In the novel *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro the character Miss Lucy over time is overwhelmed with her desire to be honest with her students about their true purpose in life and thus reveals to them information that they were never intended to have known at such a young age. Miss Lucy’s emotions appear subtly over the novel and do not fully manifest until the children’s later years at Hailsham. But in those years before she finally snapped Miss Lucy gave occasional hints to the students, alluding to the fact that the normal seeming activities they were partaking in, were seen in her eyes as something much darker. Miss Lucy’s minor slips around the students were all leading up to the day that she finally revealed to them that their whole purpose in life was to foster vital organs so they could be harvested. It was Miss Lucy’s desire to come clean with her students that slowly eats away at her tough mental fortitude and ultimately results in her revealing to them the sad nature of their existence.

Miss Lucy’s emotions do not just appear abruptly, but instead, subtly slip out in front of her pupils’ over time. The process of her emotions slowly wearing away on her mental state is most evident in her cynical nature in the classroom when her students are discussing electric fences: “It’s just as well the fences at Hailsham aren’t electrified. You get terrible accidents sometimes” (Ishiguro 78). While at first Miss Lucy’s remarks may appear as an innocent joke she is actually giving the students a subtle note that some students may have tried to escape Hailsham in the past. This remark leaves the students who have deciphered her subtle hint wondering, why someone would want to escape. Miss Lucy’s remark is the first appearance of her guilt starting to break down her mental fortitude and rearing its ugly head to the reader and students. Having Miss Lucy crack in this manner is a way for the novel to convey to the reader the toll that holding such a horrible secret from her students is having on her. Miss Lucy’s slip up in front of her students is a big moment in the deterioration of her mental state since it shows that it will not hold up forever. CS?

While for a time Miss Lucy manages to keep her guilt from becoming completely visible, her repression of it can only last so long. One day, when Miss Lucy can no longer take the children blissful ignorance, she says, “Your lives are set for you. You’ll become adults, then before your old, before you’re even middle-aged you’ll start to donate your vital organs” (Ishiguro 81). Miss Lucy could no longer fight her emotions and is finally able to be honest with her pupils about their fate, leaving them in total shock. Miss Lucy’s goal in telling her pupils this is to finally be rid of her guilt. Miss Lucy’s actions show that her mental state has broken down and has thus been defeated by the guilt that she has carried for so many years. With her emotions driving her, Miss Lucy’s reveal to the students finally sets her free from hiding the knowledge of their true purpose.

While at times Miss Lucy may seem like a character who can handle her guilt, in the end she succumbs to it like the majority of those who carry so much weight on their conscious. Guilt is something that hangs over many people and overtime leads them to do things they never thought or wanted too. Though guilt is seen as a negative in many contexts it actually speaks volumes about the humanity of person. Since a person who has never felt guilt lacks the ability to feel empathy towards other. Without empathy a person is no better than an inanimate object because they feel that the concerns of others are irrelevant and thus will never stick themselves in harm’s way to help their fellow man.

Summer Reading Essay - Scoring Rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Structure** | **Evidence** | **Analysis** | **Language/Mechanics** |
| **Excellent** | * Clear and specific thesis statement * Introductory paragraph has well-selected background info * Topic and concluding sentences that capture all ideas in the paragraph & relate to thesis * Structure of essay logical and successful * Insightful conclusion | * Strongest possible evidence selection (i.e., writer has chosen a variety of original and compelling quotes) * Quoted evidence clearly supports thesis and topic sentences and is well integrated * Writer uses proper MLA citation | * Analysis that furthers the argument follows each quote * All analysis clearly ties back to the thesis statement and topic sentence * All analysis clearly addresses the prompt * Analysis shows insightful and original understanding of complex ideas | * At most, only a few inconsequential errors * Word choice is precise * Sentence structure is clear and varied |
| **Good** | Organization of the essay includes minor flaws or awkwardness in one or more of the following areas:   * Thesis * Background * Topic Sentences * Concluding Sentence * Structure/Organization * Conclusion | * Evidence selection is good but may be more obvious than an “A” writer’s quote selection * All quotes support thesis and topic sentence * Integration of text may be at times awkward * Context is present, but insufficient. * Quotes are cited, but not consistent with MLA format | * Analysis offers thoughtful insight but lacks the depth, rigor, or focus of an “A” writer’s analysis (i.e., too brief, unconvincing, or repetitive) * Analysis relates to thesis statement * Analysis shows competent understanding of prompt and text * Analysis is accurate but somewhat generic | Several errors in the following areas:   * S-T S-P S-# * LOU/U * R-O/Frag * Spelling * Capitalization * Punctuation * Word choice and sentence structure (may be less sophisticated although argument is clear) * Syntax (some areas of awkwardness) |
| **Average** | The following components of the essay are missing info and/or otherwise ineffective:   * Thesis * Background * Topic Sentences * Concluding Sentences * Structure/Organization * Conclusion | * Writer lacks evidence * Quotes may not always support thesis and topic sentence * Quotes serve as plot summary * Writer does not provide context * Writer does not integrate quotes * Quotes are not cited | * Analysis may, at times, simply reword quotes or paraphrase text * Analysis drifts from the prompt and/or thesis * Analysis reflects a misunderstanding of the text * Lacks analysis | Numerous errors that indicate a gap in knowledge in the following areas:   * S-T S-P S-# * LOU/U * R-O/Frag * Spelling * Capitalization * Punctuation * Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Below Average** | Little discernible essay structure exists or essay is incomplete. | No direct evidence is used. | Writer simply paraphrases, misunderstands text or prompt, or includes inappropriate or unnecessary information, such as critique. | Errors impede understanding. |

Total: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_27\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ / 36