

# Falling leaves and bossypants- comparison and contrast essay sample



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Memoirs provide insight into a person's life that can be used as a learning experience and show a great deal about the character of the writer. A whole story told from the perspective of the author, gives the reader an impression of the writer, whether intentional or not, with the use of the author's tone, writing style, and his or her unique voice. While no two memoirs are the same, each gives off a certain feel to the reader, drawing them into the life of the author. Tina Fey's *Bossypants* and Adeline Yen Mah's *Falling Leaves* are two vastly different stories with one concerning the transition of life from a young girl to a woman living in America and the other the story of a truly unwanted girl in China. Though very different, each memoir focuses on the issues brought up in their life solely because of their gender and how they persevered through society's social stigmas.

One of the main differences between Mah and Fey's memoirs is how each is written, with both authors using a very different style of communicating their story. Tina Fey uses a very laid back approach to her writing using very simple language and uses a life experience to teach a lesson each chapter while moving chronologically through her life. Tina doesn't convey her emotions as obviously as Adeline does, allowing for the situation to display how she feels instead of just openly writing about it. " You can't be that kid standing at the top of the water-slide overthinking it. You have to go down the chute." (Page 123, *Bossypants*) This quote shows many aspects of Tina's writing style, her use of directly addressing the reader to make a point, her use of hypothetical situations to communicate her message, and finally her use of trying to teach the reader to not make mistakes she did in life. This

differs very widely from Adeline's very structured and emotional based writing style.

" I learned from this experience to rely on myself. I realized that without Aunt Baba, there was no one looking out for me... I never got lost again." (Page 45, Falling Leaves) This quote shows Mah's very straightforward writing style and how she directly shows her emotions through her stories. Even though they write very differently both Tina and Adeline consistently use vivid imagery throughout their memoirs to give the reader a clear, detailed picture about the event in the passage. " He was of medium height, slender, wore thick glasses and, although not considered handsome, possessed warmth and charm" (Page 135, Falling leaves). " He has an artist's eye for mixing color and prints. He wears tweedy jackets over sweater vests in the winter and seersucker suits in the summer. His garnet college ring shows off his well-groomed hands." (Page 46, Bossypants) The writing style in the two memoirs is not the only difference; both Bossypants and Falling Leaves convey two totally different tones. This is caused by the two very dissimilar backgrounds of each memoir, one having a more joyful and humorous tone while the other is very saddening and serious.

Bossypants has a very relaxed and amusing feel because of Tina Fey's background as an actor/comedian. Her personality bleeds through the pages with her use of sarcasm and wit as evidenced in page 93 when she writes, " This is definitely the low point of the trip, until the fire. Oh yes, there's a ship fire coming in the story. Wait for it." Her informal tone is set throughout the whole memoir and the readers starts to become more relaxed and starts to understand Fey's voice. On the other hand, in Falling Leaves Adeline uses an <https://assignbuster.com/falling-leaves-and-bossypants-comparison-and-contrast-essay-sample/>

approach much more similar to one of a novel and causes the reader to become immersed in each event as made evident in page 68, “ She slapped my face so hard I was knocked off balance. ‘ You’re lying’ she continued...” these emotion packed sections sets the grim tone throughout the novel and makes the reader empathize with Adeline’s experiences.

The main similarity commonly repeated in both memoirs is the gender discrimination experienced by both Adeline and Tina. Although they are both experiencing two very distant forms of discrimination, with Adeline experiencing abuse from her parents; both Fey and Mah had to stand up for themselves and demonstrate their worth as equal to one of the opposite sex. In Bossypants Tina often talks about how males put down female comedians as not being funny, or being of lesser importance than male comedians.

“‘Rick Fenderman says women aren’t funny.... Do you have something to say to that?’ Yes. We don’t \*\*\*\*\* care if you like it.” (Page 144 Bossypants).

Adeline abused by her step-mother at home, was unwanted because he was the youngest female child, seen as burden on the family. “ If you board that train you’ll most likely be kidnapped and sold as a ya tou (girl slave).” (Page 73 Falling Leaves).

Too threatened to run away from her abusive home Adeline was condemned to live a life full of regret, just because she was a girl. This theme of not belonging because of gender is recurrent throughout both memoirs and is an essential part of the perspective of the author. Although it didn’t seem like Bossypants and Falling Leaves had a lot in common there are many subtle similarities in the writing style, and the overall story of each memoir. The

main contrast between the two stories is the way that each tale is written, <https://assignbuster.com/falling-leaves-and-bossypants-comparison-and-contrast-essay-sample/>

delivered to the reader in a unique way while conveying similar messages.

Tina Fey liked to include the reader into the story and used a very simple writing style whereas Adeline Yen Mah used a much more fluid structure that was similar to one of a novel. Both memoirs had lessons that the reader was meant to pick up on, some obvious while others were much more subtle.