

The Awakening

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Scrabble, and Motivation

We have known each other since before I can remember anything else. We have lived in the same neighborhood in the same suburb of Chicago. For a while, we even homeschooled together. Although I was almost two years younger than Andrew, we had connected with each other the first time that we met, and we became very close friends. However, while we have been growing older together, I have come to the realization that we have not been necessarily growing up together, and that our paths in life have diverged considerably. Whereas Andrew is still being homeschooled, I have gone back to school. I learned to motivate myself to do well in school and have my own interests, while Andrew's mother continues to have almost total control over his life.


The product of parents who separated while he was a little boy, Andrew lives with his mother. A highly educated former physicist, she is an unsympathetic parent and a constant presence in his life. She is almost always with him, and from my perspective, she seems determined to control every aspect of his life. From the food he eats, to the clothes he wears, to the small group of friends with whom she allows him to spend time, his mother has tried to shape Andrew to fit her vision of an ideal child. She even pulled him out of school at an early age in order to homeschool him and control his curriculum, which has made his world even smaller. Whenever Andrew is in the same vicinity as his mother, he always seems to be keeping his eye on her, as if to gauge whether she might disapprove of what he is saying or doing. I still


remember that, when we were homeschooling together, she frequently yelled at Andrew when he gave the wrong answers to his math problems. He has become so dependent on her that he once became genuinely panicked when his mother left him alone at my house for one hour while she did some errands, and did not know how to handle himself. I have always felt a dislike for her demanding personality, although I do not doubt that Andrew's mother cares deeply about him.



Andrew and I began to grow apart when I stopped homeschooling with him to start seventh grade at a private school. For various reasons, my parents and I had decided to stop homeschooling me. One of those reasons was that I was not conducive to the curriculum which my mother had created for me, and I had made this clear to my parents. Another reason was that I wanted to be in a more structured environment with other children. Andrew continued with his homeschooling, doing well in his lessons. After I commenced my schooling at my new school, Andrew and I stopped seeing each other as often. This gave me the opportunity to see Andrew's life in a new and more objective way.


 1 was one particular incident that will remain imprinted in my mind forever.

Andrew was visiting me one weekend, and we had agreed in advance that we should play the board game Scrabble, which, because it has intellectual components, is one of the few games that his mother does not restrict him from playing. When he arrived with his mother, he immediately walked down to the lower level of the house, and into a room where my desktop computer was located. As soon as I had joined him, he closed and locked the door from the inside. As I watched him beginning to play a game on my computer, I distinctly felt that he wanted to be away from his mother.



As I was expecting, his mother soon approached the room that we were in, and Andrew told me not to open it  2 ugh the door, she told us to come out of the room to play Scrabble. I

proceeded to open the door and follow his mother out of the room. Andrew followed only when his mother insisted that he did so. He started to follow behind me, but then he quickly turned into a nearby bathroom, closed the door, and began washing his hands. He appeared to be trying to avoid his mother. I realized then that although he enjoyed the game itself, he did not like being required by his mother to do so. During the game, his mother seemed to be overly critical, and he in turn became less and less willing to play. Every time Andrew started to make a word with his Scrabble tiles, his mother would stop him and offer her own suggestion of a word that would yield a higher score. Several times, Andrew became frustrated and tried to quit, but his mother forced him to finish the game. Andrew seemed defeated and angry, and what was supposed to be a pleasant afternoon became fraught with apprehension and resentment  3

While I had always been aware of Andrew's mother's strong influence in his life, it  4 not until that moment that I started to truly appreciate the negative effect that she was having on him.  5 had found it necessary to supervise and criticize him over something as inconsequential as a simple board game. Although his mother believed that she was helping and improving him, she was in fact doing the opposite by not letting him think for himself and make his own choices. His mother's interference was hindering his own motivation to play and enjoy the game, and that game seemed to be representative of his whole life.

From that incident, I began to realize the importance and necessity of giving people the freedom to pursue their own motivations and make their own decisions. I realized that a major part of my own motivation in my activities was my desire to avoid my parents' disapproval. As a result, I had become a disinterested student and musician.  6 this epiphany, however, I became more self-motivated and thus more accomplished in my music and academics. My parents have allowed me to enjoy my endeavors independently in things such as music and

sports. I have noticed that I feel a much greater sense of pride and gratification if I do well, because my successes can be credited to my own motivation. Furthermore, I feel that I am better able to learn from my mistakes instead of feeling badly because I have not met my parents' expectations.

