

Writing Sample
7th Grade Honors English

The following essay was written by a 7th grade honors student during a 45 minute timed writing assessment. The student had not seen the prompt (the writing topic and directions) prior to the assessment, and this is a first draft. It has been used with permission from the student. This piece represents the quality of writing expected from a 7th grade honors student.

The scene is Mount Olympus, and the gods are getting ready to dine. The table is spread with a large array of choices, everything from pita to gyros meat. Meanwhile, in Athens below, people are gathering in the market for a similar feast. They are not as well-bred as the gods, so there is a lot of jostling and yelling, but the atmosphere is still extremely friendly. Which would you choose, the wealthy splendor of the gods or the warm family table of the mortals? Fortunately, you can have both, in the form of a restaurant called Athens Market Cafe. Although it isn't exactly Mount Olympus, Athens Market combines Greek authenticity with food worthy of the gods and wonderful service.

The spirit of Athens Market is extremely authentic. Tables and chairs are made of wood, and the floor is rough tile. Greek people have said that the food is closest to anything back home as is possible. Another authentic and fun example is Soboki, as I believe it is called, or flaming cheese. The waiter came over to our table holding a tray above his head, sprinkled it with oil, and lit the contents of the plates afire. As it flamed, he sprinkled something on top, and the fire slowly went out. The result: hot, bubbling, rich, crusty cheese. As the waiter lit it, he gave the customary whoop of "Ooopah!", giving it the nickname, "the open cheese".

Of course, what's the point of going to an authentic restaurant if the food is bad? Athens Market doesn't have that problem. The food is wonderfully and deliciously Mediterranean. Not only do you get baskets of the warmest, softest, thickest pita in the world while you wait, but you also get cool, tangy tzatziki (cucumber) sauce to dip it in. Entrees include pastitso, or Greek lasagna, baked chicken marinated in spices, and gyros meat. Gyros (pronounced "year-oass") is a combination lamb meat and beef ground with pepper and delicately broiled or fried in long strips. Each entrée comes with lots of vegetables and possibly pita on each plate, plus a soup or a salad. Soups include avgolemeno soup (milky, lemony, and lots of noodles) and lentil soup (didn't try that).

Finally, the food and authenticity come with great service. When I was there, I was with a group of teenage girls who were all wild after a limousine ride and a bottle of sparkling apple cider. The waiters were all very friendly and could handle our overwhelming demands. Our food came in less than twenty minutes, which is quite reasonable for a group our size. Also, those waiters must be telepathic, because whenever I even thought of a refill, a server would appear by my side with a pitcher of drink.

Come to Greece at least to dine once. At Athens Market Cafe, the authenticity level is high, the food is heavenly, and the servers treat you like a god. Given the chance, everyone should eat in Athens.