

## WRIT Curriculum - Sample Prompt

The following editorial, “Why the Customer is Always Right. . . No Matter What,” by Lisa Nguyen appears in the Community Voice column of the 2023 edition of Wine and Food magazine.

*Please read and annotate the article carefully. Then follow the instructions at the end.*

There’s an old adage in the service industry: “The customer is always right.” This guiding principle is in place to ensure quality service. The thought is, it doesn’t matter how poorly a customer treats you, the service provider, because the customer is paying for a good or a service, and is, therefore, free to treat you in any manner he wishes. That means that however rude, however obnoxious the customer, you can’t do anything but smile and nod, and provide quality service. If anyone out there thinks this is unfair, I have news for you: the customer is *still* always right...no matter what.

Why, you ask? A story for you: Saratoga Springs, New York, 1853. George Crum works in a kitchen at a wellness spa. A customer orders “Moon’s Fried Potatoes,” a house specialty. Disappointed will how thick the potatoes are cut, the customer returns the dish, with complaint. So, Crum cuts the potatoes thinner, and resends the dish with apologies. Again, the customer is unsatisfied, and returns the dish—with complaint.

This back and forth carries on a third time before Crum loses all patience. As the story goes: “Crum, none too pleased that someone would insult his cooking, cut the potatoes paper-thin, dumped them in a vat of oil, let them cook so long that they became hard and crispy, and then salted them heavily, thinking that these ‘fried potatoes’ would now be inedible. When served the item, the customer took a bite...and then another...and then another, before proclaiming that the fried slices of potatoes were delicious. It became known as the ‘Saratoga Chip.’ The potato chip was born” (Blitz, para. 4).

So the next time you’re a passenger on an airplane, a retail customer, a hotel guest, an event attendee, go ahead: insult, complain, grumble, protest, whine. If that kind of behavior can be responsible for giving the world the potato chip, think what inventions could follow-up your own bad behavior. The customer is always right, and there’s nothing you can say to prove me wrong.

### Works Cited

Blitz, Matt. “The Truth about the Origin of the Potato Chip.” *Today I Found Out*. Web. Jan 22, 2022.

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### Instructions:

**Your Task:** compose a critical response essay—including, *ideally*, an introduction, *at least* three body paragraphs, and a conclusion—to the text below

**Goals:** your essay should include the following:

1. A brief summary of the author's argument
2. Your own argument which should either:
  - mostly agree with the author *and* provide your own persuasive assertions that extend support for the author's position
  - mostly disagree with the author *and* provide your own persuasive assertions that defend your counter-position
3. Your refutation of ***at least one*** objection a reader might have to **your** argument (or any point therein)