

Letter s examples essay



The outcome of the punishment and how well it worked or didn't work depends on the person dealing with the consequences. Towards the beginning of the book, *The Scarlet Letter*, I think Nathaniel Hawthorne is making the scarlet letter seem so terrible and cruel for Hester.

But as the book comes to a close, you realize that it has done some good things for Hester. Though this punishment of wearing a red "A" on your chest to show adultery seems cold, there were some positive outcomes and it was effective after all. In Massachusetts, during the 17th century, Hester Prynne is punished for adultery by having to carry around a scarlet "A" on her chest. By doing so it's showing her punishment for sinning. Hawthorne suggests that the bitter punishment will turn Hester into a cold and hard woman, but it does the opposite. The "A" turns Hester into somebody she wasn't before, in the best way possible. She becomes strong and confident.

"So strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength." (Hawthorne 148) After some time, Hester begins to feel the "A" has become a part of her and there is nothing to be done that could take it away. This punishment was effective, but not only for the bad. By wearing the "A" on her chest Hester set an example for the rest of the women in the town. At first, they cut her out of society and viewed her very poorly. "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die." (Hawthorne 59) When Hester is first presented with her punishment, the women of the town think of Hester as nothing more than a hussy. The punishment was effective in this way; because I'm sure none of the other girls would want to be in Hester's position.

It prevented them from committing the same sin. On the other hand, another part of Hester punishment was to stand in the middle of town for three hours with the new addition to her clothing. In this way, the punishment doesn't seem effective.

Instead of seeming fearful for the same fate happening to them, the women were more disappointed that the punishment wasn't greater. The women of Salem don't seem intimidated by having to wear an "A" on your chest. I don't think it was that effective in preventing others from doing the same. This punishment will prevent Hester from committing the same sin again. Though it did change Hester for the better and gave her Pearl, it did have some harsh effects on her as well.

Hester wasn't always thought of as an angel. She had to stand on the podium while people stared at her in disgust. This scaffold constituted a portion of the penal machine The very idea of ignominy was embodied and made manifest in this contrivance of wood and iron.

" (Hawthorne 62-63). Which I'm sure embarrassed her beyond belief. Hester did keep her chin up and become very independent and self-reliant, but I'm sure having the whole town despise you is hard to handle.

In this way, the punishment was effective. Hester feels so much shame and loneliness that she would never even think of acting on it again. Therefore, in this way, the punishment was effective.

In the end, shame was an effective punishment. It was meant to make Hester feel embarrassed and guilty for committing adultery, which was

achieved. It was also successful. Instead of being fearful of the same fate, the other women were more concentrated on how “light” Hester punishment was.

Hester wears the scarlet letter as her punishment and after some time, accepts the fact that it has become a part of her. Hester grows from the punishment and becomes a stronger woman. Even though the town holds some bitter memories for her, that is where most of her life is and she ends up moving back and dying in Salem. The punishment was both effective and not effective.

It was both good and bad.