

Literary Essay  
 based on the book:  
The Race

Heather Klassen's short story, 'The Race,' teaches readers the importance that winning isn't everything. In the race, two boys named Brett and Todd are teamed up in a boat race. At the end, Todd helps a little boy cross the finish line, and learns the importance that winning isn't everything. Brett still wants to win, though. He is upset that this was their last year, and they did not get in first place. Some people might think that this story is about two boys who are in a boat race. But I think it is much deeper than that. I think 'The Race' teaches readers that winning isn't everything.

Early in the text, there is evidence of the importance that winning isn't everything. This is shown by Todd not really caring if he and Brett win in first place this last year. (This is their last year.) Todd sort of wanted to win, but not as much as Brett. This shows that Brett cared more about winning than Todd did.

Later in the text, there is more evidence of the importance that winning isn't everything. For example, Todd realizes that there is a little boy who is almost eight years old, who is struggling with his boat. Todd remembers when he was the boy's age, struggling as well. He did not even create his boat well, and even worse, he was alone. Todd wants to help him. This shows that Todd

→ about the boy.

At the end of the story, there is even more evidence of the importance that winning isn't everything. For example, Todd and Brett turn their boat around, to the starting line, and go help the little boy. Even though Brett disagrees to do that. (Todd told Brett that the boy was struggling, and he wanted to go and help.) Evidence from the story was, "Winning isn't everything." And as the little boy looked at Todd and smiled, Todd knew he meant it. This shows that Todd cared about the boy, and the boy appreciated.

Heather Klasser's short story, 'The Race', teaches readers the importance that winning isn't everything. My connection to that is: I have a little sister, and I try to teach her that winning isn't everything. (She is only four years old, though.) When I was little, I pretty much learned that too.

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\*CCSS - Common Core State Standards alignment ("W" = Writing strand; "RIT" = Reading - Informational Text; "L" = Language strand)  
 CA Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Alignment



# The Race - Essay

Keith  
#27  
10-23-

In the story called The Race Todd is helpful when he helps Brett make the boat, helps control their boat, and helps the little 8 year old boy to get to the finish line.

Todd is helpful when he helped Brett make the boat. Todd and Brett are on a team in a race where they have to make boats out of milk carton. Todd and Brett had to waterproof every single carton. Do you know how long it would take for Brett to do it all by himself? Probably a long time but Todd was very helpful and helped him finish.

Todd is very helpful when he helps control their boat. Brett could never steer the boat by himself and if he can't steer it by himself he can't control it by himself. Brett said to Todd "wait if you leave me alone on this boat, we can't win the race!" But Todd would not let that stop him from helping the little boy.

Todd is also helpful when he helped the 8 year old boy cross the finish line. The 8 year old boy was barely across start when Todd told Brett he was going to help him before he drifted out to sea. With a little team work they help the boy get past the finish line even though it meant they would lose. The little boy was grateful he knew that they lost because of him but he explained that winning isn't everything.

I learned that you should help people even if it costs you a victory. I also learned to be kind to everyone even if you don't know them.



EGUSD – Informational/Explanatory Text-Based Rubric, Grade 5

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# The

In the story "The Race," Brett is a selfish snob. He is acting selfish because in the book, all Brett wants to do is win because this is the last year he and Todd can race in the kid division.

In the beginning of "The Race," Brett is talking to his friend Todd while they were placing their milk carton boat on the start line. An example from that scene is when Brett says "This is it Todd. This year we have to win. We've built the best boat out here." When he says that, it proves that he can be selfish.

In the middle of the story, an example of Brett being selfish is when Todd tells Brett they should turn around to help the little boy because he hadn't made it past the start line. Brett didn't want to turn



around because they were close to the finish line. He didn't want to lose again. That's how Brett was selfish in the middle of the story.

In the end Brett gave up and helped the little boy. He wasn't very selfish in the end, but I know Brett was mad they had lost the race. It was their last year in the kids division, so Brett was going to have to try harder to win a competition in the next division.

Brett may have been selfish but deep down inside, he is a very kind and helpful person. Have you helped someone lately?

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