

# A reflection of sarcasm essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

A Reflection of Sarcasm At some point in one's life, a task becomes an obstacle of annoyance and then a deeper frustration.

In James Thurber's highly noted essay *University Days*, he reflects back on such a time when a seemingly easy assignment of using a microscope to see and draw the cells of a flower, left the instructor more than agitated. In his essay, Thurber recalls the exact course that halted his graduation as the "phenomenon of maladjustment" (709), not being a misunderstanding of the course material, but rather a spectacle of not being able to identify the cells at all under the microscope. No adjustment what so ever was going to change that fact for Thurber, and it left his instructor feeble minded with the notion that Thurber was just "pulling his leg" as he explained over and over that "anybody can see through a microscope" (709). Thurber took a pass on the class. Upon returning to the class the next year, once again Thurber and the instructor were face to face with the same task. In the end, what was left for Thurber to see and draw, excitedly, was only that of his own eye: a reflection of the "phenomenon of maladjustment" (709).

When facing the frustration of this assignment, Thurber used humor and mishap to account for his not being able to see what the microscope held. He could not see nor identify the cells with any help from the instructor or by just adjusting the microscope. Thurber was left with the shameless job of using sarcasm and quick humor to avoid the instructor's rash reactions in hopes that under the good grace of the instructor, he would pass Thurber and all would be fine.

But, Thurber's unnerving wit and seedy comments only caused the instructor to microscopically view him as a complete disaster. Thurber's essay displayed how easy it is for any one human to illustrate the capacity for humor and disregard to self as long as in the end, the assignment will be completed and there will be a passing grade. Works

CitedDiVanni, Robert. One Hundred Great Essays.

New York: Pearson Longman, 2007.