts • Evidence used effectively to support and extend points made - 5+ examples of techniques used by the author to communicate with the audience • Sophisticated and correct expression with no errors 				