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[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



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Escapism Escapism can be defined as “ the tendency to escape from daily realities or routine by indulging in daydreaming, fantasy, or entertainment.

An indication to retreat from unpleasant realities through diversion or fantasy". Our society often believes escapism to be a negative factor, as

many people take it as the inability to cope with or face the realities in our

world. But there are many different forms to escapism, from extreme laziness to the ultimate in healthy living to the devastation of heroin

addiction. But in the simplest form escapism is nothing more than offering an

escape from our own consciousness by heightening the sense of self and

giving us a feeling of liveliness. Today we can find every kinds of escapism

whether it may be watching television, playing video games or in worst

cases intoxication and use of drugs or even at times sex. The idea of

escapism can be found in The Man who lived Underground where Fred

Daniels creates his own world under the city, in The Awakening where Edna

fantasizes about Robert and the ocean and in The Metamorphosis where

Gregor imagines himself to be a pest. In the Man who lived underground,

Fred Daniels creates his own world under the city after being falsely accused

of killing a women. He runs away from the police and as he gets tired of

running away he decides he either has to surrender or find a hiding place.

So, as to escape from the police he goes into the sewer through the

manholes in the street. Making way through the water and darkness he finds

a dirt cave off to one side, and then comes to a brick wall, through which he

could hear a group of people singing. After exploring the sewer he gets tired

and goes back to the cave and falls asleep. When he wakes up he is cold and

hungry but he knows he should leave the sewers. So as to pass the time, he digs holes through the wall and goes into basements. In the sewers he feels free and does what ever he wants to. He goes from one basement to another passing from undertaker's office, furnace room and even a jewelry shop. Along the way he picks up whatever he feels like. He gets some tools from undertaker's office, a lunch box from the furnace room, some jewelry and cash from jewelry shop and electric light and a radio. Then he returns to the cave where he put the electric light and radio he had collected from the basements, and decorates his wall with the money he took from the jewelry shop and sprinkles the floor with diamonds which looked like " looking up into a sky full of restless stars" (Wright 340). He does not consider his acts a stealing because the things he has taken meant nothing to him. Eventually he gets tired of hiding and goes back up to confess to the policemen but they do no listen to him and shoot him to death. Similarly, in the Awakening the idea of escapism can be found where Edna is often fantasizing about Robert and the ocean. Edna has this oppressive feeling related to her husband and the dull life, which she feels is ahead of her. Although she does seem to love her children but she finds peace within her own thoughts. After her return from the Grand isle, where she spends most of her time with Robert near the ocean, she stops attending and holding perfunctory social obligations at the family home and she becomes increasingly involved with her painting through which she would escape the reality and fantasy about Robert and the time spend with him in the ocean. She completely feels like a new women after her experience with Robert and her mind becomes free of its usual patterns. The new found strength that she gets from freeing her

mind helps her to move out from her husband's house and explore the understanding of herself. Likewise in the Metamorphosis the idea of escapism can be seen where Gregor one morning finds himself turned into a pest. Gregor, who was the only person that worked and supported his family and worked to pay off the debt of his parents. He disliked his job and was very tired of life. It was escapism that had brought on his metamorphosis, allowing him to find freedom from work and from the ways of life. Even though he had turned into a pest he could not free himself from the guilt of not being able to help his parents. " To keep himself from being lost in such thoughts Gregor took refuge in movement and crawled up and down the room"(Kafka 701). Now, enslaved by his feelings of duty to his family, he attempts to escape these by hiding under the couch and out of the way. This escapism pays a heavy toll to him, as his relation with his parents and even his sister get more strained than before and they starts to neglects him completely. Eventually he dies but no one of his family member was moved by his death but instead was relieved from his death. In conclusion, we see different forms of escapism in all three stories. From how Fred Daniels creates a place for himself in the sewers to hide away from the police, to how Edna, being fed up of her boring life and being oppressed by her husband finds a way to gain a new strength in her by thinking about Robert and to even how Gregor transforms himself into a huge bug to get rid of his old life. Escapism cannot only be looked from a negative prospective, it sometimes helps individuals to find their inner self and transform them to whom they actually want to be. Works Citeded Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis. Humanities in the Modern Worlds: An Africana Emphasis.

2nd Ed. Wendell Jackson, et al. NY: Pearson, 1998. 688-712. Print. Wright, Richard. The Man Who Lived Underground. Humanities in the Modern Worlds: An Africana Emphasis. 2ndEd. Wendell Jackson, et al. NY: Pearson, 1998. 335-350. Print.