

## 500-word Writing Assignment

### It's Not Cool to Hate Twilight

At its best, 2020 felt like a nostalgic hangover for the mid-2000's. We're talking sleeping in your childhood bedroom, wearing low-rise jeans, playing endless hours of Animal Crossing, and, of course, drinking in the Twilight Renaissance. [IMDbPro](#) ran the numbers and *Twilight* spiked into the top 100 spot in the second month of quarantine. Time to unroll your Kristen Stewart posters. It only took fifteen years, an [Edward POV novel](#), and a couple hundred [TikToks thirsting over Robert Pattinson](#) (although let's be honest, we're Team Carlisle) but we did it, girls, guys, and nonbis. *Twilight* is cool.

In 2008, liking *Twilight* was an act of social suicide. Sure, everyone was reading the books, but loving them? That was a secret you had to lock away in your purple Mattel password diary. In some ways, the criticism was well founded. The series and its subsequent commercialization has been criticized by the [New York Times](#) and others for its treatment of and detrimental effect on the Quileute people. Angela R. Riley writes, "'Twilight' has made all things Quileute wildly popular: Nordstrom.com sells items from Quileute hoodies to charms bearing a supposed Quileute werewolf tattoo... Meanwhile, half of Quileute families still live in poverty." The Renaissance has not ignored this significant issue. This past year, influencers and TikTokers are stepping up and urging their viewers to [donate](#) and support the efforts of the tribe to relocate to higher ground. And any video or post that doesn't mention the Move to Higher Ground project is corrected in the comments. But most of the hate spewed in the early 2000s about *Twilight* didn't mention Meyer's commodification of the Quileute Tribe, it was about hating teenage girls.

[Lindsay Ellis](#) points out in her 2018 video essay addressed to Meyer, "We, and by we I mean our culture, we kind of hate teenage girls[...] We hate their stupid books and their stupid sexy actors they made famous and their stupid sparkly vampires." Ellis points out, if the issue is truly about 'bad and cringy writing,' where is the same level of criticism for the *Fast & Furious* franchise? For *Transformers*? The criticism for these male-gaze oriented franchises wasn't nearly as violent. *Twilight* wasn't just cringey and problematic, it was girly. And that made it worse.

So why is #twilight trending on TikTok? Because Meyer's target audience isn't thirteen anymore. The *Twilight* love fest is an ode to a generation that had to hide their Team Edward sweatshirts at the back of their closet. 2020 is the year for unapologetically reclaiming our guilty pleasures and sticking up for the kid who was bullied just for liking something sparkly and eternally-teenaged. Sure, Taylor Lautner is stunning. Yes, the soundtrack for *Breaking Dawn Part 1* is absolutely flawless. But in 2020, enjoying *Twilight* is not about loving vampires, werewolves, and the CGI babies (or let's be honest, absolutely screeching at the CGI baby). It's about sticking up for the lonely Twihard inside of us all.