



Character Analysis Essay Examples

The stories *A Good Man Is Hard To Find* and *Bullet in the Brain* depicts grandmother and Anders respectively. These two characters have various traits which affects their interaction and actions. These two characters have been depicted as major figures all through the two stories. Hence they have shown different characteristics. This paper will contrast and compare the two characters from the two short stories.

The Grandmother and Anders are manipulators. From *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, the grandmother is depicted clearly as a manipulator where she does not want to go to Florida just because she has friends to see in Tennessee. Therefore, she wants to try with all means to change Bailey's mind (Short Stories, 297). All the time that something runs up against her will, the grandmother wants to try to have it her way. It is interesting that she does not do this directly but in a confrontational way. All her styles of manipulation are ever subtle. She tries to scare Bailey with reports of crime when he goes to Florida. She even talks of statements like: "I wouldn't take my children in any direction with a criminal like that loose in it" (Short Stories, 296). She proves her manipulation nature through all the efforts to convince the people against going to Florida just for her benefit. On the other hand from *Bullet in the Brain*, Anders also proves and depicts herself to be a manipulator. First, after listening to the ladies talking against the bank teller, he also conceives his "own towering hatred to the teller" (Short Stories, 480). The main purpose of his reaction was to manipulate the other ladies to get much hungry with the teller. The result would have been a misunderstanding and rowdiness in the bank. Again, the manipulating nature of Anders can be seen after the men with pistol get into the bank. He tells the lady, perceived to be the bank teller about "justice is done" (Short Stories, 480). His main intention for the words was to manipulate the men in pistol so that he is spared and the lady is shot. Hence, through the selfish nature of the two characters, they all rhyme when it comes to manipulating people.

The two characters are confrontational when it comes to their ways of doing things. First, the grandmother has been revealed never to be having a direct way of speaking her mind out. However, she speaks and talks in a confrontational manner. For instance, when Bailey insists of going with the children to Florida, she becomes confrontational and speaks of the children has already been to Florida. Also, when Bailey cannot allow her and the children to go the old plantation, the grandmother becomes much concerned and confrontation where she uses the children to get Bailey to do it for them (Short Stories, 302). On the other side, Anders shows his confrontational nature just from the beginning. When he also spots the bank teller making stories with another man instead of attending to the customers, he becomes confrontational and tells her that “I think it’s a pretty lousy way to treat your customers” (Short Stories, 481). He goes on to speak of various instances like “Unforgivable. Heaven will take note”. The two characters are all confrontational. The contrast only comes in where grandmother’s style of confrontation is tactful and subtle while Anders has an angry and direct style of confrontation, which is depicted throughout the story.

There is a contrast that is reflected between the two characters when it comes to their level of association with other people. The grandmother proves to be much friendly when it comes to associating with people. However, Anders does not like associating with people whatsoever. From A Good Man Is Hard To Find, the grandmother insists of going to see friends in Tennessee (Short Stories, 296). She also enjoys being in the company of the children because of her humorous and good interactive nature. Much more, on the journey to Florida, she sits just between the two children again, John Wesley and June Star (Short Stories, 297). This could show good interactive skills and especially with the children. She keeps on making stories all the way as they travel. However, Ander, on the other hand, does not seem to be much social and interactive. His un-interactive and antisocial nature have been shown by the author after his death. For instance, all her lifestyle, he had never met the cousin Coyle and even after meeting him, he says hi to everyone else but “takes no further notice of him” (Short Stories, 484). His temper could never allow him to be social as well as the author defines him as someone who gets angry so fast. This can

be illustrated through the conversation of the women that “put him in a murderous temper” (Short Stories, 480).

