**File Name: I6R Lyddie’s Choices**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 6**

**Range of Writing**

**Introduces the topic clearly,** including naming the title and author of the novel; provides context of for the story, including naming identifying characters and main central ideas of the novel

**Lyddie’s Choices**

Lyddie Worthen is the main character in Katherine Patterson’s *Lyddie*. Lyddie is a young girl living on a Vermont farm in the 1840’s. This is the time of the Industrial Revolution. Lyddie’s father has abandoned the family and Lyddie’s mother leaves her and her brother behind thinking that the world is coming to an end. The only thing Lyddie has left is her farm which she desperately wants to hold on to. In order to keep her farm Lyddie has to work off the debts on her farm, but the job she has isn’t paying enough, so she leaves to begin a new life as a factory girl at the newly developed textile mills in Lowell Massachusetts. Because of working in the Lowell mills Lyddie gets a broader sense of herself. She is able to make some choices about who she wants to be in her life.

States focus / **topic** of the piece

Lyddie is working at a place called Cutlers Tavern for very low wages. If she keeps working like this she will never be able to pay off her debts, so she decides to go to Lowell and work in the mills so that she can make more money.

**Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations, or other information and examples from the text.** The writer explains the meaning of the quotation he has chosen, with details about context (what was going on here). He also explains details that **clarify the relationship among the ideas** / **topic** he is working with in the piece.

She is told by a customer who works in the mills “you’d do well in the mill you know. You’d clear at least two dollars a week. And’ she paused ‘you’d be independent.’” (p. 25)

Lyddie then makes the choice to go to the mill. She realizes that at the mill she will be able to pay off the farm debts faster. This is a hard choice for Lyddie, if she stays at the tavern she knows that she will continue to make money and eventually pay off the debt. If she goes to the mill she has a chance of not getting the job at all but if she does get the job she will be able to pay off the farm debts much faster. This is when Lyddie begins to take her life into her own hands and makes the choice to take a chance at the mill.

When Lyddie begins working at the mill, she starts making much more and with that money she is able to buy a book. Lyddie does not have a good education and people at the mills by her roommate Betsy she becomes passionate about reading so she goes to buy a book.

**Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples:** the writer explains the meaning of the quotation he has chosen.

“’I-I come to purchase at book…’” “’what book do you have in mind…’” “’uh-uh *Oliver Twist* if you please sir’” (p.83-84) she then pays with two silver dollars.

By making the choice to purchase that book she opens the doors to education and becomes a smarter person who loves to learn. She also changes from a thrifty penny pincher to someone who realizes that money isn’t always the most important thing in life.

Because of Lyddie’s love for reading she makes the choice to leave the farm that she has just returned to, and leave Luke, the man who loves her to go to Oberlin College in Ohio.

**Establishes and maintains a** reasonably **formal style**

“I’m off’ she said ‘to Ohio, there’s a college there that will that will take a women just like a man’”. (p.181)

By making the choice to go to college Lyddie is showing that she won’t give up on her education and won’t give up on an adventurous life. Even though things haven’t been great for her she is still ready to start another chapter in her life.

**Uses appropriate, varied transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts**

What does the author want us to understand about the power of the Industrial Revolution? I think that in Lyddie it is showing that the Industrial Revolution gave people many opportunities in their lives. The Industrial Revolution also had lots of hard moments where people would get sick, break a bone, or even die. The Industrial Revolution seemed to rule a lot of people’s lives and ruin their families. Lyddie took advantage of the Industrial Revolution well and through the choices she made was able to pull past just being a factory girl and take different paths in life.

**Provides a concluding section that follows from the explanation presented** by restating the main point and reflecting on the topic

**Uses precise word choice, and domain-specific vocabulary** about the Industrial Revolution

In this assignment, students were asked to reflect on the question “How did the work in the Lowell mills change Lyddie’s life?” after they had read the book *Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson. Class discussion helped students to arrive at the focus statement that this writer uses. He provides enough context about the book in the introduction that even people who have not read the text can follow the writer’s thinking in the piece that follows.

The writer clearly organizes his evidence using three quotations from the text. In each case, he gives some context for the quotation he uses and follows the quote with a well-elaborated explanation that makes the relationship between the quote (evidence) and the topic / focus clear. He uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts. Throughout the piece, the writer uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to make his thinking clear.

The writer uses a formal, academic tone as he explains his thinking. The conclusion follows from the main point and, although not required by the Standards, provides some thoughtful reflection on the topic.

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