

Alistair macleod's short story "to everything there is a season" essay sample

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As human beings, we are changing each and every moment as we are introduced to new ideas, values and challenges by our surroundings. In Alistair MacLeod's short story, "To Everything There Is a Season", the author depicts the anxieties and reservations of the narrator's transition between childhood and the adult world. This story also allows the reader to understand the importance of change in one's life. The story is set on Christmas Day and the weeks preceding, when the whole family was awaiting for the eldest brother's arrival. By seeing through the author's eyes, we can understand the turmoil and conflict as he feels he is trapped in between two sides; childhood and adolescence. Reluctance of changing, "Santa Claus",

Growing up is a lifelong process that is inevitable for everyone. Most of the time, we are unaware of the physical or psychological changes that are happening to us. However, when we do realize the changes are happening, it is hard for many not to feel overwhelmed and not to feel sadness about what we lose along the way. Although, when one leaves their comfort zone, one may feel confused and uncertain of what the future lies, as yearning for stability is human nature, chances are that our lives will become much more dynamic and fulfilling. In the story, the author tried to hold onto his past by perceiving himself as the "innocent" child who still believes in Santa Claus. However, in the end he realized that no matter how hard he tries to stay as a

child, time will still move on. Changes in our lives is what makes life worthwhile.

The narrator of the story is troubled at his questioning on the nature of Santa Claus, as he realizes that he may be losing his childhood innocence and stability in his life. In the story, Santa Claus is symbolic of the author's only connection with his slowly fading childhood. This is shown on page 340, paragraph 2, he said, " For without him, as without the man's ship, it seems our fragile lives would be so much more desperate." Like the drowning man, the only hope that the author sees in the situation is Santa Claus. By grasping onto the Santa Claus myth, the author too feels safe as he is uncertain of what is in store for him in the future. Despite the author's " attempted perpetuation" of the Santa Claus myth, he is fully aware of the fact that change is inevitable when he discovered that his Christmas gifts were now in the adult pile (p. 344). The fear of growing up and leaving one's " comfort zone" can sometimes be quite intimidating, but in order to make one's life meaningful, one must first be willing to take risks and be quick to adapting to changes as chances will slip away unexpectedly.

The metaphor on page 344, paragraph 4, " It is as if I have suddenly moved into another room and heard a door click lastingly behind me. I am jabbed by my own small wound," describes the author's feeling of sadness and fear from the transition from his childhood into the adult world. The scene before this metaphor describes the author's realization of his forever departure from his childhood world as his presents are no longer from " Santa Claus", unlike his younger brothers. Christmas is a holiday filled with joy and

laughter, however for the author, this Christmas meant the mark of his entrance in the adult world. As he said on page 344, paragraph 4, "...so much surprised as touched by a pang of loss at being here at the adult side of the world." He is uncertain of the future and afraid of losing his childhood innocence and memories. However, at the end of the story his father reminds him that, "...there is no need to grieve. He leaves good things behind." It is true that we may lose some of our memories along the way as we grow up, but it is also true that the future awaits us with new challenges and rewards.

The world around us is forever changing - new technologies develop, wars erupt, babies born and people dying - and we are aware of them. Usually, these kinds of changes do not generate discomfort or uneasiness in us. However, when a change is happening within or that is closely related to us and the outcome is unknown, we will strive to hold onto something for stability - past memories, old values, taking up a hobby, practicing religions, and more. It is because humans have the tendency to exaggerate the fear of the future or the unknown. The narrator's distress of growing up is a valid example of this particular segment of human nature. Still, as human beings, we have the ability to rationally analyze a situation. As philosopher Heraclites wrote more than 2500 years ago, " Everything flows and changes", and " You cannot step in the same river twice." Therefore, why should one be forever grieving for the losses which come with all changes, when we can embrace the future with the same amount of enthusiasm and anticipation?