The principle of self-motivation is paramount to the achievement of lasting success and a sense of fulfillment in oneself. There is a difference between doing things  7 bid disapproval and meet the demands of others, as opposed to acting out of a sense of personal responsibility and a desire for one's own individual accomplishment  8 lieve that my own perspective and understanding of individual motivation has been greatly impacted and shaped by this realization, and that it has given me a better sense of responsibility for myself.

This principle also has societal implications. Coercion by others creates a feeling of resentment that hinders personal growth and accomplishment. When individuals are free to make their own decisions and their own mistakes, they are happier, more productive, and more capable of achieving greatness. Therefore, the importance and relevance of self-motivation must not be understated by our society. We are best when we do things not because others tell us to do them, but because we are motivated to do them by ourselves.

The Awakening

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

90/100

PAGE 1

PAGE 2



Comment 1

use a smoother transition



Comment 2

reword-- she attempted to open the locked door and Andrew...

PAGE 3



Comment 3

this is sad



Comment 4

no ref to it



Comment 5

it is really important than you start focusing on you and what you learned--- about yourself or your own family... focus the awakening on you



Comment 6

add more discussion here-- again, to focus on you

PAGE 4



Comment 7

reword to avoid there and things-- vague language



Comment 8

good idea here-- very mature

EXPOSITION (20%)

0 / 5

The text sets up a story by introducing the event/conflict, characters and setting.

EXCEPTIONAL (5)	The text creatively engages the reader by setting out a well-developed conflict, situation, or observation. The text establishes one or multiple points of view and introduces a narrator and/or complex characters.
SKILLED (4)	The text engages and orients the reader by setting out a conflict, situation, or observation. It establishes one or multiple points of view and introduces a narrator and/or well-developed characters.
PROFICIENT (3)	The text orients the reader by setting out a conflict, situation, or observation. It establishes one point of view and introduces a narrator and/or developed characters.
DEVELOPING (2)	The text provides a setting with a vague conflict, situation, or observation with an unclear point of view. It introduces a narrator and/or underdeveloped characters.
INADEQUATE (1)	The text provides a setting that is unclear with a vague conflict, situation, or observation. It has an unclear point of view and underdeveloped narrator and/or characters.

DEVELOPMENT (20%)

0 / 5

The story is developed using dialogue, pacing, description, reflection and multiple plot lines.

EXCEPTIONAL (5)	The text demonstrates sophisticated narrative techniques, such as engaging dialogue, artistic pacing, vivid description, complex reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
SKILLED (4)	The text demonstrates deliberate use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
PROFICIENT (3)	The text uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, reflection, that illustrate events and/or characters.
DEVELOPING (2)	The text uses some narrative techniques, such as dialogue or description that merely retells events and/or experiences.
INADEQUATE (1)	The text lacks narrative techniques and merely retells events and/or experiences.

ORGANIZATION (20%)

0 / 5

The text follows a logical sequence of events.

EXCEPTIONAL (5)	The text creates a seamless progression of experiences or events using multiple techniques--such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc.--to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
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SKILLED (4)	The text creates a smooth progression of experiences or events using a variety of techniques--such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc.--to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
PROFICIENT (3)	The text creates a logical progression of experiences or events using some techniques--such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc.--to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
DEVELOPING (2)	The text creates a sequence or progression of experiences or events.
INADEQUATE (1)	The text lacks a sequence or progression of experiences or events or presents an illogical sequence of events.

STYLE (20%)

0 / 5

The text uses sensory language and details to create a vivid picture of the events, setting, and characters.

EXCEPTIONAL (5)	The text uses eloquent words and phrases, showing details and rich sensory language and mood to convey a realistic picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
SKILLED (4)	The text uses precise words and phrases, showing details and controlled sensory language and mood to convey a realistic picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
PROFICIENT (3)	The text uses words and phrases, telling details and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
DEVELOPING (2)	The text uses words and phrases and telling details to convey experiences, events, settings, and/or characters.
INADEQUATE (1)	The text merely tells about experiences, events, settings, and/or characters.

CONCLUSION (20%)

0 / 5

The text provides a conclusion that follows from the course of the narrative. The conclusion provides a reflection on or resolution of the events.

EXCEPTIONAL (5)	The text moves to a conclusion that artfully follows from and thoughtfully reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
SKILLED (4)	The text builds to a conclusion that logically follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
PROFICIENT (3)	The text provides a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
DEVELOPING (2)	The text provides a conclusion that follows from what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
INADEQUATE	The text may provide a conclusion to the events of the narrative.

