

English 95

Essay #3

Essay Length: Complete, well-developed first draft

Choose one of the topics below and write an essay that responds to it.

Choice One: In "Désirée's Baby," Armand misjudges his wife, and assumes she has black ancestors because of their baby's skin. In "Nobody Knows," the reader makes assumptions about George and Louise based on their gender and class.

Tell about a person whom you have underestimated or misjudged because of their appearance and/or their actions. Then go on to tell about how you came to see this person more clearly, and what this taught you about yourself or other people. Be sure to describe the person's appearance and/or actions in enough detail to convey how your opinion of this person changed, and why.

Choice Two: In "Désirée's Baby," race matters. The slaves are defined and labelled according to how many black ancestors they have, or how light or dark their skin is. Armand abandons Désirée, and she kills herself, because they both believe that she is partly black. Though we would like to believe that we have come a long way since the days of slavery, unfortunately we still live in a world that seems obsessed with race and color.

Tell about a time when your race was either an advantage or a disadvantage for you. Be sure to explain the situation clearly and include what you learned about yourself and other people from the experience, especially regarding the role race plays in our society.

Instructions

1. Read the topic a couple of times and note what it requires you to do. Complete all the tasks of the assignment.
2. Take time to plan and organize your essay before you begin to write. (Scratch outlines are often quite helpful.)
3. Be sure to start with a clear main idea. (In other words, make sure you can answer this question: "What is the main point I want my readers to understand?")
4. Make sure that you support or illustrate general points with specific examples and vivid details from your own experience and from the text (when appropriate).
5. Allow yourself enough time after writing to go back over your essay, check for errors or omissions, and make any necessary corrections.