

LOLA'S 4.8 FILM ESSAY (RESUBMISSION)



Resubmission

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, a powerless, little man who breaks away from his boring life. Walter takes a journey to find a photographer and a missing negative, and he manages to find himself along the way. Throughout his journey, Walter faces many hardships, each one bringing him closer to the person he really wants to be. In *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, filmmaker Ben Stiller suggests that the ability to face hardship is an essential human quality because it helps us realize who we really are.

A few adjectives add to your summary effectively, Lola. Good choice.

Nice, strong thesis statement. Make sure each body paragraph develops this idea.

In the opening of the film, Walter faces hardships every day, leading to his limited view of his place in the world. The first shot at 00:00:50 shows his chequebook; that tells us that he doesn't have a lot of money, and the money he has, he spends on his family. The director, Ben Stiller, uses *mise-en-scène* to convey Walter's limitations, even in his own home. Everything in his home feels limited, right down to the colours around him. In the opening scene of the film, we see lots of vertical lines. He is internally framed in almost every shot, showing how limited he really is. The colours are all gray and drab, just like him. Walter uses his imagination to avoid these hardships. In his fantasies, he imagines that he is the hero to impress Cheryl Melhoff. The life of the heroic Walter in his fantasies is nothing like Walter's real life.

I like how you bring up the topic of facing hardships specifically in your topic sentence.

Great choice to bring in the cinematic technique, Lola! You explain the effect of the *mise-en-scène* of Walter's home nicely here.

The hardships Walter faces at work aren't any better than his private life. His workspadce is dark, with no windows to the outside world. There, Walter is responsible for all of the photo negatives for *LIFE* magazine. On his birthday, Walter shows up to work and discovers that *LIFE* magazine is closing, for good. The close-up of Walter's eye in the missing space of the negative contact sheet reinforces his limitations (13:21). This negative that is supposed to go on the final cover is missing.

This observation is true, but can you connect this idea to your thesis statement, that "facing hardships helps us realize who we really are"?

Continued

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Sean O'Connell, the photographer, requested the negative be considered for the cover, calling it "my most grand" and "the quintessence of life." It's crucial that this negative is found, but Walter is nervous about going after Sean. Ted Hendricks blames and bullies Walter, calling him "Major Tom" when he catches Walter daydreaming. Cheryl encourages Walter to go to Greenland, saying that Ted calling him "Major Tom" is actually a compliment, because that song is about being brave and going into the unknown. Inspired, Walter decides to head to Greenland to find Sean and hopefully, the missing negative.

Once he makes the decision to go to Greenland, Walter faces many difficult situations. With each hardship he faces, Walter becomes braver and surer of himself. He boards a helicopter flown by a drunken pilot. At first Walter chickens out, but he imagines Cheryl singing "Space Oddity" to him, and that motivates him to jump into the helicopter. This moment is a turning point for Walter, in terms of facing hardships. After he makes that decision, Walter's self-confidence builds. He jumps out of that helicopter, into shark-infested waters, to catch a ship. From the ship, he heads to Iceland and faces an erupting volcano. He returns home, hoping to face Ted and save his friend's job, only to get fired himself. The hardships don't end there. With new information from his mother about Sean's location, Walter heads to ungoverned Afghanistan and climbs the Himalayas, only to find out that he actually had the negative with him most of the time (until he threw the wallet in the trash, that is). Luckily, his mother salvages the wallet, and Walter is able to save the day and bring in the negative.

David Bowie's song, "Space Oddity," appears throughout the film. You explain Cheryl's use of it well.

True, but how does this connect to your thesis?

This idea connects to your thesis statement effectively.

I'm glad to see you shift this example to the "During Transformation" paragraph, as I suggested in your 4.7 Plan. You worked it in here nicely!

We need a concluding statement for this body paragraph that connects to your thesis statement.

