Chivalry: Dead in the 21st Century?

LeMorte d’Arthur Written Response #3 (30 pts)
C.P. 11 British Literature- Ports

What lessons can be learned from King Arthur and his knights regarding Chivalry and how does it relate to us today?

Although it has been centuries since the rule of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, the way people interact has changed little. Just as we have school rules, class rules, social rules (laws), and different ways to define how we should treat each other, people used to have The Code of Chivalry and Courtly Love. These were a set of rules that showed people how to live honorably.

The Task

• Read and understand the tales of Arthur and his knights, with special regard to Chivalry. You may want to review the beliefs and codes of the knights at the following web sites:
  - http://www.chronique.com/Library/Chivalry/code.htm
• Consider what aspects of the Code of Chivalry and Courtly Love you believe are relevant today.

The Prompt

Many adults believe that today's generation of teenagers do not understand what it means to be chivalrous or to display a code of courteous behavior, not only towards adults, but to each other as well. They see teens as rude, irresponsible, and lazy. Others believe many teenagers are striving to demonstrate honor, respect and common courtesy. They recognize positive efforts teens are making in their schools and communities. Write an essay in which you take a position on this topic. You may write about either one of the two points of view given, or you may present a different view. Use specific examples to support your position.
Your Grade

- Essay demonstrates a clear understanding of the task
- Essay takes a position on the issue and offers a critical context for discussion
- Essay addresses complexity by examining differing perspectives on the issue
- Development of ideas is ample, specific and logical
- Most ideas are fully elaborated
- Clear focus on the specific issue of the prompt is maintained
- Organization is clear and transitions are used
- Introduction and Conclusion are effective
- Essay shows a good command of language, grammar and mechanics.

A FEW DON’T-s

- Do not begin with “I think that chivalry today does exist and in this essay I am going to tell you why.” (NOTE: “I believe…” and “In my opinion…” should also be avoided.)
- Do not repeat yourself- constantly re-read your writing and ask, “Did I already say this?” and “Is this related to my main thesis?”
- Do not make common spelling and sentence structure mistakes (homophones: it’s, its; their, there and they’re and commas!).
- Do not write less than three paragraphs.

AND A FEW DO-s

- Offer your position in the introduction and consider including your reasons- thus outlining the structure of your paper for your reader
- Develop each argument with specific examples (In our high school, many students will be attending a leadership retreat where they will develop skills related to reaching out and making a difference in their community.)
- Recognize the complexity of the issue (many teens today are focused on school, but not necessarily the lives and well-being of others…) then acknowledge the complexity of the issue (…school is important, but ultimately teens who recognize helping others and reaching out provides more rewarding opportunities, will become our leaders…)
- Consider transitions, but avoid obvious transitions (First, Then, Lastly…)
- Address the counterargument- and then refute it- show why it is not true. (In some cases, teens today do not have opportunities to demonstrate their leadership potential, but more likely, they are not looking in the right places.)
- Consider your word choice- is it specific, appropriate and varied?