

Essay # 1 - Family Conflicts

We know from our experiences, reading, and class discussions, that families take many diverse forms. So, it makes sense that families will experience and deal with conflict in a number of different ways.

Can the ways a family deals with conflict tell us anything about what's important to that family, what the family values? Write an essay in which you compare and/or contrast conflict in a family you know (yours or one you've observed) with conflict depicted by a television family. What can you conclude about the different or similar ways each family deals with conflict?

Your essay should include (not necessarily in this order):

- An overall point, a thesis or controlling idea that helps focus your whole essay (This should reflect your perspective, your view on the different or similar ways the television and real family handle conflict(s).)
- A specific, detailed example (or examples) of a conflict or difficulty in a particular family (yours or one you know). You *may* use the example you wrote about in your first sample essay, but you don't have to.
- Explanation of what your example shows. What does this example show about how this family deals with conflict? Does it tell us anything about what's important to the family you are writing about or about the difficulties of families today? Does your example illustrate or contradict any of the points from our readings?
- Specific, detailed examples (or one extended example) of how conflict is depicted by a television family (or families).
- Explanation of what your example(s) of television families shows. Can you make any generalizations about this family based on how they handle conflict? What seems to be important to them? Again, how can you connect your observations to points from the readings?
- Explanation of how the conflict in the family you know compares and/or contrasts to conflict played out in a television family.
- Discussion of at least one point about families raised by Rosalind C. Barnett and Caryl Rivers in their article "The New Nostalgia." How do the examples from your own family and/or television family help you understand, agree, or disagree with one or more of the points made in the "The New Nostalgia"?
- So what? What's interesting or significant about the differences you saw between television and real life families? What have you learned? What final thoughts do you want your readers to take away from your essay?

You will be evaluated on

- your ability to respond to the readings, especially "The New Nostalgia",
- your organization of your paper (thesis, topic sentences, paragraph organization),
- your development (complete, detailed examples and explanations),
- sentence structure (use of details and coordinators),
- proofreading (grammar and spelling errors).

Peer Review: Monday, Jan. 30 or Tuesday, Jan. 31. You must bring a draft to class of at least 3 double-spaced typed pages.

Essay Due: Wednesday, Feb 1 or Tuesday, Feb. 2 Final draft of 3-5 typed pages; attach rough draft.