Discovery Honors English

Jolly

**Abraham Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs” in the movies**

*Directions:*

Pick a movie to watch where the main character meets some ultimate goal (self-actualization OR self-transcendence). Watch the movie and note how the character moves through each level of the hierarchy of needs. Try to choose a movie (see list below) that you have never watched before so you can get a good grasp of Maslow’s theory and expose yourself to something new, rather than just reviewing your favorite film.

*Written Notes:*

1. Include a synopsis of the movie and what the overall “challenge” is that the character faces.
2. Compare the main character in the film to each level of the hierarchy of needs. List specific examples of how the character met or achieved each level and then identify their overall self-actualizing moment. What do they discover about themselves?
3. Identify specific moments when the character is being motivated *intrinsically* and *extrinsically* and how those moments contribute to their overall success.
4. Finally, think about how Maslow’s hierarchy could explain part of your life. Either list a goal you have achieved and how you fulfilled the steps toward your goal *or* identify how you are working toward self-actualization and list some examples of each level that will help you to get to the top. What does Maslow’s hierarchy mean to you and how can you continue to use it in your life?

*Format:*

1. Prepare a short speech (1-2 minutes) for the class based upon your analysis. Use your notes from above to do this. Start with an anecdote from your own life as the hook, then follow the usual outline for speeches which we’ve practiced several times. You can only bring a printed outline for your speech with you.

Note, this is NOT a group project.  Each person must do their own analysis & prepare their own speech.  However, you may choose to watch & analyze a film with a group of friends, then each of you chooses a different character to focus upon. Choose a film carefully if you do this; the supporting characters in most films are simple foils who aren’t developed enough to demonstrate Maslow’s theory. Pick one with well-developed supporting characters, such as *Star Wars* or the *Lord of the Rings*.

*\*Below is a list of some that are perfect for this assignment\**

The Nightmare Before Christmas

Erin Brokovich

ANY Disney film

Castaway

ANY Lord of the Rings Films

ANY Star Wars Film

The Dead Poet’s Society

BIG

The Truman Show

The Majestic

The Wizard of Oz

The Matrix

The Sandlot

Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory

Edward Scissorhands

Field of Dreams

For Love of the Game

The Family Man

The Goonies

The Blindside

Up!

Despicable Me

We Bought a Zoo

Apollo 13

Rain Man

Chef

Ratatouille