Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Mrs. Moore-English 7 Unit 1: Extended Response Essay

**Essay: The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963**

**Overview:** The Watson family travels to Birmingham, Alabama to provide Byron with a safer environment where he will be free of negative influences from his friends in Flint. Ironically, there is more danger in Birmingham than there was in their home in Flint, Michigan. Although they aren’t aware of it at the time, the Watson family takes a huge risk by traveling south. **Is it worth it? Is it more harmful than beneficial?**

**Directions:** Construct a well written four paragraph essay in which you **discuss the dangers the family faced and argue whether going to Birmingham was worth the risk?** Discuss what **risks the Watsons took by going to Birmingham and then decide whether it was worth it for them to go down south in 1963.**

**You must include:**

* **An introduction where you introduce your essay clearly stating your thesis statement using a TAG sentence.**
* **TWO body paragraphs that include:**

**Direct quotes and references from the novel, as well as direct quotes/evidence from the nonfiction article or source (you may also use the Epilogue of the novel).**

* **Body paragraph 1: Explain why the Watsons go to Birmingham**
* **Body Paragraph 2: Tell what was happening in Birmingham in 1963.**
* **Conclusion: Restate the thesis (TAG statement) and give closure to your essay. You may want to include how the trip to Birmingham changed a character(s) in the novel.**

\*Since this is your first big essay, we will be doing a portion of the writing together in class.

\*Use the graphic organizers provided, along with your notes, study guides, articles, outlines and anything else you may have to organize your essay.

\*Use relevant examples from the text (text based details) and refer back to your thesis.

\*Use appropriate transitions (transition reference chart in your binder).

\*Be neat, organized and always use correct grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

**Introduction Paragraph:**

Give brief background information and include a TAG statement**.**

**The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis is a historical fiction novel that takes place during the Civil Rights Movement.**

**STATE YOUR CLAIM:** Based on the evidence on the previous page which side of the argument will you take in your essay? Was the trip **worth it (beneficial)** or **not worth it (harmful)**? (No I statements. This is your thesis statement. Make your position clear).

**Overall, it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_for the Watson family to take the trip to Birmingham, Alabama.**

**PROVE YOUR CLAIM** with facts using text based details. Why is the trip **worth it (beneficial) or not worth it (harmful)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**BODY PARAGRAPH 1: From the novel**

**Topic Sentence:** Explain the purpose of the trip.

**The purpose of the Watson family’s trip was to find a safer environment for Byron. Unfortunately, Byron was hanging out with friends who had a negative influence on him and he was always getting into trouble in Michigan.** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Your text based details from below will be written on these lines followed by your concluding sentence).\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Finally, Byron needed to leave Flint, Michigan.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Give textual evidence (details and quotes) to show why they needed to go to Birmingham. You need at least two specific details with elaboration.

**Text based detail #1** showing the risks of traveling south for the Watsons from the novel:

Explanation of how/why this detail demonstrates risk:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Text based detail #2** showing the risks of traveling south for the Watsons from the novel:

Explanation of how/why this detail demonstrates risk:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**BODY PARAGRAPH 2: From the article/epilogue**

**Topic Sentence:** Explain that Birmingham was a dangerous place in 1963.

**Birmingham, Alabama was a dangerous place in 1963 for various reasons.** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Your text based details from below will be written on these lines followed by your concluding sentence).\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_**

**As a result, the Watsons had no idea how truly dangerous Birmingham, Alabama was in 1963.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Give textual evidence (details and quotes) to support why Birmingham was a dangerous place in 1963. Be sure to cite your sources of information and include at least two specific details with elaboration. You need at least two specific details with elaboration.

Text based **detail #1** that demonstrates the risk of being in the south during the 1960’s from the article:

**The article “The Day The Children Died” by Kyle Smith, Gail Cameron and David Cobb describes the devastating bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham in great detail.**

Explanation of how/why this detail demonstrates risk:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Text based **detail #2** that demonstrates the risk of being in the south during the 1960’s from the article:

Explanation of how/why this detail demonstrates risk:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Paragraph**: Restate the thesis and bring closure to your essay. Discuss which character(s) has changed as a result of the trip to Birmingham? Include at least one detail with elaboration.

**As one can conclude, it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(worth it/beneficial or not worth it/harmful) **for the Watson family to take the trip to Birmingham, Alabama.**

Was it worth the risk? Why or why not? Include text based details from the novel and explain how these details support your statement.

Which character changed as a result of the trip to Birmingham? Provide at least one text based detail with elaboration.