

A Bronx Tale

About the Movie: A Bronx Tale

Director, Robert De Niro - Rating R

A father becomes worried when a local gangster befriends his son in the Bronx in the 1960s. This film asks the question: "Is it better to be loved or respected?" Plenty of action and strong acting. You will definitely recognize some locations shot in Brooklyn and Queens.

Sample Essay Prompts

Extra Credit Assignments

A Bronx Tale (1993) begins with a murder in broad daylight on a busy street. There is a young man who witnesses the crime. Under pressure, "C", the nicknamed young man, tells a lie that allows the gangster/criminal to go free. The gangster, however popular and respected in his community is still guilty of murder, but in the "eyes" of the community, a person never informs on anybody. This is called "ratting them out." Although "C" is troubled by his decision to lie, he later develops a relationship with this gangster, much to his real father's concern. This creates conflict between the two grown men. In many ways, *A Bronx Tale* is about a young man with *two* fathers: one, a workingman, the other a gangster. "C" is a young man growing up under two distinctive value systems: one honest, the other, criminal. Write a persuasive essay in which you will express your views concerning one of the several issues that are raised in the film *A Bronx Tale*:

- The first issue involves the initial "big" lie: do you think that "C" should have lied? Did he have a responsibility to society and to the law? How might you have handled the pressure?
- Another issue involves the gangster lifestyle: "C" lies to his parents about his friendship with the gangster and about many of the things he does involving his other friends. Do you think that it was right for him to lie to his parents about this? How would you have coped with these pressures? Do your parents have a right to know about your life, your friends, your romantic interests?
- Another issue involves the choice of lifestyles. "C" will model and pursue: the successful but corrupt gangster he idolizes and the hard working but honest father he loves. Do you think that it is ever right to make the crooked "fast buck"? Was his father telling him the truth when he said: "working hard every day took real courage"? Which role model is the best example to follow? Which one of these two men do you think was living a lie?

Mini-Research Project

Prepare an investigative paper that focuses on any one of the following topics associated with or suggested by the film, *A Bronx Tale*.

- a) Organized Crime in Post-War New York
- b) The New York Yankees - the 1950s and the 1960s
- c) Machiavelli's *The Prince*
- d) The Hells Angels motorcycle club

Standard College Essay

Many issues arise from the analysis and discussion of the film, *A Bronx Tale*. Some of these issues involve: problems associated with growing up near/with crime and criminals; tension between the races; telling lies; parents and children communicating; and the need to set individual and moral codes of behavior for oneself.

In a full-length essay (approximately 400-500 words), later to be revised for content and correctness, discuss any of the issues raised in the film *A Bronx Tale* that you consider to be of special interest either for yourself or for society. Explain why and how these issues are significant not only in the film but also in relationship to your own life, society, or even both. You may refer to this film or any form of media coverage and to other people's opinions.