

# Sweet home alabama essay sample

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Can you really find your soul mate when your ten years old? Did you know when lightening hits the sand it forms beautiful glass pieces when you dig it up? Reese Witherspoon (Melanie), Josh Lucas (Jake), and Patrick Dempsey (Andrew) fall into a love triangle that takes you from high class New York City to down south in Greenville, Alabama. You will learn it is not all about the money you make, or the possessions you have in your life. It is about the love, family, and friends that support you that make your life the fullest.

### Storytelling

After a failed marriage, and a miscarriage Melanie Smooter leaves behind her Alabama roots, and high school sweetheart husband to search for her dream of becoming a fashion designer in Manhattan. She starts her new life with changing her name from Melanie Smooter to Melanie Carmichael. Then enters the glamorous social circle, where she catches the eye of a handsome Park Avenue man named Andrew Hennings, whose mother is the Mayor of New York City. After accepting a proposal from this high society upcoming politician, she must visit her hometown to finalize her divorce paperwork from her soon to be ex-husband Jake. While back home she visits her parents who still live in the home she was raised in, which is a double wide trailer. She proceeds to tell them about her engagement and her new successful career.

When she pays her ex-husband Jake a visit and demands a divorce, he calls the sheriff. She discovers that Jake never changed their bank account from a joint account, and spends all his money on redecorating their home. When Jake refuses to sign the divorce papers Melanie follow him to the local bar owned by his mother. She converses with her old high school friends, and

reminisces about all the good times back in Alabama. She gets intoxicated, and for a moment she forgets where she came from as she acts like a snobby New Yorker in a hick town. Her old friends remind her it is not always about money that makes people happy. She wakes up with a headache and the divorce papers signed. She pays one last visit to her friend Bobby Ray to apologize to him for her behavior the night before. After all his family estate, The Carmichael Plantation is what inspired her new last name. Melanie and Andrew plan their wedding in Alabama. Melanie finds out Jake came looking for her in the city, but realized in order to win her back he needed to make something of himself. She discovers he started a deep glass business. The day of her wedding she finds out she did not sign the divorce papers.

She begins to question her decision to marry Andrew and divorce Jake. This film started in Manhattan, New York, the fashion capital of the world where life is fast paced. To taking the movie back to Melanie's southern roots in Alabama, a small town outside of Greenville named Pigeon Creek (Los Angeles Times, 2002). The director created a movie full of wholesome southern comfort. You feel part of the southern culture once Melanie touches down in Alabama. Starting with beautiful Plantation homes, green grass, desolated roads, and then working your way down to the small country town feel. The town has only one main street, one bank with no ATM, and one local bar everyone patrons for the night life. The camera captures all the events of a small town such as: a local festival, a dog cemetery, water tower, and everyone in the town knowing everyone and everything that goes on. Melanie goes from the high class uppity socialites into a society that thinks Jaclyn Smith is a top fashion designer. She realizes life is not all about a

name and money, but about true friendship and being accepted for who you are. This romantic comedy directed by Andy Tennant created this fairytale movie that every little girl dreams about, which is finding true love and marrying your prince charming (Chicago Tribune, 2002).

This love usually only comes around once in a life time between two people (Goodykoontz, & Jacobs, 2011). The romantic comedy genre is a combination of love and humor, which is my favorite type of film. A common convention that is used within the film industry is the story formula. The typical formula that every romantic comedy uses, which deals with a man and a woman meeting at the beginning of the film then turmoil occurs leading the couple to separate. While their separated they usually end up meeting other people, but deep down still wish they were together again. The final result is usually a happy outcome. The couple ends up getting back together after they realized that they truly love each other. Sweet Home Alabama portrays this genre very well. This film offers some formal appeals. For example, the lighting and weather conditions around the couple when they first met, and at the end of the film when Melanie and Jake get back together in the same spot they met at age eleven. Most times then often when a couple meets the weather is surreal, and the day maybe sunny and beautiful out, or the environment is very bright giving you that warm fuzzy feeling inside.

