

The Sun Also Rises
Take-home Test

by

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Literary Analysis and Composition
5th Period
Mrs. Joan Leary
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1. Although Jake is dedicated to his work, discuss the fact that his choice of friends, Harvey Stone, Bill Gorton, Mike Campbell, and Lady Brett Ashley suggest that his own life lacks depth and commitment.

While Jake Barnes has some dedication and ethics, he leads a life that lacks depth and commitment-just like the lives that his friends live.

Jake, though he tries not to, does live cold-heartedly and with moral abandon. An acquaintance of Jake, Robert Cohn, idealistic and whimsical, visits him one afternoon. Jake, though very tolerant, secretly uses anything at his disposal to rid his afternoon of Cohn. In another example, Jake and some friends of his go to a club to enjoy themselves. A group of homosexuals enters and their lifestyles fill Jake with anger and frustration. Jake's castration from World War I makes him feel jealous that they have sexuality but waste it with other men. Finally, Jake takes one of his best friends, Lady Brett Ashley, to see Pedro Romero, a Pomplonan bullfighter. Jake was asked not to introduce anyone to Romero by a good friend, but he disregards the wish and betrays his friends.

Jake's friends, excluding Bill Gorton, lead lives that lack meaning. The best influence on Jake among the circle of friends lies in Bill Gorton. Bill does not have the dissolute qualities that Jake's other friends have. He has real devotion to work and to his friends. Bill also tells Jake that he is Jake's best

friend. Brett Ashley, that only static woman in Jake's life, leads a very wasted life. She freely admits to being over-sexed and being a drunk. Brett knows that she cannot live with Jake and love him because of his impotence. She must have him sexually if they start a romance. She knows she would not be able to stay loyal to Jake and honestly confesses that fact. Harvey Stone also lives a wasted life. Harvey's addictions control his life. He lives solely to drink and to gamble. He asks Jake for some dining money, and Jake accommodates with a hundred francs. Harvey immediately orders another round of drinks with the money. He will undoubtedly turn the francs to alcohol or gambling chips. Mike Campbell, Brett Ashley's fiancée and a well-respected member of the group, has a rude congeniality and sincerity that gets him in trouble. For example, he enrages Cohn with a barrage of insults. Mike says that Cohn is a zero-he is not a man. Cohn takes all Mike's insults and later demonstrates his rage on Romero-the matador. The group altogether wastes their lives. Except for Bill and Jake, the circle of friends is an unsalvageable waste.

3. Using situations from the novel, discuss the literary critic Jackson Benson's belief that "Jake Barnes is an embodiment of Hemingway's philosophy..." which states that "...for a man to live with dignity requires ...he be hard on himself. If a man is lost, it is because he has lost himself by preferring illusion to reality...and self deceit to self-honesty."

Jake Barnes, according to Jackson Benson, "...is an embodiment of Hemingway's philosophy..." which states that "...for a man to live with dignity requires ...he be hard on himself. If a man is lost, it is because he has lost himself by preferring illusion to reality...and self deceit to self-honesty."

Jake maintains his human dignity by being hard on himself. Robert Cohn, an American Jew who is well acquainted with Jake, acts foolishly throughout the entire novel. Though Jake does not particularly like Cohn, Jake's moral code compels him to still tolerate Cohn. Cohn asks Jake if he wants to travel to South America. Jake, though unhappy, listens to Cohn, and still acts civilly to him. Later, when Jake betrays his friends Montoya, Lady Brett Ashley, and Pedro Romero in Pomplona, he really feels down-his guilt eats at him. Jake tortures himself inside for his betrayal. His self-discipline helps him to not fail again.

Jake does lose himself by "...preferring illusion to reality...and self deceit to self-honesty." Jake has the unfortunate characteristic of being impotent. Nonetheless, he greatly wants to have Brett Ashley, his nymphomaniac friend, as his mate. Though he knows they can never consummate a relationship, Jake still wishes to do so. This romantic imagery deceives his usually realistic views. As mentioned before, Jake betrays his friends in Pomplona. He finds Montoya and Romero-a hotel owner-friend and a young matador, respectively-at Montoya's hotel. Montoya knows Jake's companions and asks him to keep them and their influences away from Romero. However, when Brett wants Romero, Jake takes her to him. Jake betrays Montoya, Brett, and Romero with the mistake. More importantly, though, Jake loses himself through his self deception.

4. Discuss the fact that the bullfighter Pedro Romero is considered by the critics to be the embodiment of Hemingway's "code hero."

Pedro Romero, the young matador of Pomplona, fits the seven characteristics of Hemingway's "code hero." Romero never talks about his beliefs, never makes broad generalizations, and never reveals that he follows a code; he is a man of action, whose gratifying actions are emphasized, and whose idea of death, which must be avoided at all costs, lies behind all other thoughts.

Pedro Romero's code prevents him from doing three things. First, the "code hero" never talks about what he believes in; the reader must infer his philosophy. Nowhere in the novel does Romero say anything about his religion, his profession, or his thoughts. He needs no philosophy-his code is his philosophy: how he acts, how he feels, how he lives. Second, Romero never makes broad generalizations. The

code keeps Romero in a positive state of mind. His open-mindedness constantly gives him hope. When his friend, Jake, introduces many slack companions, Romero is able to see that they are not all bad. Third, Romero never reveals the existence of a code. The hero keeps his precious code sacred. The code keeps Romero confident and strong. The code is Romero's self preservation.

Actions, especially self-gratifying actions, characterize Pedro Romero. Romero prefers actions to thinking. To Romero, thinking delays the inevitable: actions. Romero could not be successful if he thought before he acted in the dusty bullring. A stray thought could easily freeze him for a moment—just long enough for a horn to slip by his guard. Hemingway emphasizes the actions that bring pleasure to Romero. Romero sleeps with Brett, a nymphomaniac friend of Jake's, and Hemingway proudly emphasizes this. The bullfight that earns Romero the celebration is the most accentuated part of the novel.

The idea of death, seen as total closure to Romero, lies behind all other actions and must be avoided at all cost. To Romero, life's actions are much more important than worrying about death. His fearless occupation and his attitude toward the dead show us he rarely considers death. Nonetheless, Romero's whole life is spent avoiding death. He avoids death with every rush of the bulls he battles. He must show calm under pressure—he has complete self-discipline, because of his code.

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