

Sample compare and contrast essay essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This compare and contrast essay is about the *Desiree's Baby*, by Kate Chopin, and *The Necklace*, by Guy de Maupassant novels. They have numerous similarities, as well as quite a few differing themes. The two stories were both written before the 1900s and incorporate a twist along with an unexpected ending. *Desiree's Baby* had, intertwined within the short story, themes of racism, derived from the racial hierarchy of Louisiana at the time, and femininity whereas *The Necklace*, had a variety of themes, such as wealth, suffering, and, like *Desiree's baby*, femininity. Throughout the two stories, the themes can be contrasted as well as the writing technique.

Desiree's Baby demonstrates multiple thematic instances of racism. Set in Louisiana, in the 1800s, the story depicts several examples of the perception of race and African-American inferiority, and the result of the perceptions of both races leading the topic of race in a taboo direction. This superiority caused characters to act in morally incorrect ways. The central conflict revolves around Armand's speculation about Desiree's unclear racial genetics and the race of their child. Armand is blinded by his hatred of the African-American race so much so that once he notices the seemingly darker skin-tone the child was developing, he fore-sakes Desiree and completely abandons her. This exemplifies not only the amount of subjugation the blacks faced, but also showed the psychological affects slavery had on the white people raised in this environment. Given the racist background of the area, Armand believes that because Desiree may have traces of African-American in her, by having a child, marrying her, and staying with her has blemished his family's name.

Despite Desiree's desperate, but futile attempts to reach out to Armand and reason with him regarding her heritage, and confirming the background of her family, Armand disregards anything she tells him as false due to his speculation of her race. Armand loathing for the African-American race is so extensive that only the letter he discovers from his mother could convince him the truth of his blood.

Madame Valmonde, was woman in the story who finds a child abandoned at her plantation's gate and decides to take her in. This baby is named Desiree, and is cared for by the couple as their own child, believed by Madame Valmonde that " Desiree had been sent to her by a beneficent Providence." (Chopin one) The story starts with Madame Valmonde explaining how she found Desiree, resting in a shadow of their gate. She is visiting her now grown daughter Desiree, who has just given birth to a baby. The short story makes evident contrasts with Madame Valmonde and Armand with the love Madame Valmonde shows Desiree even prior to finding out her unclear racial background.

Themes in The Necklace, by Guy de Maupassant, vary from wealth and femininity to materialism. Wealth and femininity go hand in hand in The Necklace. Maupassant writes " She was one of those pretty and charming girls born, as if by an error of fate, into a family of clerks." (Maupassant 1) One of the first things the reader finds out about Mathilde is that it seems as though she was meant to live an extravagant and luxurious lifestyle. This follows the theme of money and wealth. Maupassant goes on to write " She suffered endlessly, feeling she was entitled to all the delicacies and luxuries in life" (Maupassant 1). Mathilde wanted nothing more than to escape from

her middle-class life and acquire great wealth to which she felt entitled to. Mathilde Loisel, is the epitome of a victim at the mercy of a patriarchal society. She finds herself with virtually no control over her own life, wishing she was someone else. Mathilde demonstrates her pride by doing everything in her power to create a facade of wealth when in reality, she's clearly middle class. The reader is assured once again that Mathilde considers herself intitled to the finest things in life by Maupassant writing " she had been born to enjoy every refinement and luxury, depressed by her humble surroundings." (Maupassant 1) Mr. Loisel, however, had a different perspective on their life. " Ah! Beef stew! What could be better," she dreamed of fine dinners, of shining silverware" (Maupassant 1). While Madame Loisel seems to be discontent with their lives, Mr. Loisel is perfectly happy.

Mathilde's husband, Mr. Loisel is a clerk in the department of education. Mathilde is not satisfied with her husband, due to his financial circumstances, being a member of the middle-class. She despises the mediocrity of their lives together and is dismal having to stay in their apartment, fantasizing of a life of opulence she feels she was born for. However, Mr. Loisel seems content with their humble lifestyle and takes delight in the life they have. While Mr. Loisel takes value in the more insignificant things, he additionally appears dedicated to Mathilde, going through the inconvenience to please his wife with an invitation to an exclusive event which he has no interest in attending. He runs all around town looking for the necklace his wife lost and ends up spending his life's savings replacing it. Mr. Loisel gives the impression that he's an easy going easily pleased husband in The Necklace.

The reader is assured once again that Mathilde considers herself intitled to the finest things in life by Maupassant writing “ she had been born to enjoy every refinement and luxary, depressed by her humble surroundings.”

In both short stories, the women are described as pretty. “ For the girl grew to be beautiful and gentle, affectionate and sincere – the idol of Valmonde.” (Chopin one) and “ She was one of those pretty and charming girls” (Maupassant one).