

From Cadet to Captain

JJ Abrams' 2009 movie, *Star Trek*, is exciting, packed with action and adventure. The characters in the story are very realistic and their experiences teach us an important lesson. By studying their experiences and consequences of their actions, it is clearly demonstrated that it is important to learn from one's life experiences if one wants to be successful.

The main character, James T Kirk, is first introduced to the audience in his childhood. He has stolen his mother's boyfriend's car and is running from the police. He is around nine or ten years of age in this scene. The audience quickly discovers that Kirk is a hot-headed young man who challenges authority. Once he is a cadet with Starfleet, he continues his hot-headed ways. He cheats on an exam, challenges the Acting Captain, and gets himself "marooned...on Delta Vega" for mutiny. In the scenes where Kirk is in conflict with others, the use of close-ups is effective in showing his lack of respect for authority: eye-rolling, smirking, and mumbling typically lead to the physical or verbal conflicts that follow. As a young, fatherless male, Kirk is unsure of who he is and where he belongs. The Enterprise's journey to save Captain Pike from the Romulans provides him the opportunity to find himself and success. Your summary of Kirk's character prior to transformation is succinct. Well done.

Kirk's life's motto is "I don't believe in no-win situations," and this is made very clear in the opening scenes of the film. The storyline is fast-paced, and it's not long before Kirk is marooned on Delta Vega where he meets Spock who exists 129 years in the future. Spock Prime is surprised to learn that his younger self is the reason Kirk is stranded on the desolate arctic planet and helps him to return to the Enterprise. It is during this time that Kirk begins to transform: his realization that he and Spock are actually best friends in the future, and that he becomes Captain of the Enterprise prompt him to consider Spock's side of things and how they can work together to bring Captain Pike home. Kirk also learns that in Spock Prime's time realm his father is alive and that "[Kirk] often spoke of him as being [his] inspiration for joining Starfleet. He proudly lived to see [Kirk] become captain of the Enterprise" and this knowledge is the biggest trigger to Kirk's transformation.

However, once back on the Enterprise, Kirk's behaviour doesn't leave the audience convinced that he has actually learned anything. He challenges Spock's motives for turning back and berates him for not loving his mother, "What is it like not to feel anger... or heartbreak... or the need to stop at nothing to avenge the death of the woman who gave birth to you?" His jibes at Spock's cultural background invoke a not-before-seen rage in Spock and he begins to physically assault Kirk in white-hot anger. This physical assault results in Spock removing himself as Acting Captain, putting Kirk in the Captain's seat, and the crew embarks on chasing the Romulan ship and the captive Captain Pike. It is in this scene that viewers know a transformation has begun, as Kirk is "accepting [his] fear, and maintaining] control of [himself]" as the Enterprise enters warp speed in pursuit of likely death.

Kirk's experiences allow him to change for the better, and he achieves success, both personally and professionally. He is no longer selfish or a hot-head. He learns to consider others' opinions in relation to the mission and because of his actions in saving Captain Pike and destroying the Romulan ship, his cadet status is upgraded to Captain of the Enterprise. The audience can determine that Kirk's experiences with other officers and cadets, and his experiences with Spock Prime specifically, have given him a new view on things. The fact that his father is alive in a time-realm somewhere, and Kirk grew up with a father-figure to guide him, gives Kirk a sense of peace and stability and allows him to become the officer

Comment [1]: What are some camera angles and lighting in this scene support that this is the beginning of his transformation?

Comment [2]: You have some strong quotations here, but there is a lack of focus on film techniques and how they support that this is the cause of Kirk's transformation.

Comment [3]: How does the audience determine this? What film techniques support this statement?

and the man he needs to be in this time-space continuum. Success doesn't happen overnight. It takes learning from one's own past, present, and future to promote change in one's self.

In conclusion, Abrams' film shows that success comes from learning from one's experiences and often these experiences change a person for the better. James T Kirk illustrates how changing one's beliefs in one's self and those around him can lead to success. Everyone wants to be the best version of themselves, and being open to experiences can lead to change and success.

