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Five Kinds of Writing

Assignment 10:

Working together in your group, write five versions of the event implied below. You will be writing to inform, describe, persuade, narrate and report.

You must research the French Revolution, as well as the individual mentioned, what newspapers were available and so on.

She was just a petite thing, probably no more than four or five years old. Yet, people simply turned their heads away as she lay there in the gutter. No one asked how she died - and no one even tried to cover her little face nor bothered to call the police. It was late in the eighteenth century, and the dead girl was simply another child perishing in the Paris streets of Revolutionary France. There were many of those - orphaned, abandoned, unprotected, and a source of continual annoyance to the merchants from whose stalls they regularly stole food. Yet - somehow, her awful plight has touched a nerve - a part of your sympathetic nature that you thought you had lost in these desperate times - and you decide that you will use her tragic little anonymous death, to awaken some kind of public or private discomfort - to perhaps start people thinking about what must be done to ease the suffering of the growing army of street children in Paris.

1. A Narrative.

You are a novelist. You are already writing a book about France's children and their uncertain futures. You decide to add her story - a fictional representation of it - as another chapter in your book.

2. A Description

You are an artist. You know that the child's body will be picked up soon and that, in any case, no matter how hardened the citizens of Paris are becoming, they would be outraged if you were to set up your easel and stand here in the street making a picture of the child's lifeless body. So you quickly make a charcoal sketch of the child and her surroundings and you go home to produce an engraving of the pitiful sight. This you send to the newspaper, with a 750 word essay describing the scene and the child and the crowds - in detail. You must make good use of all sensory details such as sounds, smell, taste, emotions and feelings.

3. Writing to Inform

You are an advisor to Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, and you know that while she has been taking a great deal of criticism for her alleged comment, "Let them eat cake," that she did not, in fact, say any such thing. She is eager to find out all she can about the sorry state of the Paris citizens. You go back to your office and spend the afternoon, writing a compelling 750 word essay, to inform the Queen of this incident and of its increasingly common occurrence.

4. **Writing to Persuade**

You are a concerned citizen who is watching with horror as the French Revolution rolls on-crushing the people of France as it goes. This little girl's body, lying in the streets, seems to symbolize the state of the country's disintegration, and fills you with a certain despair - a compelling urge to DO SOMETHING - anything that will stop this devastation of France. You write a passionate letter to Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794) who was one of the leaders of the Committee of Public Safety... begging him to attend to this dreadful situation.

5. **Writing a Report**

You are the member of the Paris GENDARMES, who has been sent to deal with this increasingly common event. You write a statement for your superior in which you report on the site, the disinterested crowds, the attitudes and the most likely causes of death. Your report is brief, objective - to the point - but although you have seen much death, and have hardened your heart so that you do not break down on the job - your sympathy goes out to this dead child - close in age to your own little girl.

Interested? Read *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Anderson.

A Day in the Life.....

Assignment 8:

Within your assigned groups, work together to research the circumstances of the lives of the following six children [one child per group.]

Then prepare to present your results as: A Day in the Life of _____ [the assigned child] to the entire class.

In your group, you are asked to write together, a monologue .

Choose one student to “be your character” and s/he will read or recite the monologue which will tell in detail about his/her day from the time s/he awakens in the morning, until s/he falls asleep at night.. As a group, you will be evaluated on the correctness and completeness of the historical or factual material you present in the monologue- on the costume you make for your character - on the answers of your whole group, to the questions posed by the rest of the class , after your presentation. You will be wise to be very well prepared and to know your era and your info fully.

Group One:

It is winter of 1999. You live in Bangladesh. You are eight years old, the eldest remaining child in your family. Your parents have five children younger than you - and have already sold the three who are older into bondage - to a factory owner from Pakistan. They have been very careful with the money they received for the other children, but now it has run out, and it is your turn. You don't want to go, but your father says you must and he drags you out into the street so the factory owner can pinch your arms and legs - look in your mouth and get a good look in sunlight, at the rest of your body. Money exchanges hands and you are placed in the back of a van with 20 other half naked kids from 4 to 15 years of age. It is 6:00 AM - This is a day in your life-----.

Group Two:

It is the summer of 1999. You are an orphaned refugee from a small village in Kosovo, - just a small boy of nine who has seen horrors that Canadians of any age, cannot even imagine. Your parents, your grandparents, and your siblings are dead; your home was burned down around them, and you have survived only because you went for water and were absent when the Serbs crashed into your door. You have tagged along with the thousands of Kosovoan refugees , filling the roads and highways, marching towards the borders to find refuge from ethnic cleansing. Now, safely across the border, you spend your days and nights standing at the exit from Kosovo, where you hope to see someone you know - anyone - anyone at all, who will let you accompany him/her, because you are all alone in an angry world. This is that day in your life....