**File Name: O5R Roll of Thunder**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 5**

**Range of Writing**

**Book Response on Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry**

**Introduces the text clearly** by providing some background information about the time period, as well as the quote on which the response is based

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor takes place in Mississippi in the 1930’s, a time when segregation was present. Some of the characters in this story are: the Logans (Cassie, Stacey, Little Man, Christopher John, Mama, and Papa), T.J. Avery, and Mr. Morrison. In the book, one of the characters, Mr. Morrison says, “In those years I suppose it was just as hard being free as it was being a slave.” In this book response, I am going to use examples from the book to help explain why I agree with that quote.

**States an opinion**

 One of the examples to support the quote is Soldiers Bridge. Soldiers Bridge is a bridge on which white men have power over black men. The bridge has only one lane for only one car. If two people with the same skin color meet at the bridge, the person who reached the bridge first gets to go first. If a white and a black meet at the bridge, the white automatically gets to go first, always. This is true even if the black wagon/car is halfway across the bridge. The blacks would have to back off the bridge, and allow the whites to cross! This makes them feel like slaves obligated to obey their masters’ commands.

**Provides logically ordered reasons** for the opinion **that are supported by details** from the text.

 Another example is Mama losing her job. Mama lost her job as a school teacher because Mr. Granger, who is the school district manager (and who also wants the Logans’ land) claimed that Mama was teaching inappropriate information at the school, and should not be teaching anymore. Mr. Granger is white, and he feels strongly that whites are better than blacks. Mama was teaching about slavery and how black women/men were treated unfairly. He wanted a reason to fire her because without her paycheck, the Logans would not have enough money to pay the taxes for their land, and he might be able to get it.

**Links opinion and reasons using words and phrases**

 Another example is the Jefferson School Bus (the white school’s bus) that drives past Cassie, Stacey, Christopher John, and Little Man every morning as they walk to school. The driver and the children make fun of the Logans and laugh at them. If it has rained the night before, the driver would speed up and splash mud at the Logans. The Logan children felt mad, and humiliated, but they could do nothing to stop the white bus driver from doing this. They were like slaves, because they had no control over what was happening to them.

 Yet another example to support Mr. Morrison’s idea, is the Wallace store. The Wallace store is the local store where people shop (and which also sells alcoholic beverages). Most of the white men gather at the Wallace Store to drink, smoke, and play cards. If black skinned people were to enter the Wallace Store, the drinkers and smokers would insult them by calling them names, like “nigger” and they would make fun of them. The blacks would also always be served last. This is like Soldiers Bridge, because even if a black person was already being waited on, if a white person arrived, Mr. Wallace would stop waiting on the black person, and help the white person. This is definitely not fair.

 My last example is the textbooks that the students are given in the black school. At first the black students were all excited about the new books, but when Little Man accepts his book, their point of view changes completely. The “new” textbooks are discards from a white school, where they were used until they were in very bad condition. Little Man ( who is very meticulous) refused to use his book because it was old and dirty. Little Man’s teacher became mad and used the whip on him.

 As you can see from the situations I have explained, life for the Logans during this time was completely unfair. They were treated unfairly, because their skin is black. The black skinned people in this story were treated with almost no respect from the white skinned people in this story. Although slavery had ended, these people were still treated like slaves because the whites would order them around, and they would have to obey, or risk their lives.

This well-constructed piece was written after reading the novel, “Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry”. The writer uses events from the text to support the opinion that, for the Logans, it was “just as hard to be free as it was to be a slave.” The piece is logically organized; the opinion is clearly stated at the end of the first paragraph, followed by five examples from the text, each explained in a well-elaborated paragraph. Linking words and phrases *(“One of the examples”, “Another example”, “As you can see”)* connect the writer’s opinion with clear examples from the text. The concluding paragraph restates the opinion *(“Although slavery had ended, these people were still treated like slaves”)* and summarizes the reasons for it “*(they were treated unfairly...with almost no respect...and they would have to obey or risk their lives.”).*

**Provides a concluding section related to the opinion presented.**

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**Revised and Edited for Student Use**

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