

Culminating Writing Task Prompt

What is the authors' perspective or purpose for writing *Sugar Changed the World* and how do they respond to conflicting viewpoints?

To answer this question:

- Examine the authors' word choice to determine their tone or attitude toward the various topics discussed in the text.
- Evaluate how the text is organized and developed, including how specific paragraphs and sentences develop and refine the authors' ideas surrounding the discovery, use, popularity, and impact of sugar and where evidence supports the authors' ideas or there is irrelevant or insufficient evidence.
- Determine a central idea of *Sugar Changed the World* and how the authors convey that central idea through their tone and organization and development.
- Identify places in the text in which the authors acknowledge or respond to perspectives different from their own.

Write an essay that explains how the authors convey their perspective or purpose in writing *Sugar Changed the World*, including how they respond to conflicting viewpoints. Be sure to use proper grammar, conventions, spelling, and grade-appropriate words and phrases. Cite several pieces of textual evidence, including direct quotations and parenthetical citations.

Analyzing the Prompt:

1. What kind of prompt is this?

Argumentative

2. What is the central idea of the text?

Sugar has had both positive and negative impacts on the world.

3. What supporting ideas and conflicting ideas might you want to write about?

- Supporting ideas: 1. Sugar and slavery lead to the Age of Freedom 2. The life of an enslaved person was brutal and dangerous.
- Conflicting ideas: 1. Myth of the use of sugar as a spice 2. "Triangle" versus "spherical" trade.

4. What are some examples of how the authors develop and respond to these ideas?

- Foreshadowing at the end of a paragraph or section
- Vivid details to portray the life of someone forced into slavery
- Direct acknowledgment and disproving of conflicting ideas

Organizing Ideas

Claim

The authors develop the central idea - that sugar had a positive and negative impact on the world - in an engaging and accessible way for the reader, and respond to conflicting ideas by directly addressing and disproving these ideas in the text.



Reason 1

The authors use foreshadowing of events in the history of sugar at the end of paragraphs or sections to motivate the reader to keep reading.

The authors use vivid language to develop the central idea by painting a picture of greed and brutality in the practice of slavery on sugar plantations.

Reason 2

While developing the central idea, the authors also respond to conflicting ideas in the text in a direct manner.

“So to get the fabrics that would buy the slaves that could be sold for sugar for the English to put into their tea, the Spanish shipped silver to the Philippines, and the French, English, and Dutch sailed east to India. What we call a triangle was really as round as the globe.” (37)

Reason 3 (Counterclaim)

Some readers may feel that the text is too academic and contains too much historical background. However, the way the authors bring themselves into the beginning and end of the text and make themselves part of sugar’s history makes the work feel less like a textbook and more like the authors are sitting with the reader, telling a story.



Evidence

“And indeed, it was when the enslaved Africans began to speak - in words and in actions - when Europeans began to see them as human, that the Age of Sugar also became the Age of Freedom.” (70)

Evidence

“Even though one book after another repeats this myth, the popularity of spices had nothing to do with disguising the taste of meat or fish that had gone bad.” (19-21)

Evidence

“We realized that our two family stories - Marina’s great-grandparents, brought to Guyana to replace slaves, and Marc’s aunt’s grandfather, helping to refine an alternative to that same sugar - were just the beginning of a much larger story about a remarkable substance.”(6)

<p>“Sugar plantations were Hell because of the endless labor they demanded from slaves. They were Hell because of the many dangers and the injuries that they caused. They were Hell because the slaves who labored without end got nothing for their work - except to live another day, to work more.” (61)</p>		
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Reasoning	Reasoning	Reasoning
<p>The authors build up the idea that there is a turning point coming - as the Age of Sugar turns into the Age of Freedom - and then end the section, leaving the reader with questions about what will come next and how this transition happens.</p> <p>The authors use repetition of the phrase “were Hell” to emphasize to the reader the awful conditions in which the enslaved Africans were forced to work and live.</p>	<p>The authors directly disprove this idea by arguing that anyone who could afford sugar at the time could have also afford fresh meat and the use of sugar would not have covered the smell and taste of rotting meat.</p> <p>This shows that the exchange of goods between countries was not as simple as the three connections of a triangle, but really consisted of a number of different connections, crisscrossing the world.</p>	<p>This shows that the authors’ interest in the subject is personal, and this changes how the reader views the text. It is almost like the authors become characters, like in a fiction text.</p>