Works Cited

"Star Trek (2009)." *IMDb*, IMDb.com, www.imdb.com/title/tt0796366/quotes. 2 Nov 2017.

5.4 Critical Response Rubric

Value	Thought and Support	Form and Structure	Matters of Choice	Matters of Correctness
Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You present an <i>insightful</i> analysis. ❑ You demonstrate an <i>excellent</i> understanding of how film techniques support character transformation. ❑ You provide <i>precise</i> and <i>deliberately chosen</i> support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You arrange your ideas and details <i>effectively</i>. ❑ You <i>present, integrate, and sustain</i> a coherent controlling idea. ❑ You conclude <i>skillfully</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Your word choice is <i>confident</i>. ❑ You use <i>effective</i> and <i>polished</i> sentence structures. ❑ You make <i>confident</i> stylistic choices. ❑ You use a <i>convincing</i> voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You demonstrate <i>confident</i> control of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. ❑ You write with an <i>impressive lack of errors</i>.
Proficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You present a <i>thoughtful</i> analysis. ❑ You demonstrate a <i>proficient</i> understanding of how film techniques support character transformation. ❑ You provide <i>relevant</i> and <i>accurate</i> support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You arrange your ideas and details <i>appropriately</i>. ❑ You <i>present</i> and <i>sustain</i> a coherent controlling idea. ❑ You <i>conclude appropriately</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Your word choice is <i>engaging</i>. ❑ You use <i>effective</i> sentence structures. ❑ You make <i>competent</i> stylistic choices. ❑ You use a <i>capable</i> voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You demonstrate <i>control</i> of correct sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. ❑ You write with <i>minor</i> errors.
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You present a <i>relevant</i> and <i>straight-forward</i> analysis. ❑ You demonstrate a <i>satisfactory</i> understanding of how film techniques support character transformation. ❑ You provide <i>adequate</i> and <i>general</i> support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You arrange your ideas and details in a <i>straightforward</i> way. ❑ You <i>present</i> and <i>generally maintain</i> a controlling idea; however, <i>coherence may falter</i>. ❑ You conclude <i>functionally</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Your word choice is <i>functional</i>. ❑ You use <i>generally clear</i> sentence structures; attempts at complex structures <i>may be awkward</i>. ❑ You make <i>clear</i> stylistic choices. ❑ You use a <i>matter-of-fact</i> voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You demonstrate control of <i>basic</i> sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. ❑ You write with <i>occasional</i> errors, but communication remains clear.
Limited	<p>Inconsistent inclusion of techniques in your discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You present a <i>superficial</i> analysis. ❑ You demonstrate a <i>weak</i> understanding of how film techniques support character transformation. ❑ You provide <i>inappropriate</i> support, or support that is a <i>restatement</i> of what was taught or read.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You arrange your ideas and details in a <i>ineffectively</i>. ❑ You <i>do not maintain</i> a controlling idea. ❑ You <i>do not</i> conclude deliberately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Your word choice is <i>inappropriate</i>. ❑ You frequently use <i>awkward</i> and/or <i>immature</i> sentence structures. ❑ You make <i>vague</i> and/or <i>unclear</i> stylistic choices. ❑ You use an <i>undiscerning</i> and/or <i>uncritical</i> voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ You demonstrate <i>faltering</i> control of sentence construction, usage, grammar, and mechanics. ❑ You write with a <i>range of errors</i> that <i>blur clarity</i> of communication.

Redo	Your attempt to respond does not address the assignment . You need to contact your teacher so we can discuss your work and your resubmission.			
TOTAL: 36/40 = 90 %	16 /20	10 /10	5 /5	5 /5
Assessment	Areas of strength: You have a clear, consistent, and insightful focus on Kirk's transformation. Your ideas flow well and your integration of quotations into your sentences is seamless. Your focus remains on Kirk's transformation and all of your details support this discussion.			
	Might I suggest: Having a consistent focus on film techniques and how they support each stage of Kirk's transformation is a key component of this assignment. Focus on word choices which are specific and clearly express the idea; replace tired words, such as "sees", "shows", "things," etc.			