The two characters are also different when it comes to Christianity. The grandmother is a good Christian and much religious as compared to Anders who seems to have lived an unserious life. The grandmother has been depicted to be prayerful and is even concerned about other people’s prayer status. For instance, she insists of the Misfit to pray (Short Stories, 306). And she even asks the Misfit a question about: “do you ever pray?” (Short Stories, 306). She insists that if the Misfit prays, Jesus will help him. Hence, it is absolute that strong and good Christians are the ones who hold so much on prayer and the grandmother who also calls herself a lady holds on prayer. On the other side, the actions of Anders does not reveal any sect of a prayerful life. First, after his death, the author brings the picture of Ander’s past life. The author speaks of Anders crashing the “father’s car into a tree” and his ribs “kicked in by three policemen when he was at the anti-war rally” (Short Stories, 484). There are times that Anders hated books and he is described at regarding the “heaps of books on his desk with boredom and dread” (Short Stories, 484). Comparing the two characters and their Christian experience, the old lady, also the grandmother shows to be a mature Christian and much diligent as compared to Anders.

The grandmother in *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, and Anders in *Bullet In The Brain* depict to be having some similarities and contrast in their character traits. Though they both prove to be confrontational, they diversely have various confrontational traits. Also, though they are similar in their manipulating characters, they have different Christian experience. And to crown all the comparison, it is sad that both the two characters had a similar course for their death. They were both shot but under various circumstances. Hence, as they stand out to play various roles in the two diverse stories, they still prove to have some similarities and contrasts in their traits.



Character Analysis of Sonny in Sonny's Blues

One of the significant characters in James Baldwin's short story, "Sonny's Blues," is Sonny. Sonny is a musician and the narrator's brother who is addicted to heroin and gets jail time for it. A peculiar trait in Sonny is his heroin abuse which he validates with his pain and loneliness that the reader relates his experiences. However, though Sonny tries to justify his choice of heroin as a result of his suffering his choice is neither just nor wise. The fact that heroin lands him in prison proves that his actions were unwise regardless of how much he might try to justify them. The justness of his actions is invalidated by the fact that there are other choices to overcoming loneliness and suffering as shown by his brother with whom they grew up but made better and just choices.

Sonny's character develops around his addiction. His motivations to drug use and healing from addiction are therefore of most importance. Clearly, his behavior bewilders the narrator, who is his brother, who is bewildered by Sonny's "crazy" actions and does not understand it initially when Sonny explains to him. The reader learns of Sonny's motivations from Sonny himself who is burdened by the idea of poverty since childhood. Sonny is scared of the challenges ahead of him as a result of his background. His motivation for drug selling and use is, therefore, his momentous desire to escape the haunting poverty he experienced in Harlem. While his decision to move from Harlem and work against poverty is wise and just, mixing his desire with drug selling and use is neither just nor wise. His motivation to change on the other hand is indicated as his search for a betterment not only for himself but for the sake of his family which he acknowledges he has caused suffering.

The most affected by Sonny's actions is his brother who also doubles as the narrator. He reveals most details regarding Sonny who he at first terms as "wild" during their childhood. The narrator tells Sonny's struggles and the caged effect of his incarceration not only to the family but also to Sonny himself who he does not believe has changed. The way the narrator perceives Sonny reveals that Sonny is determined but at the same time confused. The narrator describes Sonny's

relationship with music as both passionate and destructive. It is his brother's saving grace while at the same time his destruction. It all lies upon Sonny to decide on which path of the music to transgress. Most importantly, the narrator implies that Sonny's actions were not as unbelievable as he made them seem, except that he did not want to believe it which explains why he did not trust Sonny to be drug-free even after prison.

Though Sonny tries to justify his actions, his words make it clear that he regrets doing drugs. When he writes to his brother, he says that he is glad their parents are dead not to see his shameful behavior. Same way he keeps from reaching the narrator because he knows that his actions have ashamed and hurt him. At one instance the narrator says "when we shook hands, the baby brother I'd never known looked out from the depths of his private life," (Baldwin). He suggests that Sonny was private and lonely because he yearned for his brother's concern and warmth. Sonny's continued growth throughout the story shows that he is a round character. The reader learns about his incarceration and then his past from which he tries to come out and his implied triumph over drug use in the end. His development throughout the plot is not only in actions but in thinking about how to deal with his feelings. Other than hiding behind drugs he decides to express his emotions through music.

