

Growing up essay sample



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Growing up is a gradual process of maturation during which we change from children to adults. This change is made possible by our experiences in our life and by the people who have influence upon our lives. Growing up is never easy and can be quite difficult in many cases. However, from proper support from those around us solutions can always be found for the obstacles that may stand in our way. Through the journey of growing up we develop a sense of maturity and individuality which sets us apart from those surrounding us. This is evident in the set text 'Angela's Ashes', a film about the hardships of growing up as the main character Frank McCourt explores the challenges of growing up. This process of growing up is also found in the 'Born on a Blue Day', a book by Daniel Tammet describing his hardships of growing up with Autism and 'I Had Bulimia and Depression', a feature article describing a young girl's fight with Bulimia and depression as a young girl. Each text once again outlines the importance of the process involved with growing up allowing us to gain a greater insight of what 'growing up' really means.

Childhood is important in the process of growing up as it is the time when children begin to develop personal identity, shaped on both positive and events which occur in this phase. This is evident in the film as the protagonist; Frank often skips his Irish dancing lessons in order to attend the movie theatre with friends. This scene is often filmed using close up shots, to allow the viewer to see the obvious happiness of the boy's face; diegetic music, which the boys present are seen to be enjoying and the voice over by the narrator, confirming the delight they got from watching the film with their peers. This scene depicts childhood in a very positive manner as it

shows childhood can often be very joyous at times. The related text, 'Born on a Blue Day' however, shows the negative side of childhood. Daniel is often bullied at school and finds it hard to fit in with his peers. To show the negativity the book is written in a very despondent style which allows the reader to sympathise with Daniel and understand his troubles. The comparison between two texts (and characters) is clearly shown, because of Daniel's disability keeps to himself but Frank due to his positive childhood is a lot more daring and 'out there'. These factors in their childhoods would go on to influence their levels of maturity.

Maturity is the ability to learn from others and mistakes we have made and understand the importance of responsibility. This is apparent in the scene where Frank gets a job delivering coal. From this he finally gets the sense of becoming a man and the new-found responsibility of managing money. During the scene which he is working the film employs techniques such as: low angle shots- to give the impression of growth and responsibility; non-diegetic music – which shows the happy and bright outlook on life Frank is showing and the lighting is no longer low key which shows hope and change. Similar to the film, in the Novel written by Tammet he describes the importance of learning and the role it played influencing maturity level. For example he states, " Whenever I mastered a new skill, such as keeping eye contact, I felt so positive because I worked so hard on it". By writing using a first person perspective throughout the book (not only in this quote) allows the reader to connect with Tammet. Each text is similar in the way that maturity may be daunting to some and challenging at times but should always be seen as positive point of growing up as it defines who we are.

They also show that personal maturation is always evolving with on-going life experiences. Life experiences are the actions of ourselves and others and the consequences each provide. For example in the film upon the death of a family member the father leaves the family in order to fuel his alcohol problem while Frank is left to care for the other children. In such a scene the lighting is very dark and low key setting the depression atmosphere. Camera shots are also taken very close up in order to show the full emotion of the faces of the children, especially of that of Frankie as he struggles caring for his siblings. In the related Feature Article as a result of Brookes actions (i. e. vomiting and causing bodily harm) she hurts her family on an emotional level as a cause. The feature article is written using emotive language such as “ I was depressed and angry” to allow the reader to step inside her shoes to gain a proper perspective of her thoughts as she battled with her conditions. Unaware of the hurt she was causing others. On comparison each texts depicts the negative side of life experiences and how they not only affect ourselves, but those around us too.

While negative life experiences can greatly change who we are and affect us physically and mentally support from family and friends can provide support required to push through such difficult phases. Family and friends can always be seen as a source of support always pushing us along when things get tough. Regarding the support side of family and friends when Frank is hospitalised due to an illness his whole family is around him to support him and push him through. Techniques to show this are: positive facial expressions/body language by close up shots – reinforcing the positive influence of family and dialogue such as “ It was the first time my Dad ever

kissed me”- showing Franks obvious happiness with the love his Dad shows towards him. Similarly in the feature article when the mother of the young girl realises the issue at hand she is very persistent in sending her to counselling and seeing appropriate help.

The writer states, “ When my mum realised what was happening she was heartbroken. She begged me to see a counsellor or doctor”. By writing the piece in first person perspective using a subjective type of writing it allows the reader to empathise with the girl and once again showing the unconditional love and support families provide. These pieces show no matter how difficult the situation family will always be there to support. Growing up is never easy and is different for everyone. From studying growing up I have gained a greater awareness of the process of growing up and the factors which influence them. The changing perceptions in one’s views come over time from a sense of maturity, responsibilities gained from life experiences, excitement and traumas of childhood and by those who surround and support us every day. While it is never easy growing up is something which must be embraced as it makes who we are to this very day.