

FORMAL OUTLINE: *Essay 2*

- I. The author wrote a nostalgic story about baseball.
  - A. The story is about replacing AstroTurf with real grass.
    - 1. Introduce author and title of story.
    - 2. Introduce the plot and focus on ideas related to the thesis such as nature, tradition and nostalgia.
  - B. The author is telling us a fantasy that uses the replacement of artificial turf with real grass as a metaphor for his love for baseball. He realizes that his opinion is entirely subjective but he justifies his opinion with the concepts of nostalgia, tradition, and nature.
    - 1. Discuss the evidence for the view of opinions as subjective.
    - 2. Highlight the nostalgic elements of the story.
    - 3. Explore the ideas of nature and tradition and how they're interrelated.
- II. The individual subjectivity of the author's perspective is expressed by his fantasy.
  - A. Fantasy setting gives unique insight into the narrator's mind.

- 1. The narrator tells us of a scenario that would probably never happen in real life, but he makes it seem plausible while also expressing his opinion on what should happen.
  - 2. "He, like me, is a first-base-side fan. I've always watched baseball from behind first base. The positions fans choose during sporting events are like politics, religion, philosophy: a view of the world, a way of seeing the universe. They make no sense to anyone, have no basis in anything but stubbornness." p. 341. Use to show author's opinion on subjectivity.
  - 3. The narrator is keenly aware of the subjectivity of opinions, but he believes his view is justified by nostalgia, tradition, and nature.
- B. Daughters watch baseball from different positions, but he raised them to watch behind first base.

- 1. One daughter from first base the other from third base.
- 2. Love and nostalgia are reasons for having his view.

- III. The author has nostalgic love for the traditional way baseball was played.
  - A. The author misses the days when baseball was played on real grass.
    - 1. The narrator's plan to replace all the AstroTurf stems from his youth watching baseball being played on grass.
    - 2. "... 'What do you think of artificial turf?' 'Hmmm,' he snorts, 'that's what the strike should be about. Baseball is meant to be played on summer evenings and Sunday afternoons, on grass just cut by a horse-drawn mower,' and we smile and our eyes meet." p. 342. Use to demonstrate the author's nostalgia for real grass.
  - B. The narrator is nostalgic for his youth when he imagined himself being a famous baseball player.
    - 1. "I am a failed shortstop. As a young man, I saw myself diving to my left, graceful as a toppling tree, feilding high grounders like a cat leaping for

butterflies, bracing my right foot and tossing to first, the throw true as if a steel ribbon connected my hand to and the first baseman's glove. I dreamed of leading the American league in hitting—being inducted into the hall of fame. I batted .217 in my senior year of high school and averaged 1.3 errors per nine innings.” p. 340. Use to support

2. His youth spent playing baseball may be a reason he is nostalgic for real grass.

IV. Nature is an important reason that the author uses to justify using real grass

A. The grass is a part of nature, it is a living thing that is intimately connected with baseball.

1. “It was an evil day when they stripped the sod from this ballpark, cut it into yard wide swaths, rolled it, memories and all, into great green-and-black cinnamon roll shapes, tucked it away. Nature temporarily defeated. But nature is patient.” p. 341.
2. The simple fact that grass is alive grants it a quality of regeneration that AstroTurf lacks.
3. Grass is representative of the permanence and power of nature.

B. The author thinks that grass feels better than AstroTurf

1. “I stride down from the stands and walk out to the middle of the field. I touch the stubble that is called grass, take off my shoes, but find it is like walking on a row of toothbrushes.” p. 341. Use to confirm author's opinion.
2. The author believes that grass is better for the players when they slide.

V. Nature, nostalgia, and tradition are the reasons that the author believes real grass is better than AstroTurf, but underlying it all is love for baseball.

A. Love for baseball is the true reason the narrator wants to replace the AstroTurf in the stadium.

1. Nostalgia is one facet of the narrator's love for baseball.
2. Tradition is very important for the author's sense of grass as the superior groundcover.
3. Nature is possibly the most important reason for the author because it is overriding.