Benjamin Ha

Ms. Giraudo

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An Unlikely Hero

In James Thurber’s “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty,” Walter Mitty is a hero for coping with living in a harsh, dull world through living his fantasies in daydreams. For example, when Walter Mitty drives Mrs. Mitty to town for errands , “You’re driving too fast!” said Mrs. Mitty ( James Thurber 1), driving a Navy hydroplane in his dreams results in Mitty speeding , “Full strength in No.3 turret”, shouted the Commander (1). Living a monotonous life forces Mitty to feel self-conscience of himself. His ability to defeat this self-consciousness reveals Mitty’s actually has a strong personality. In addition, when Mitty drives “past the hospital” (1), he dreams he is a world famous surgeon operating on the “Millionaire banker, Wellington McMillan” (1). Mitty rids his stigma of incompetence through dreams that give him confidence in reality. He realizes his desire to become a lifesaver because of his dream of saving people’s lives. Furthermore, Walter Mitty hears a newsboy “shouting something about the Waterbury trial.” (2), and “Walter Mitty raised his hand briefly, and the bickering attorneys were stilled. ‘With any known make of gun,’ he (Mitty) said evenly, ‘I could have killed Gregory Fitzhurst at three hundred feet with my left hand,’ ” (2), and dreams he is a witness of that trial. Mitty dreams of the trial because he realizes his yearning for respect and fear in the actual world. Mitty has a disguised trait of determination which enables him to gain respect and fear in his dreams. In essence, Walter Mitty’s determination and unique ability to dream in order to relive himself from the harsh realities of the real world bring inspiration to many.

In this essay, I did the structure well. I understand the format and I actually like it now. I find it convenient and it provides an easier way to start an essay. My weakness is commentary. In this essay, my commentary did improve tremendously and I am surprised that I did pretty well on it. I obviously did not do great but it was an improvement. I still need to think more critically on my approach of commentary and I am always flowing with ideas but I tend to forget. The next essay, I will try writing my feelings while I read the book so I can improve my commentary in the future. My goal for the next essay is to find better evidence. I felt that my concrete details were solid, but they could have been better. Good concrete detail would make it easier to write good commentary. In all, I thought that I did good on this essay, but there is still much room for improvement such as commentary and concrete details.

1. In James Thurber’s “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty,” Walter Mitty is a hero for coping with living in a harsh, dull world through living his fantasies in daydreams.

2. CI: Mitty is a hero for coping with living in a harsh dull world.

TLCD 1- For example, when Walter Mitty drives Mrs. Mitty to town for errands , “You’re driving too fast!” said Mrs. Mitty ( James Thurber 1), driving a Navy hydroplane in his dreams results in Mitty speeding , “Full strength in No.3 turret”, shouted the Commander (1).

Why is he imagining he is driving a plane?

Why would Mitty mirror his dream in the real world? Synchronization?

Why does Mrs. Mitty treat Mitty like a child?

Mitty drives a plane in dream land because he is bored and needs to bring excitement into his life. Mrs. Mitty has little trust in Walter Mitty even though Mrs. Mitty is Walter Mitty’s wife which complicates relationships.

TLCD 2- In addition, when Mitty drives “past the hospital” (1), he dreams he is a world famous surgeon operating on the “Millionaire banker, Wellington McMillan” (1).

Why does he feel compelled to save someone’s life?

Does he feel that he has to do good because people have been doing bad to him?

Why is it a rich patient making Mitty seem famous and rich?

Mitty saving people’s lives reveals Mitty himself needs to be saved by a hero. Because there is no hero to save him in his dire time of need, he imagines himself as a hero.

TLCD 3- Furthermore, Walter Mitty hears a newsboy “shouting something about the Waterbury trial.” (2), and “Walter Mitty raised his hand briefly, and the bickering attorneys were stilled. ‘With any known make of gun,’ he (Mitty) said evenly, ‘I could have killed Gregory Fitzhurst at three hundred feet with my left hand,’ ” (2), and dreams he is a witness of that trial. Mitty dreams of the trial because he realizes his yearning for respect and fear in the actual world.

Why is Mitty now the bad guy?

Was he not always the good guy of each dream?

What causes him to change?

All the sadness buried in his heart reveals he is capable of becoming a sinister villain that terrifies others. In the end, this villain is not actually a villain but a misunderstood individual.