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“There are many shortcuts to failure, but there are no shortcuts to true success,” quoted Orrin Woodward. Although tempting, shortcuts in life are more destructive than relieving. Tom takes many shortcuts in the story which reveals how greed affected the path he took. He took a shortcut home, what he believes is happiness through a deal with the devil, and to get out of the deal with the devil. In [Washington Irving’s](#) short story, “[The Devil and Tom Walker](#)” many [moral](#) messages about life are introduced. Irving’s dark descriptive style and symbolism are illustrated by the lesson of horrific outcomes due to taking shortcuts. From the beginning of time, the devil was known to make deals with weak mortals. The devil often asks for your soul in exchange for riches or your heart’s desire. Irving based his story on this archetypal plot of selling one’s soul to the devil. This made it impossible for someone to resist the offer unless one has strong principal values. Tom would rather give his soul to the devil in order to cheat his way to wealth. This indicates the avarice Tom Walker faces and how self-centered he becomes when he is offered an opportunity for true happiness. Most of Irving works was based off of folklore. Folklore was a type of inspirational entertainment that stresses the importance of tradition, history, and wisdom. One of Irving’s greatest stores, The Sketch Book, was based on German folklore and legends. “The Devil and Tom Walker” was considered the American version of the archetypal story of the Faust. Faust was an old German legend about a sixteenth century

German philosopher who sells his soul to the devil for knowledge and power. Many people considered Faust as the main inspiration to Washington Irving story "The Devil and Tom Walker." Irving used "The Devil and Tom Walker" as a richly symbolic story that shaped the views of many people during the

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