I think this is to create a sense of happiness alluring the audience that they are meant to be. For example, at the beginning of Sweet Home Alabama the setting takes effect on a beach. Although they are very young when they meet, they kiss for the first time. This is very common to the genre of romantic comedy. Another appeal that is familiar is the music being played <https://assignbuster.com/sweet-home-alabama-essay-sample/>

during different parts of the film. One section of the film that makes it humorous is the meeting of the parents, and how different the two are. One is the Mayor of New York City, and the other is a red-neck family so the music gets very southern country. It just makes you want to laugh as the music selection fits each scene. I find features like this make the film humorous in addition to the romance that is presented. I feel the selection of music chosen plays a slow southern draw, and then uses powerful songs when they first meet, and in the end when they end up with each other again.

The movie ended perfectly with the song, Sweet Home Alabama by Lynyrd Skynard. Some may think this is tacky, but it is a huge part that makes up this genre, and the best parts of the movie. Overall this is my favorite genre along with action & adventure, and comedy movies. Sweet Home Alabama is a movie that I can watch over and over again. This spectacular southern movie that doesn't overwhelm you with romance, but mixes it up with just the right amount of humor to keep the audience enlightened. Witherspoon plays a New York fashion designer Melanie Carmichael. She came from a white trash background in Alabama, and decided to make a new life for herself in The Big Apple. Dempsey plays the new fiancé (Andrew Hennings) who is noted as the most eligible bachelor, and whose mother happens to be the Mayor of New York City.

Jake the estranged husband played by Josh Lucas is a good ole hometown boy who was going nowhere, but now opened a new business called “ Deep South Glass”. The type of acting utilized in this film is known as method acting. Method acting is when the actor/actress looks deep inside themselves

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to play this role to the fullest (Goodykoontz, & Jacobs, 2011). Reese Witherspoon plays the perfect southern belle with her cute little figure, blonde hair, and that strong southern accent. Patrick Dempsey plays his normal astute self. Well dressed, well mannered, well spoken. Josh Lucas comes out looking like a dirty hillbilly, dressed with his blue jeans and flannel shirts, and his deep southern drawl. All the characters in this film disclose strengths about themselves that truly bring out the story to unexpected measures. Candice Bergen's who plays Patrick Dempsey's mother, and the Mayor of New York City even is likeable in this film. For each character in each scene, we understand the drive, we understand why people choose certain actions, and we follow along eagerly as events unfold to reveal more and more intensity to people and the secrets they've kept in their closets. Making the Movie

What does it take to make a successful movie? What are the key elements that can make or break an award winning movie? This film won 3 film awards and had 6 nominees. In order for a film to be a hit, the plot has to instill the audience with beliefs and values, dreams and fears. Additionally, the plot needs to be driven by the notion of reward, revenge, and/or escape. The plot must revolve around an encounter, or journey that can only be fixed through rising acts of sacrifice and danger on the part of the characters. Technology has changed immensely in the way movies are filmed, especially with the computer generated imagery that has been introduced. This technology has not only reduced the cost of building sets, but also allows actors to mysteriously turn into different beings, and can create different types of natural and manmade disasters without actually destroying anything.

Andrew Dunn captures some of the most beautiful, breath taking shots of the Southern locations.

At the beginning of the film the camera captures the sky and clouds while lightning is flickering then striking the sand forming the components that make breathtaking glass pieces. This film exemplifies that it only takes a simple gesture, a small moment in time, or even a short line of dialog to bring true life into a character giving a film true profundity. When you see the eyebrow expression on Melanie’s face when she is surprised in the Tiffany showroom,

a look of pleasure when something works in each characters favor, and even the use of language and jargon all contribute smoothly to the reality of the film. The editing done in this movie was a direct cut. Direct cut defines, “ one shot instantaneously replaced by another shot” (Goodykoontz, & Jacobs, 2011, sec. 5. 3). This also ran in a type of sequence form. This film opens up with two young children chasing each other on a beautiful Alabama beach. The two kiss and Jake tells Melanie they will be married one day.

The scene then moves right into the present. Melanie changes her name, ditches her southern accent, and tries to fit into the east coast life style. Shot and take was another form of editing utilized in this film. Shots were taken in New York City as well down south. “ The basic element is the shot, the view a camera takes from a single position or setup (stationary or moving), obtained by turning the camera on for a certain amount of time and then turning it off. Each time this is done, it is referred to as a take, and if a shot is performed badly or ruined for some reason, the director will order additional takes until that shot is satisfactory” (Goodykoontz, & Jacobs, 2011, sec. 5. 3).

