**Prompt:** In a well-developed and well-organized essay, analyze how Hemingway develops his characterization of Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* and how this characterization develops the meaning of the text as a whole.

**THESIS**:

Through his use of crucifixion imagery in *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway depicts Santiago as a Christ-figure, asserting that endurance despite all opposition is the greatest victory.

Comments:

1. “how” is a specific literary device. Avoid “vivid” imagery!
2. “what” is plot specific – I know what you are arguing specifically about the text!
3. “why” is a bold statement – thematically structured!

**CAST**:

Santiago experiences struggle, pain, and sacrifice to share his triumph of catching the marlin.

Individuals who persevere in the face of defeat feel a sense of pride in their efforts.

**Hemingway creates crucifixion imagery to compare Santiago to Jesus Christ, who sacrifices himself for the salvation of mankind. For example, despite his physical pain and exhaustion, Santiago struggles with the marlin during the second night as the fish drags the skiff further out to sea. Similar to Jesus Christ who experiences immense pain and a sense of loss while hanging on the cross for three days, Santiago feels pain as he physically struggles with the marlin and a sense of loss as he no longer sees the safety of shore. Furthermore, when Santiago’s palms are cut by the fishing line as he attempts to reel in the marlin, Hemingway draws a parallel to the image of Jesus suffering from the stigmata to further develop Santiago’s suffering. Additionally, the image of the old man struggling up the hill with his mast across his shoulders recalls Christ’s march toward Calvary. Despite the heavy weight of the mast and Santiago’s exhaustion after his ordeal, Santiago does not allow the villagers to witness his defeat. Even the position in which Santiago collapses on his bed—face down with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up—brings to mind the image of Christ suffering on the cross. Hemingway employs these images in the final pages of the novella in order to link Santiago to Christ, who exemplifies transcendence by turning loss into gain, defeat into triumph, and even death into renewed life.** Although the marlin has been eaten by the sharks, Santiago returns to his village victorious for his pride has been restored through his unwillingness to be crushed by overwhelming obstacles.

Comments:

1. Claim is the reason why Santiago is a Christ-figure.
2. Add on expands on the idea of how individuals triumph.
3. **Support** includes specific and relevant examples/details of crucifixion imagery and analysis of the examples.
4. Tie Back connects Santiago to the thematic message, or “why,” found in the thesis.