

English 12: Synthesis of Text

Scale: 5

Comment: This paper was awarded a 5 because there is clear evidence of synthesis at an interpretive level. There is sophisticated vocabulary, interpretation of both texts and a solid thesis.

In “ ‘Happyness’ for Sale” by Jia Lynn Yang and “Circus in Town” by Sinclair Ross the main characters Jenny and Chris both live in a harsh world that tells them they will never succeed. Despite the efforts of others and reality Chris and Jenny do not falter in achieving their dreams. Chris overcomes the fact that he is a single father lacking the best education and attempts at creating for himself a future to be jealous of. Jenny works against the debts her parents carry that keep her from enjoying the simple things of a normal childhood such as going to the circus.

Jenny from the story, “Circus in Town” is a young girl living in the time of The Depression. Her parents are incredibly broke and have a pile up of unpaid bills. When a wide-eyed Jenny begs her parents to let her go to the circus. Listening to her parents argue against each other about all the things they wish would happen and what they could only dream of being financially able. Although Jenny could have listened to her parents saying it was an impossibility and Jenny could never enjoy such things, she overcomes that and remains hopeful. Instead of suffering a harsh fate she goes to her own circus.

Chris Gardner from “ ‘Happyness’ for Sale” is a poor salesman striving to pay the bills when his wife leaves him on his own with a young son to take care of. When he can no longer afford an apartment or childcare he lives on the street and sleeps anywhere they can. Despite people pushing him down and telling him change is simply not a possibility for people like him, Chris reaches for his goal. He remains forever optimistic as he gives up anything he has left for the smallest possibility of change. His mind overcomes matter and in the end that changes his life.

Despite the fact that the entire world is telling Chris and Jenny that they can’t, the fact that they could even dream of or hope for such things already proves something to the world. Their optimism makes them ultimately different when it comes down to it and their optimism changes their lives.