

Example of argumentative essay on the immortal life of henrietta lacks

[Family](#), [Children](#)



English

The story of Henrietta Lacks has several themes in it. It talks about family relationships, the strong spirit of Henrietta and broadly on the science of HeLa. The writer of the book Rebecca Skloot did some extensive research and study on the life of Henrietta and based on her story she has gone ahead to start an organization to help people who have greatly contributed in scientific research. She mainly focuses on the people who have not received any recognition like it was the case of Henrietta's children before it was discovered that her cells were being used for some great research. Henrietta lacks has done a great contribution and her cells caused a great revolution to take place in the study of cancer and other diseases.

Henrietta's story starts on a very low note. Henrietta was having some very tough times in her early days. Not that they got better as her life continued but the writer tries to make us sympathise with Henrietta due to the challenges she faced while she was still very young. Henrietta bears her first child while she was merely 14 years old. To make matters worse by the time she was bearing her first child she had already been abandoned by her farther. Like things were never going to get better for Henrietta, her husband David was not at all faithful to her but due to the situation she was in, she was forced to keep up with him. She went on to move to Turner station where she made friends and met her cousin Sadie.

Despite the hard times, Henrietta tried to have a positive view of life. She had a very strong spirit and her friends even described her as a person who like to laugh a lot. She even took time to go dancing with her cousin Sadie as she tried to find the good things in life. The writer here shows how Henrietta

never let the hard times in life beat her down and how she endeavoured to make the life better. Henrietta was also a very dedicated mother to her children. Her cousin Sadie at some point thought that Henrietta did not want to seek medical attention early because of the fear that it would prevent her from bearing more children. The writer seem to be passing a message up to this section of the book. Rebecca Skloot tries to tell her readers that amidst hard times in life they should take Henrietta's story as an example and have a strong will and spirit to carry on and fight hard.

Henrietta's story is majored on the science that was born from the study of her cells. Rebecca Skloot by profession is science writer so she was also mainly interested in the scientific aspect of Henrietta's life though began by telling the story of her life. The writer by doing this is able to capture the attention of many who probably would not bear reading a story full of scientific research terminologies and explanations. By telling the story of Henrietta and where she started from before her name came to be widely recognised she is able to keep her readers glued to her novel as they await to see how the events unfold.

Henrietta became aware that she was not feeling well but lightly dismisses her condition by saying she felt like she has a knot in her womb. A rhetorical choice of repetition is used with the word knot where it is severally referred to in the book and more in the chapter. Racial segregation is also brought to life by the author here. Henrietta was a black woman but the doctors on the hospital were mainly white people. It is probably one the reasons Henrietta was reluctant to go and receive medical attention. The first doctor who attended to Henrietta was a white man did not pay much attention to her

condition. There seemed to be some racial discrimination as describe by Rebecca Skloot.

It is later discovered that the knot in Henrietta's womb was a serious case of cervical cancer. The writer here uses appeal to fear as a rhetorical choice in a bid to make her readers anticipate negative things are about to happen in the coming chapters in the book. On this discovery Henrietta took her medical condition more seriously and started visiting a doctor more regularly for treatment and diagnosis. She was later told that she would require an operation to which she blindly consents not knowing it would permanently destroy her ability to bear any more children. Her doctors were however also very reluctant to give Henrietta the very fine details of the operation.

HeLa was born at this point. A cell culturist called Gey collected samples of tissues from Henrietta's cervix. He and his assistant Mary were greatly motivated to study these cells and their unique conditions. In their study they discovered that the cells did not just survive but their rate of growth was also abnormal. They did so in a very fast rate than normal human cells would. Gey passed the information to some of his colleagues who confirmed what he had discovered.

After Henrietta's condition got better the writer switches the mood to a more positive one. Here we are told of how Henrietta used to sneak out late in the night with her friends to dance. Her friends were amazed by Henrietta's strength and character and how she liked to view life in a positive manner. The writer now describes Henrietta in the perspective that her friends viewed her. Henrietta had to take Elsie to a mental hospital due to her mental illness which made her very sad again.

Later Henrietta started experiencing pains once more. We are told that her skin has burnt black on the outside. As Henrietta's condition worsened great research continued on her cells all over the world with some researcher claiming that cancer was curable. Many speculations and ideas about her cells started streaming in from all over the world. Claims even came in that her cells had grown from an immortal chicken heart.

The writer later tells that after her investigation that Henrietta's family never received any money from the research that was being done from her cells.

The doctor gets this details from Henrietta's cousin. They gave the excuse that there was a possibility that her cells were artificial and that normal cells don't continue to experience growth after a specimen is dead. This part ends when Henrietta is in hospital in her last hours where her final request to her family is to take good care of her children.