



### Introduction

It's inarguably **human nature** to **explore** the unknown. This **desire** has manifested itself as sailors set to the seas to search for new lands, and as—in more recent history—astronauts have broken through the atmosphere on quests to **explore the observable universe**. And yet, the **unknown** is not limited to concrete, physical destinations; rather, it extends to how individuals wrestle with the most enigmatic area of their lives: **death**. Throughout generations, **artists** have been at the forefront of exploring and reasoning with death, in all of its forms, and this has rapidly increased recently due to the rise in the **consumption of entertainment**: ominous and foreboding creations have become remarkably **profitable**, especially around Halloween. Now, some argue that the consistent bombardment of horrific images and deathly contemplations is producing a society that is either overly **anxious** or **desensitized**, while others suggest that creating and consuming such media is just one of the ways that humans **learn to deal with** life and the inevitable end that claims all.

### Assignment

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source.

Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on how commercializing **fear** and **horror** affects the ways **individuals** respond to the unknown and macabre.

### Directions:

Make sure that your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

- Source A (Poster)
- Source B (Jarrett)
- Source C (“How Watching”)
- Source D (“Violence”)
- Source E (Christensen)
- Source F (Keane)

## Breaking Down the Prompt

Steps	Information
<p><i>Step 1: Collect Ideas worth Arguing</i></p> <p>Search the background information and the command of the prompt itself. When doing so, circle or identify any language that is either an idea noun*, or implies a particular idea. This step will be important when it comes to source evaluation. See the <a href="#">Argue Ideas, not Things</a> GOE video.</p> <p>*If you are looking for a non-comprehensive list of idea nouns, scroll down to the end of this packet. Don't forget to check out the Garden of English <a href="#">Ideas Worth Arguing</a> poster for a more-colorful, classroom option.</p>	<p><b>Human Nature</b>  <i>Desire</i>  <i>Adventure</i>  <b>The Unknown</b>  <i>Death/Life</i>  <i>Art</i>  <i>Consumerism</i>  <b>Entertainment</b>  <i>Economics</i>  <b>Horror/Fear</b>  <i>Anxiety</i>  <i>(De) Sensitivity</i>  <b>Adaptation</b>  <i>Education</i>  <b>Inevitability</b>  <i>Individuality</i></p>
<p><i>Step 2: The Springboard</i></p> <p>Read the prompt and identify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions and perspectives about the issue(s) presented</li> <li>• Assumptions based on the presentation of information and the prompt itself (especially following the words “argues a position on...”)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: You do not have to agree with the assumptions that are presented in the prompt.</i></p>	<p><u>Positions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Horror-based entertainment negatively influences humans.</i></li> <li>• <i>Horror-based entertainment is a coping mechanism for those trying to understand death.</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Assumptions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Humans are adventurous by nature.</i></li> <li>• <i>Death is a mysterious part of life.</i></li> <li>• <i>Popular Media and Consumerism influences how individuals respond to the world.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's conceivably acceptable to profit off of horror-based entertainment.</i></li> </ul>
<p><i>Step 3: Initial Thoughts</i></p> <p>Look at the identified positions and assumptions and quickly mark whether you agree (+), disagree (-), or partially (+/-) with them.</p> <p><i>Note: This will help you as you develop your argument, search for source material, and write your thesis later.</i></p>	<p><u>Positions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Horror-based entertainment negatively influences humans. (+)</i></li> <li>• <i>Horror-based entertainment is an appropriate coping mechanism for those trying to understand death. (+/-)</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Assumptions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Humans are adventurous by nature. (+)</i></li> <li>• <i>Death is a mysterious part of life. (+)</i></li> <li>• <i>Popular Media and Consumerism influences how individuals respond to the world. (+)</i></li> <li>• <i>It's conceivably acceptable to profit off of horror-based entertainment. (-)</i></li> </ul>

<p><i>Step 4: The Command</i></p> <p>Identify what you are commanded to do when you write your essay. This command always begins with the language “argues a position on” and goes to the end of the sentence.</p>	<p><i>[Develop] your position on how commercializing fear and horror affects the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre.</i></p>
<p><i>Step 5: The Conquer Question(s)</i></p> <p>From <i>The Command</i>, create a question (or questions) that you have to answer in order to accurately respond to the prompt. This is done by looking at the language in <i>The Command</i> and asking, “What can’t I know until I articulate it in my thesis?”</p> <p><i>Note: It is best to start this question with the word “What”; however, you may also begin it with the word “How.”</i></p>	<p><b>Command:</b>  <i>[Develop] your position on how commercializing fear and horror affects the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre.</i></p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What affects does horror-based entertainment have on an individual’s response to the unknown and macabre?</i></li> <li>2. <i>What are the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre?</i></li> <li>3. <i>What is my position about this relationship?        (This will be naturally articulated when you combine your answers to questions 1 and 2 in your initial claim and thesis)</i></li> </ol>
<p><i>Step 6: The Initial Reaction</i></p> <p>Great! You have really thought about the prompt’s construction and what you are to do with it. Now it’s time to produce your gut response (even if it’s emotionally charged and not quite reasonable). This initial response may turn into a more complex thesis, or it may change based on the source material you then read. No matter what, though, you’ll definitely have to make it more sophisticated; more on that at a later time.</p>	<p><i>Marketing and normalizing fear and horror negatively influences moral development.</i></p>

## Universal Ideas

Addiction	Fear	Pride
Alienation	Fidelity	Progress
Ambition	Freedom	Purity
Anarchy	Friendship	Race
Apathy	Gluttony	Reality
Apostasy	Grace	Rebirth
Atonement	Greed	Redemption
Beauty	Growth	Regret
Belonging	Hate	Renewal
Betrayal	Heresy	Respect
Brotherhood	Heroism	Revenge
Change	Hope	Salvation
Chaos	Humility	Savagery
Community	Identity	Secrecy
Companionship	Imagination	Sin
Conformity	Immorality	Sloth
Corruption	Individuality	Solidarity
Courage	Infidelity	Solitude
Curiosity	Innocence	Stability
Death	Jealousy	Struggle
Defiance	Justice	Submission
Desire	Judgment	Success
Destruction	Knowledge	Suppression
Dishonesty	Life	Survival
Disobedience	Longing	Temptation
Disbelief	Loyalty	Tradition
Dominance	Lust	Trust
Doubt	Madness	Truth
Duty	Materialism	Vanity
Dystopia	Maturation	Vengeance
Ego	Mortality	War
Empathy	Obligation	Work
Encouragement	Obsession	
Enlightenment	Patriotism	<b>Etc.</b>
Eternity	Peace	
Failure	Perseverance	
Faith	Poverty	
Family	Power	
Fantasy	Predestination	

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