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For example, when Melanie stumbles onto Jake's store " Deep South Glass" for the first time, or when she tells Andrew she cannot marry him at the alter. Sweet Home Alabama utilizes the music of southern country and contemporary pop music. The beginning of this film starts out with the rumble of lightening, and an acoustic guitar playing in the background while the kids run and talk on the beach.

Numerous scenes have sound effects to go along with the scene. For example, when Melanie redecorates Jakes home the music playing when he comes walking through the door, George Thorogood's " Bad to the Bone" to her father re-enactment on the battlefield with the sounds of cannons and gun fire. The film's music soundtrack really comes through with a full, energetic sound that's very enjoyable. The Dialogue remains clear and natural throughout the film. Reviews

Many moviegoers base their decisions on spending money to see a film by how well or how badly the films are reviewed by critics. You can review critic movie reviews on the internet, television, and newspaper. Critics just like actors have their own fan base, and individuals will look to their favorite critics review on a new movie release. Scott Bowles remakes Like her premier fashion designer in Sweet Home Alabama, Reese Witherspoon established herself as a force to be reckoned with this weekend. She led her romantic comedy to the top spot of the box office with an estimated \$37. 5 million; according to tracking firm Nielsen EDI" (Bowles, 2002). Bradshaw noted, " It's all very predictable and there's a notably diluted, sanitised Alabama shown on screen: Lynyrd Skynyrd's classic track is adopted as the unofficial state anthem, as opposed to Dixie, of which we get just a few coy <https://assignbuster.com/sweet-home-alabama-essay-sample/>

bars on the soundtrack; the confederate flag is glimpsed subliminally in a picturesque Civil War re-enactment and on a few tasteful cushion designs” (Bradshaw, 2002). Holden cited, “ If Sweet Home Alabama, directed by Andy Tennant from a screenplay by C. Jay Cox, has the ingredients for a classic screwball comedy, the movie is in such a rush to entertain that it barely connects the dots of its story.

But it still has its effectively goofy comic moments” (Holden, 2002). The theme of the film reiterates you can’t be two different people; you have to be who you are. You have to face your life and your past, and not pretend that you are someone you’re not. For example, the film starts out in the busy city of New York with Melanie preparing for her fashion show debut. You see models running around. Melanie fixing her clothing line so it lays right on the model before they head down the runway, ending with the typical fashion show acknowledgement to the designer. Sweet Home Alabama is a Cinderella story line with an added twist. I feel once you look into things sociology can be found everywhere. Social mobility and social movement is part of our everyday life. Melanie is just one example of how a person is not defined by their past, and can move up in society with will power. Same with Jake, he may look like the same down home boy, but he has made something of himself within his hometown. This film portrays to society that success and money do not buy happiness.

It shows young women can go after their dreams and become successful, but never forget how you got there. Your family, friends, and community are a strong part of who you are today. It also shows society that true love does exist. Sweet Home Alabama is a great example of a formalist movie for the <https://assignbuster.com/sweet-home-alabama-essay-sample/>

romantic-comedy genre. The film casts a fairytale storyline and foreseeable outcome, but what makes this film so delightful is its bright and realistic approach to the subject and its characters. Melanie's upcoming debut as the next fashion designer noted in Woman's Wear Daily (WWD) follows the feminist approach. She is making her mark into the fashion society. Lastly, this film has a psychological approach about self-discovery within each of us.

Melanie learns about herself, her friends and family, but most of all she learns to appreciate the roots she came from and rectify the mistakes she has made. Life can throw many curve balls into the mix of married life, especially when you marry young. If you take a step back and appreciate what life has to offer you may be surprised how special your life is. Melanie realized that although she made her dream come true as a high society new and upcoming fashion designer engaged to the most eligible bachelor in New York City, she was missing her life at home with her family and Jake. True love conquers all obstacle that one faces in married life. So next time you think about running away to find yourself, take a good hard look at your life, and make sure you are willing to walk away.