

# The necklace paper essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Ms. Marina Spears English 1102 Research Paper 22 April 2014 Symbolism in The Necklace Many times in life we feel as if we do not fit in that is just a natural thing. We may be at a fancy restaurant or at a classy party, but there are moments in our life where we feel as if we do not belong amongst the company that surrounds us. In The Necklace, readers are swept away by a story of a woman who is in that same situation. Mathilde Loisel is a pretty woman who was unfortunately born into a not so wealthy family. She has always dreamed of having nice, expensive things, but could not afford them. It is this reason that she does not want to attend an exclusive party because she does not have nice things to wear and feels as if she will not look as beautiful as the other woman that will be in attendance. Her aspirations of having nice things lead to greed, insecurity, and sacrifice in the form of a necklace, a wrap, and a dress. The dress symbolizes her husband's love and sacrifice for Mathilde Loisel in the way that he was willing to sacrifice his money that he had been saving to buy a gun in order to buy his wife a dress for the exquisite party. This really shows how much he cares for Mathilde because he could have told her that he did not have any money and it would not be possible for her to get a dress, but instead he gives her the money to try and make her happy.

When Mathilde asks her husband for the four hundred francs he simply replies, All right. I will give you four hundred francs. And try to have a pretty dress. (401) It also symbolizes her passion for fancy, beautiful things. Mathilde is foolish because she could have used that money for necessities for her and her husband instead of something she wants. They could have used that money to pay for bills or for food. Instead, Mathilde goes out and

buys a beautiful dress that she believes will be great for her to attend the party in. Although she thinks this dress is wonderful, she still feels like she is missing something and will not look complete around this group of astonishing women. Even after Mr. Loisel makes a sacrifice and gets Mathilde a beautiful dress, she is still not satisfied. To make herself look more like the other women at this party, she asks her friend, Madame Forestier, for help and wants to know if she can lend Mathilde a beautiful piece of jewelry from her collection. Madame Forestier is a woman who appears to be wealthy and beautiful. She is just the type of woman that Mathilde desperately wants to be like.

Madame Forestier is generous to Mathilde and offers her the opportunity to come pick out a piece of jewelry. As Mathilde is looking through all of the jewelry she is still not satisfied with what she sees. Mathilde keeps asking Madame Forestier, Havent you anymore (401). That quote is a good example of how Mathilde will never be satisfied with anything. She is so greedy that even when she has many beautiful jewels in front of her she is still seeking for more. Madame Forestier could have told Mathilde that she does not trust her with her nice jewelry, but instead helps her out and lends her what Mathilde thought was one of her more expensive diamonds to wear in order to look more like the other women. Mathilde picks out a diamond necklace that she believes will compliment her dress very nicely. Charles E. May gives a great description of what Mathilde did and how she felt when he writes, she borrows a necklace from an acquaintance to impress those not easily impressed and, like Cinderella at the ball, has all of her desires fulfilled as she is transported into the fairy-tale world about which she has dreamed.

This necklace symbolizes the fact that Mathilde could not be satisfied with an expensive dress, but had to also have jewelry to go with it.

The necklace represents Mathildes greed. The wrap is a small part of the story, but it symbolizes Mathildes station in life and insecurity, a major part of the story. Mathilde could have simply worn the nice dress and looked pretty and gone to the party, but instead she focused so heavily on the fancy apparel that she let it get the best of her. Mr. Loisel covered his wifes shoulders with a wrap to keep her from getting a cold, but Mathilde felt as if she looked poor because the other women were wearing furs. So Mathilde wanted to escape and remove the wrap. The wrap covered her shoulders and it symbolized the covering up Mathildes embarrassment and the covering up of Mathildes imprisonment in poverty and Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt proves this to be true when he writes, Maupassant shows how the Loisels are imprisoned in their loneliness and their lack of self-worth. Mathilde believes to have the complete outfit now though. She has the dress, the necklace, and the wrap. She believes that she has the complete package and will be just like all the other women at the party. Mathilde has a fabulous time at the party and feels as if she has looked good enough to impress the other ladies, but something tragic happens. She has lost the expensive necklace she borrowed from Madame Forestier.

She can not disappoint such a wealthy friend like Madame Forestier so Mr. Loisel says to his wife, You must write to your friend that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it mended. That will give us time to turn round. (403) Mathilde and Mr. Loisel work very hard for a long

time to earn enough money to buy a necklace just like the one that was borrowed. After working so hard for so long it has taken its toll on Mathilde. She now appears old and fatigued. When they return the new necklace to Madame Forestier they learn the gut wrenching truth that the necklace was just a fake. According to Virginia Brackett, The Loiseles pay an incalculable personal price, both literally and figuratively, for Mathildes vanity. De Maupassant provides no evidence of an epiphany that might demonstrate that Mathilde has learned or benefited in any way from her foolish actions. However, readers may realize that her failure to take responsibility for her actions is the flaw that leads to her fall. Mr. and Mrs. Loisel worked so hard for so long for no reason at all. Mathildes greed and insecurity lead to heart break for her and her husband. There was lots of symbolism in this story about Mathildes love for expensive things.

The reason for this is that she believes she deserves to have nice things, but she couldnt. Her greed led to a hard life full of work and fatigue. Mathilde was foolish all throughout her life and her foolishness prevented her from having nice things like she had always wanted. Mathilde wanted to become a member of the upper class so bad that it was eventually her down fall.

Brackett talks about her attempt to move social classes when she says, By accepting an invitation to interact on a temporary basis with the members of the upper class, Mathilde complies with their requirements. Not only do these requirements effectively force the Loiseles to retain their lower social status, but they also cause a further loss of income by requiring Monsieur Loisel to spend money he cannot afford to dress Mathilde as she desires. Ironically, the Loiseles do descend to the working class as a result of Mathildes

pride. If she had not been so obsessed with what others thought of her then she would not have had to work so hard to get the money to replace the one she lost. I believe the moral of this story is to be thankful for what you have. Many people today see someone with a name brand watch or piece of jewelry and immediately think that that person must be rich or very wealthy because they have nice things when in reality they are probably regular middle-class citizens that were able to fool people into thinking that they can afford things like expensive watches or jewelry.

We should all be thankful for what we have and realize that there are some people out there who are less fortunate than us. Charles E. May writes, What was taken to be real is found to be false. What looked rich on the outside is actually very poor. Yet Madame Loisel, who has looked poor on the outside, turns out to be genuine inside. This quote by May just goes to show readers that you can't read a book by its cover. We should also learn to be comfortable with who we are and what we have and not become obsessed with objects or what other people may think of us.

#### Works Cited

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