

Comparing stories essay



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Carver created a story that has some similarities and mostly differences to the Solomon story (1 Kings, Chapter 3).

The people in this story are not wise like King Solomon was. The True mother in the biblical story has different from this mother because it seemed like the “ Popular Mechanics” mother wanted the child out of jealousy and less because of love. The couple is struggling over a child that is both their own, while the two women are fighting over a child that is only one of theirs. There was no dead child in “ Popular Mechanics” like in the Solomon story, and there was no judgment handed out. Raymond Carver makes a great point with his story “ Popular Mechanics”, regarding society and relationships. He points out that the parents are more concerned with the icon of the baby, and less with the baby itself.

This story shows how the struggle of the baby began with a simple photo, which metaphorically began the struggle for the actual baby. Couples in our society will do things to each other to hurt and demean them when the relationship isn't working out. Whether it's a struggle over a child or a house, things tend to get ugly fast. Carver shows the dehumanization of the baby by it being an object used to hurt another loved one. The parents continuously refer to the baby as “ the baby” or “ this baby”, impersonalizing the child from an actual person to a symbol.

This symbol of victory is very common in our society and is evident in high divorce rates and statistics that continue to grow. Many divorces end in divided families, people taking sides and sides trying to hurt one another. The Story of an Hour” and “ Popular Mechanics” may have more connections

then people may think. She experiences (or thinks she has) a loss and is devastated, just like the couple in Carver's story. The couple has lost their relationship and are trying to deal with it in their own ways. While Mrs.

Mallard deals with her loss by grieving, the couple deals with their lost relationship by fighting over their baby. There are many obvious differences between the two stories, but the symbols and losses in the stories can be compared. I asked my sister, father, and grandmother to read "Popular Mechanics" and give me responses to certain relevant questions that would help me gauge how they interpreted the story. My sister is 23, my father is 55, and my grandmother is 78.

I tried to get the widest range of age groups I could, to get the broadest range of perspectives. My sister interpreted the story a little bit different than I had. She believes that the parents were fighting over the child strictly out of love for the child. She felt that he may have been a little bit of a victory symbol. My grandmother felt similar to my sister, she read the book as if she were in that situation.

She felt that if she was in that situation she would be battling for custody of her child as well. Neither her or my sister really picked up on the foreshadowing in the beginning with the fighting over the picture of the baby. She was a little bias and felt the mother should have the child. My father basically nailed the entire theme and inner meaning of the story.

He picked up on the foreshadowing at the beginning and felt strongly that the parents weren't necessarily fighting over the child, but the symbol of victory. I feel there are a few reasons for the different responses. First off,

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age groups play a large role in how things are perceived. My sister and grandmother weren't really looking for the inner message, as they were just basically reading the story. My father read the story with more of an open mind; he had the idea that there was an internal message because I told him I was going to be asking him some questions when he was finished.

He was also the only one to read the story twice and I feel that is very important, especially with short stories.