

Friendship: wilbur and charlotte essay sample

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“ No pig ever had truer friends, and he realized that friendship is one of the most satisfying things in the world.”(White 115)

“ Charlotte’s Web” by E. B. White was first published by Hamish Hamilton in 1952. This book is now over fifty years old but it is still a wonderful book for children because its main themes of friendship, hope and loyalty will always be actual and universal. E. B. White allowed his characters to explore their relationships with each other in such a way that the story’s themes grow naturally from their interactions. For instance, in the Zuckerman’s farm, unimaginable things happened in very believable ways: animals talked, a spider wrote words in its web, and a pig won fame. These characters acted from perfectly natural motives. The first example of friendship that White provides in “ Charlotte’s Web” is that of Wilbur and Fern. This is actually more of a mother-child relationship, because “ she loved to stroke him, to feed him, to put him to bed.”(8) Fern showed a great deal of loyalty to Wilbur through most of the book. But Fern, by the end of the book, had seemingly lost interest in Wilbur, choosing to focus her attentions on a boy. On the other hand, Charlotte was loyal to the end, even working to save Wilbur’s life to the detriment of her own.

She was also always there to give Wilbur a boost when he felt down about himself. Loyalty goes hand-in-hand with the theme of friendship in this novel. Fern and Charlotte are both very loyal to Wilbur. They worked hard to save him from slaughter because they love him, especially Charlotte. Charlotte A. Cavatica, the friendly, clever spider of “ Charlotte’s Web,” a character who teaches us something profound about love and commitment. She’s utterly devoted to her new friend Wilbur, the pig. Charlotte was the first who

comforted Wilbur by assuring him that she could save him when he found out that he was to be killed at Christmas time. Her love to Wilbur pushed her to find" the way to save Wilbur's life is to play a trick on Zuckerman. If I can fool a bug," thought Charlotte," I can surely fool a man. People are not as smart as bugs." (67) Charlotte is a gifted writer who came up with new words for her web to describe Wilbur: " TERRIFIC", " RADIANT." Throughout the tale she mothered Wilbur and looked after him. She worked tirelessly to save him and even though she was dying at the end of the novel, Charlotte motivated herself to write the word that secured his safety, it was " HUMBLE". Charlotte has made a commitment to save Wilbur's life, and she did it. When Wilbur asked her why she did that everything for him, Charlotte answered:" After all, what's a life, anyway? We're born, we live a little while, we die.

A spider's life can't help being something of a mess, with all this trapping and eating flies. By helping you, perhaps I was trying to life up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone's life can stand a little of that."(164) Charlotte showed us the benefits of loving and also revealed that life without love could be empty. Charlotte knew that she dies, but she can die proud that she saved her friends life. Wilbur, the protagonist, is a little runty pig. He would be slaughtered if Fern, the farmer's daughter, didn't stop his father from killing him. Wilbur was looked after by Fern meticulously and was later sent to the Zuckerman's' barn, where he encountered other farm animals and his friend Charlotte. Wilbur had a good, child-like heart; he was unable to make decisions for himself and was often unaware of the events around him. He was very polite and considerate and apologized to the other animals for waking them when he was calling out in search of his new friend. When he

first met Charlotte, he was sad about the bloodthirsty way in which she catches and ate insects. “ Well,” he thought, “ I’ve got a new friend, all right! But what a gamble friendship is! Charlotte is fierce, brutal, scheming, bloodthirsty—everything I don’t like.

How can I learn to like her, even though she is pretty and, of course, clever?”(41) But Wilbur realized after that she had no choice and catch insects for her own survival. Charlotte was really very caring and kind. Wilbur did show signs of progress, as he got older. For instance, he learned to accept Charlotte’s role in the circle of life, acknowledging that her insect diet did indeed served a purpose and was not simply “ cruel,” as he thought before. Ever since the spider had befriended him, he had done his best to live up to his reputation. “ When Charlotte’s web said SOME PIG, Wilbur had tried hard to look like some pig. When Charlotte’s web said TERRIFIC, Wilbur had tried to look terrific. And now that the web said RADIANT, he did everything possible to make himself glow.” (114)

Charlotte’s death ended their earthly friendship and Wilbur felt abandoned, lost without Charlotte, but his promise to care for Charlottes children in the egg sac continued their relationship forever.. By the end of the book, Wilbur has grown enough in character to take on the responsibility of Charlotte’s children. In conclusion, Wilbur’s memory of his friendship with Fern disappeared as she grew up and visited him less often. However, long after Charlotte’s death, the spider’s and Wilbur’s friendship nurtured by her children and grandchildren. The fond memory Wilbur held of his dear friend, “ Wilbur never forgot Charlotte. Although he loved her children and

grandchildren dearly, none of the new spiders ever quite took her place in his heart" (184).

References

1. Silvey, Anita. 100 best books for children. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. Print
2. White, Elwyn B. Charlotte's Web. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1952. Print.