

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



Model Essay

## The Day Andy Came Home

The taste of chocolate malt always reminds me of the day we first brought my baby brother home from the hospital. Why? It's because a chocolate malt was the treat my parents bought to stop me from fussing on the ride home. You see, they kept asking me things like, "What do you think of the new baby?" and, "Are you excited to have such a cute brother?" Every time they asked, I fussed about something different. I was five years old, and at that age I used to complain about everything. Just the day before, I had complained about socks that felt lumpy between my toes and about hamburger rolls that had little sesame seeds sprinkled over their brown tops. Nowadays, I prefer rolls that have sesame seeds on them; and as for lumpy socks, well, I guess I'm just not that sensitive anymore.

On the ride home, I first fussed about the temperature. It was February, and my parents had the heater blasting in order to protect delicate little Andy—and to bake me, I thought. I could feel it in the middle row of the van, where Mom, Andy, and I were sitting. Andy was facing backward in his pastel blue infant seat with pastel yellow flowers spangled all over it. (I'm telling you this, by the way, so you'll be amazed at what a fantastic memory I have.) He was covered with a red and blue plaid wool blanket that clashed dreadfully with the seat. The plastic of the infant seat squeaked, but Andy himself was as quiet as a stuffed animal.

"So how you do like your new baby brother?" Dad asked.

"It's too hot in here," I whined. "I'm suffocating." I had just learned that word and used it at every opportunity. "Andy, don't you think it's too hot in here?" I asked. Receiving no answer, I pouted. This wasn't actually my first glimpse of my brother, but when Dad and I had visited the hospital the day before, Andy had seemed like just one more anonymous infant in the window of the nursery. I remember staring in amazement at the rows of newborns in clear plastic bassinets, some contentedly dreaming of milk and some frantically crying, some with full heads of dark hair and some bald, but none of them looking like anyone I would want to play with. Now, in his plaid blanket and a pastel blue cap, Andy was at least a presentable member of the family. Though I wouldn't have admitted it to anyone, I looked forward to great things from him. I wanted to teach him to complain.

It was a chilly morning with scattered silvery flakes drifting and lazily twirling, like ballet dancers on a break, across the high-rise office buildings of downtown. As we curved up the ramp onto the interstate, my fussing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Model Essay

changed its focus. I began to moan incessantly for my favorite bubbly, ice-creamy, sweet, thick, beige-brown liquid. My parents, however, were not about to give in to a tantrum.

"You can have your malt if you don't make a fuss about it," Mom said as she played with Andy's tiny fingers and cooed, "Hello, baby, hello, baby."

Parents always say things like that! Well, I became totally quiet for the rest of the ride. Two blocks from home, Dad entered the drive-through lane of our local ice cream shop.

"Happy now?" he asked, as I slurped through the straw extra loudly to express my gratitude.

Noticing that the new arrival had awakened, I reached sideways with my hand holding the cardboard container. "Andy, want some chocolate malt?"

"Babies don't drink that, Amy," Mom said, "but thanks for the thought. I'm sure someday he'll love to share malts with you."

For seven years since then, my parents have told the story of how I offered Andy my malt when he was only two days old, as a sign of what a good older sister they think I was. That kind of irritates me, if you want to know the truth. I wasn't trying to be a good older sister. I was just trying to introduce him to malts.

"Yes, Amy," they reply when I tell them that. "We know that's how you saw it. And we know how we saw it. You were just being you. You couldn't help yourself."

Then they usually smile at me in this sickeningly lovey-dovey way, and I run off and play with Andy.