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WRIT 106-36

Professor Patrick

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I still think there is not a strong enough connection between these two stories and this introduction. Remember, you're not considering the literary works separately (social class for one, goodbye for the other), but together. What is the common theme?

The Lesson by Jessamyn West & The Lesson by Toni Cade Bambara

The perception of social class in society has grown by dividing people into different groups based on their economic statuses, as well as socioeconomic status. When it comes to social class and socioeconomic status, we learn about the unfairness of people and how life is not always as promised. In both stories "The Lesson" by Jessamyn West and Toni Cade Bambara, the main characters learned major lessons. Jo Learned how to say goodbye earlier than late and Sylvia learned that white people had more power and control due to their social class.

As in your previous draft, this social class idea doesn't come through strong enough in the works.

But what ties these two stories together?

To begin, in the story "The Lesson" by Jessamyn West, the author teaches a major lesson of injustice. Johnny, who is the youngest of the family, raises a steer by the name of Curly. After putting Curly in the contest which he wins, Johnny is forced to auctioned him off. The man who was hosting the competition, said "Only one thing left-the auctioning of these animals-and, believe you me, the enjoyment you've had here is nothing to the enjoyment you've going to have when you bite into one of these big, juicy baby-beef steaks (West, 1092)" This shows that at the end of the day they weren't really concerned about the animal winning the competition, all they cared about was making money and how tasty he will be when he becomes beef. While trying to convince Johnny and his father to give away Curly, the guys were making smart remarks and one said "The poor kid's made a pet of him...To bad. Well, he can't learn any earlier. (West, 1093)" Even though Johnny didn't know that he was going to end up giving away his pet, he sure ends up leaning that he had to say goodbye.

Your claim mentions Jo, not Johnny.

Didn't Jo try to convince the father to stop the sale?

As I said you must give some background before getting specific. Set up the situation in the family first to highlight the importance of the "goodbye."

Later on, Johnny learns an important life lesson that no matter how ready or not ready you are, you must let go. The family struggles to cope with the fact that the mother died and now Johnny has to deal with the loss of his pet. At the end of the story, the father told Johnny's older sister Jo, "it's better to learn to say good bye early than late (West, 1093)". The lesson that he is trying to teach both of his kids, is that nothing last forever, and at a moment in time you must let go and sometimes it might be hurtful but you will get through it.

"The Lesson" by Bambara teaches the main character Sylvia the importance of social class. Miss Moore is a college level educated woman who attempts to educate the children like Sylvia, who are not educated enough and lack knowledge. However, Sylvia does not like her and could not stand listening to what she said. In the story, Sylvia expresses how Miss Moore is "boring us silly about what things cost and what our parents make and how much goes to rent and how money ain't divided up right in the country....we all poor and live in the slums. (Bambara, 1095)". This really bothers Sylvia, who which later on does learn the importance of how important money is. For example, Miss Moore attempts to teach them the children how the white people have a lot of money compared to various races and even spend it in wrong ways. In the story, it states how white people can afford overly priced toys since a clown toy could cost as much as \$35 (Bambara 1096). Sylvia is angry that there are people in this world who have a lot of money to spend on things that are not important to her. Sylvia learns that people of other social class and race have more money than people of her kind and spends them on unnecessary items.

The goodbye demonstrated by West is not entirely on curly but involves the closure they get from the death of their mother. In essence, the father tries to teach both of his kids that it is simple to accept something painful sooner instead of going on living a life of denial. It is important for people to accept the circumstances in life and move on. On the other hand, Sylvia finds it hard to

I'd like to see you focus on how Jo had to "say goodbye."

About what? Explain.

You need to connect these paragraphs. What might Sylvia be saying goodbye to?

What's he really referring to here? Maybe Jo and the boyfriend

Is this really what she learns at the end, its important

Where is this shown?

Jo and Johnny

accept that ^{the} ^s ^{when}
agree on why the white people and upper social class manage to purchase expensive toys, yet the money could be used in paying rent and other valuable things in the society just like Miss Moore had taught them. The readings are similar in one way or another although there are slight differences among them.

In both the lesson by Jessamyn West and Toni Cade Bambara, there is the lesson of acceptance and moving on with life. For example, in the story by West the author also tries to make Johnny understand that everyone's main purpose might not be the same as his. In the story, everyone is so focused on money that are forgetting how important Curly is to him and all they want is to eat his tasty beef. In Bambara story, Sylvia gets to understand that not everyone is as lucky as those with money and she has to learn to accept that. The best lesson that these two characters can learn isto accept the circumstances and move on with life.

In conclusion, the readings demonstrate the ability of people to accept the way of life and move on. The lesson of the difference between the upper and lower social class is demonstrated in both readings. However, Sylvia as the narrator reveals how she is annoyed with the over expenditure by the white people on items that are needless in life yet people could use the money to pay rent. Johnny even though she is young and has a lot to learn, gets a sense of the tolerating the harsh reality associated with an upper social class where they treat steers as pets, yet the lower class treat them for money. Besides, both Johnny and his sister are taught to learn the lesson of accepting the reality of life following the death of their mother through paradoxical use of Curly.

I don't think this is what happens in the story. Johnny, a grieving child, has been allowed to treat his steer as a pet. Everyone else, including his father & sister, realize that money is the end game - upper and lower classes alike.

True, but how do Jo and Sylvia express their intentions about moving on? Are they willing to accept the lessons their teachers have tried to impart?

Again, not really.

Works Cited

Bambara, Toni Cade. "The lesson." *Gorilla, my love* (1972): 85-96.

West, Jessamyn. *Collected Stories of Jessamyn West*. Harcourt on Demand, 1987.