Continued

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Revision

Facing all the past hardships gave Walter perspective on his own present hardships. Compared to sharks and erupting volcanoes, Ted doesn't intimidate him anymore. In the past, Walter retreated to fantasy when the real world pressured him. Ben Stiller shows the chaos of changes at LIFE magazine with a spiral shot (1:35:40). For Walter, the office appears to spin, but doesn't seem fearful. Instead of retreating to fantasy, Stiller stops on a close-up of Walter's face. Now, he is confident that he will save the day. Walter doesn't save his job, but he is able to ensure Sean's final tribute to the staff at LIFE magazine is realized, for the world to see. Walter gains respect for himself. He makes positive steps towards a relationship with Cheryl, overcoming a major limitation he faced at the start of the film. The director uses bright lighting around the two of them as they walk together in the final shot, leading the audience to celebrate for Walter. Facing hardships does not always mean that you win every battle, but Walter realizes he has won battles that are truly important.

This topic sentence maintains the focus of your essay effectively, Lola!


Here is a good example of a concluding statement for a body paragraph. It brings closure to the discussion in the body paragraph, and it connects right back to your thesis statement.

Facing hardships made Walter a stronger, more assertive person. At the beginning of the film, everything about his life made him seem small and powerless. He needed encouragement to begin his journey. With each decision he faced a new hardship, but he continued on. He stopped focusing on fantasy, because his real life adventures are so much better. Through his experiences, Walter discovers the person he wants to be. By facing hardships, Walter realizes he can be the hero of his own life. By the end of the film, we sense that he's going to continue living that way.

Boy, I like this observation, Lola! Insightful!

These last three sentences are effective because you connect the character's transformational process to the topic.

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4.8 Film Essay				
Value	Thought and Support	Form and Structure	Matters of Choice	Matters of Correctness <i>Sentence structures, usage, grammar, and mechanics</i>
E Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You present insightful ideas . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your support from the film is precise and effective .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your thesis controls your essay skillfully . <input type="checkbox"/> You develop your ideas and explanations fluently .	<input type="checkbox"/> You use precise and effective diction . <input type="checkbox"/> Your stylistic choices contribute to a convincing voice .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates confident control . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You have few and insignificant errors , given the complexity of your work.
P Proficient	<input type="checkbox"/> You present thoughtful ideas . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the film is specific and relevant .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your thesis controls your essay . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You develop your ideas and explanations coherently .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You use specific and generally effective diction . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your stylistic choices contribute to a competent voice .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates competent control . <input type="checkbox"/> You have minor errors that do not impede clarity in your work.
S Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> You present appropriate ideas . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the film is relevant, but general .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your thesis controls your essay , but focus falters occasionally . <input type="checkbox"/> You develop your ideas and explanations clearly .	<input type="checkbox"/> You use appropriate diction . <input type="checkbox"/> Your stylistic choices contribute to a clear voice .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates basic control . <input type="checkbox"/> You have numerous errors , but your writing is clear.
L Limited	<input type="checkbox"/> You present superficial ideas . <input type="checkbox"/> Your support from the film is over-generalized or lacking relevance .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your thesis appears in your essay , but focus falters frequently . <input type="checkbox"/> You develop your ideas and explanations inadequately .	<input type="checkbox"/> You use imprecise and/or inappropriate diction . <input type="checkbox"/> Your stylistic choices contribute to an uncertain or unclear voice .	<input type="checkbox"/> Your writing demonstrates faltering control . <input type="checkbox"/> You have a range of errors in your work that lead to a lack of clarity .
Resubmission Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Your attempt to respond is insufficient . Contact your teacher to discuss suggestions for improvement and resubmission of your work.			
TOTAL: 64/70 = 91 %	30/30	16/20	8/10	10/10
Assessment 	<p>Areas of strength: What an improvement over your first draft! Your strong thesis statement focused your ideas on the topic. Your observations about Walter's transformation throughout the film are insightful. You made strong choices about specific cinematic techniques and used them to develop your ideas. Often you chose specific diction to suit your purpose, and your control over mechanics and grammar is confident. Excellent work!</p> <p>Might I suggest: Your response has come a long way from your first attempt, Lola. Repeating the key words from the topic sure helped focus your discussion on the topic. Make sure that you have concluding sentences for your body paragraphs that summarize the paragraph and connect to your thesis statement. Doing so will tie your whole essay together more effectively.</p>			