

Assignment:

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| <p>1. Number the paragraphs.</p> <p>2. Underline the Attention Getter</p> <p>3. Place brackets [] around the Connector Statement</p> <p>4. Highlight the Thesis Statement</p> <p>5. Circle the Summary Statement.</p> | } | <p><u>Introduction</u>
<i>(ACTS)</i></p> |
| <p>6. Highlight the evidence in the three body paragraphs</p> <p>7. Underline the links in the three body paragraphs</p> <p>8. Place a * in the paragraph that contains the counterargument</p> <p>9. Circle the 2 transition words found in the counterargument.</p> | } | <p><u>Body (MEL-Con)</u></p> |
| <p>10. In the conclusion, highlight the sentence that revisits the thesis statement.</p> | } | <p><u>Conclusion</u>
<i>(STAC)</i></p> |

Innocent Until Proven Guilty

Imagine for a minute, someone getting locked up, yet this victim is also portrayed as honest, precise, and genuine by his teachers and close acquaintances who know him better than anybody. Doesn't make much sense, does it? Believe it or not, juveniles, especially young black men, are treated unfairly by the justice system every single day. In the book "Monster," by Walter Dean Myers, that is the case for Steve Harmon, a poor African-American who lives in rundown Harlem. Steve Harmon, the protagonist, tells his perspective in a movie format and also writes in his journal while he sits in prison, awaiting his trial for the "crime" he supposedly committed. Steve Harmon is innocent because he didn't know Bobo Evans and because Steve did not provide a signal during the day that Jose Delgado was shot. Unfortunately, Steve is young and black, so automatically, he is treated unfairly and is more likely to have committed the crime in the eyes of the jurors.

The first reason Steve Harmon is innocent is because he did not know Bobo Evans. For example, in the novel "Monster," by Walter Dean Myers, when Kathy O'Brien is cross examining, she asks Bobo, "Did you talk to Steve Harmon... No... But you had not spoken to Mr. Harmon prior to the stickup... Naw" (195-196). This part of the trial shows that Steve and Bobo had never seen each other. Also, the testimony

reveals that Steve and Bobo had never even heard of each other. Steve Harmon was implicated in knowing Bobo because of his connection with the Osvaldo and James King. Clearly, Steve Harmon should not have even been associated with Bobo Evans.

Obviously, some people would argue that Steve Harmon is guilty, nevertheless, he **was at** the drugstore the day of the robbery. For example, in one of his journal entries, Steve reveals the following: “Anybody can walk into a drugstore and look around...(Myers, 115). I walked into a drugstore to look for some mints, and then I walked out.” (Myers, 140). Some people would argue that this shows that Steve Harmon is guilty because he was at the scene of the crime on the same day that the robbery happened. He places his own self at the scene of the crime by revealing this in his journal entry on July 27th. One can conclude that Steve admits that he was the drugstore, so this could make him guilty.

Finally, Steve Harmon is innocent because Steve didn't give a signal. For example, in the novel, James King reveals that “He was supposed to tell us if there was anybody in the drugstore... He didn't say nothing so we figured it was all right” (Myers, 182). This demonstrates that Steve Harmon did not make sure it was clear. This also shows that Steve was quiet and didn't give a signal. Clearly, Steve didn't give a signal, so he should not be implicated in the crime.

Throughout the story, Steve Harmon searches for truth in himself, and as the trial progresses, he is clearly innocent of the charges. Steve Harmon is an outstanding young man, and in the end, he was found “not guilty” by the jury because Sandra Petrocelli could not prove that he gave a signal and that he even personally knew one of the perpetrators, Bobo Evans. According to his film teacher, Mr. Sawicki, Steve was talented, bright, and compassionate. Steve seems like a decent man who through some mishap appeared in the courtroom. In the end, the verdict of “not guilty” is a fair verdict for someone who is portrayed as honest, precise, and most of all, genuine.