

# [Comparison](https://assignbuster.com/comparison/)

[Life](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/life/), [Death](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/life/death/)

Annie Dillard, the author of “ The Death of a Moth" and Virginia Woolf, the author of “ The Death of the Moth" have very different outlooks on the subject of life and death. Annie Dillard notices the point of loss and gain involved in the circle of life. Virginia Woolf, however, seems to see life as pointless and meaningless. It is essentially a postponement of the inevitable to her. Each author writes her essay at a different point in the year. This has a major impact on the personalities each of them. Dillard, the more chipper author, writes her essay in recollection of a past summer. Summer is a time when life is thrilling and nature is at its best, a season of positivity. The offspring of many animals first come out into the world in summer, signifying the beginning of new life. Because summer is a warm and bright season, energy is at its peak, and spirits are high. Then you have less ecstatic Woolf, who wrote her essay in the fall, a time of changing, when the life of summer is slowly depleted so we can go into the cold days of winter. The autumn is a dark time in which the energy of all living things is being drained, even the summer’s green leaves begin to die out to an orange or red. Fall and summer are totally opposite seasons but the dark time of autumn reflects the dark nature of Woolf’s essay and her as a person. Each author writes in a manner that clearly describes their surroundings. Dillard goes to the woods to relax and enjoy the world. She describes her environment in a very straight-forward manner painting a vivid image of the setting; even the worms and “ twiggy dirt" received mention. She is then inspired by her book and surroundings. Woolf writes from an entirely different perspective. Instead she describes only what is outside, providing evidence that Woolf isolates herself from the rest of the world, instead of embracing and enjoying it as Dillard did. She describes the field that is being plowed, the black, net-like flock of birds flying together. All of the life and energy happening outside paints a beautiful image of what is going on, but the fact that Woolf stays in her house and just observe’s everyone living is somewhat depressing. The movements and struggle of the moth affect each of the authors differently. Dillard describes the moth’s death in a very blunt description and as more of a morbid fascination: “ She burned for two hours without changing, without swaying or kneeling, only glowing within, like a fire glimpsed through silhouetted walls, like a hallow saint, like a flame-faced virgin gone to God, while I read by her light, kindled, while Rimbaud in Paris burnt out his brain in a thousand poems, while night pooled wetly at my feet. " She sees the moth’s death as an important stage in life, as most religious people do. The moth is perceived as a creature that is struggling for a freedom that it will never receive. Woolf on the other hand, writes about the death in such a colorful way that is almost poetic. The breakdown of the moth’s death is a bit philosophical, she describes the moth as “… a tiny bead of pure life... dancing and zigzagging to show us the true nature of life. " Which when read like that makes you almost value the moth, it gives the reader a higher sense of one’s life. However, it does seem apparent that both authors come from very different backgrounds. Anne Dillard has been religious her whole life which is why she makes several religious references throughout the moth’s death. Because she views death as a glorious and beautiful thing, which is how most religious people do perceive death. This is why she is able to camp alone and is totally content with living alone, she accepts the cycle of life. But, she does mention that “ The only time I mind being alone is when something is funny; then when I am laughing at something funny, I wish someone were around. Sometimes I think it is pretty funny that I sleep alone. " This is also a proof of her faith, because she is emotionally together and has God to take care of emotions. But, she still wishes for a tangible to fulfill her emotional needs physically. Then you have Woolf, who has suffered from several deaths of close family members and was sexually abused by her two half brothers as a child who doesn’t see death in the same view as Dillard. She see’s death as Woolf creates a beautiful essay on the fragility and importance of life. Her simplicity and detail keeps her essay from becoming overcomplicated, overly dramatic, or depressing. It was a surprisingly light and meaningful essay on an event that most people would probably overlook. Although they address the same subject, the two authors express their views on a totally opposite level. Annie Dillard is at a point in her life where she feels alive and enjoying everything including her surroundings. Her very essence is reflective of the vitality of her life. Virginia Woolf is in a much different place in life. She writes her essay as if she feels the eminent doom about to overcome her. She sees herself being shut out by life and isolates herself to prepare for the end. Each individual deals with the matter of life and death in her own way; each one must draw on personal experience to determine her own perspective.