

English 12: Synthesis of Text

Scale: 4

Comment: This “4” paper is well-written. It presents a solid discussion of each piece, but offers only a limited synthesis, found mainly in the conclusion.

An optimistic outlook on life can bring happiness and imagination to one’s life even in times of sadness and sorrow. Optimism is a state of mind that can only be produced by oneself.

In the excerpt from “Circus in Town,” by Sinclair Ross, the character Jenny uses optimism to power her imagination. Coming from a family struggling with poverty during the depression, Jenny lives an uneventful life, compared to other children. This makes the finding of a poster advertising the circus, along with the possibility that she may be able to see it first hand almost unimaginable. At first Jenny is ecstatic. She imagines a whole new world that she has never seen before, one that will fill her life with happiness and hope for her future. However, once arriving home, Jenny’s parents bitter outlook on life and refusal to attend the circus breaks Jenny’s heart. In the end, Jenny is able to take an optimistic approach to the situation. Heading out to the barn with the circus poster she lies with the animals and pictures herself at the circus.

In “ ‘Happyness for Sale’, ” by Jia Lynn Yang Chris Gardner uses optimism to stay alive. Making just \$1000 a month Gardner took care of his son as a solo parent, while living out of shelters and occasionaly bathrooms. Not knowing what the next day would bring Chris never stopped believing that he would make it. Painstakingly he worked his way up from an internship to opening his own brokerage firm only 5 short years later. Gardner’s optimistic outlook kept him going through the difficult times. He could have given up when most people would have, but he was determined and persevered to get what he wanted for himself and his family. Today Gardner’s story is well known and he has many people asking for help in their times of trouble. Gardner does what he can to spread his optimism to others who need it and never forgets that his optimism is what got him here today.

An optimistic viewpoint of life does not always equal success but is more likely attainable when you have a positive outlook on life. Optimism is an important factor for people to live happy lives. Most live optimistic lives but unfortunately for some, optimism can not be bought in a store, but must come from within.