Sonny's Blues was written in 1957 when racial segregation was still live in the United States. Brought up in Harlem and in the state of poverty coupled with an unclear future, Sonny, like many other children in the black community, as shown by the descriptions given by the narrator, resulted to the quickest means to achieve riches or at least escape poverty. Whether by peddling drugs to attain money or using them to forget their doomed futures, the writer does not pass judgment on Sonny. Rather he presents a case of a whole community through Sonny and the narrator. Regardless, he shows that there is a way out since both the narrator and Sonny had the chances to transcend the stereotypes. The narrator succeeds in achieving a career and beginning a career while Sonny's escape lies in his music. Overall the writer author thinks of his characters and especially Sonny as preventative of the black community at a time

when they were segregated from achieving the best and had to struggle to make it or wallow in their plight.



Transformation of Huck and Jim in the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a novel written by Mark Twain, who was born in 1835 in the towns of Florida. The novel is set in the town of St. Petersburg, Missouri along the banks of Mississippi River. Huckleberry, a narrator of the novel who is thirteen years old son of a poor drunken father (Twain & Reichardt, 2009). The characters in the novel include; Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, Widow Douglas and Miss Watson, Jim, Pap, The duke and the dauphin, Judge Thatcher, The Grangerfords, The Wilks family, Silas and Sally Phelps and Aunt Polly. The main characters who played significant roles in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn novel are Huck and Jim.

Huck Finn

Huck is the protagonist and narrator of the novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Huck is seen thirteen years old in the novel which is forced to live a miserable life of his own. His father is poor and drunk a town of St. Petersburg, Missouri. Despite Huck being an uneducated young boy, Huck is seen intelligent, very thoughtful and creative who always try to make conclusions on important matters of concern about his life. Huck is also influenced by peer especial from his close friend Tom.

Despite Huck being dirty and homeless, Widow Douglas try to help to protect him from his drunken father, him but declines the offer and stick to his independent way of life. Final, Widow Douglas manages to give Huck some education and spiritual lessons that he had missed as other children. But still, Huck is less indoctrinated with social values as other young boys of his age like Tom Sawyer.

Huck is instinctual distrust, and his travel experience makes him question many things that the society has taught him. At some point, Huck and Jim tell the black slave hunters that sometimes speaking is the right way to go.

Everything seems new to Huck for an encounter he meets an occasion for the new lesson because of his background. It makes Huck set his new rules though he is not a kind of independent moral genius. Towards the end of the novel, Huck becomes more open and says all those willing to follow Tom Sawyer's leadership can do so. Despite this failure, Huck remains appealing and sympathetic. The novel teaches the society a lot of moral lessons especial young people. Just like Huck, very young at the age of thirteen but he makes a difference in the society. Huck represents what any individual is capable of becoming: thinking, feeling human being rather than a mere burden in the system of society.

Jim

Jim also one of the main characters in the novel, he appears to be a man of rare intelligence and compassion. Jim perceives to be superstitious to the position of idiocy. From a careful reading of Jim and Huck in Jackson Island reveals his superstitions that reveal his deep understanding of the natural world and he portrays an alternative form of the truth in the society. Jim also has healthy functions in the novel; this is portrayed when the author tells of that he misses his family terribly. When he reaches the river, he becomes a surrogate father, he takes care of the little boy Huck, cooks for him and shelters him too.

Like Huck-Jim is realistic about his condition and must find a way of achieving it without facing the wrath of those who can change it. Jim also is seldom; he is capable of making a bold decision. Some of his readers criticize him as being passive, though it remains that his mercy over young boy has to be remembered. Jim is depicted as a loyal and noble man (Twain, 2004). He remains a good friend of Huck especial when he cares for him. Lastly, the novel describes Jim as the only adult in the story who is positively concerned about Huck and remains as a role model to Huck.

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1. Twain, M., & Reichardt, M. R. (2009). *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: With an introduction and contemporary criticism*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press.
 2. Twain, M. (2004). *Cliffs complete Mark Twain's the adventures of huckleberry finn*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.