

# A literary analysis of the whistle by benjamin franklin

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The analysis shall examine characterization as it has been used by the writer in the story. The story of the Whistle by Benjamin has salient themes. The broader theme that the author has presented in the work is indeed the lesson that has been learned from the story. One easily learns that it is not wise for people to spend all the money they have on things that are unworthy. Benjamin reveals that; whenever he was tempted to buy things that he felt were unnecessary, he would convince himself not to pay so much money for the whistle, and as such, he saved money. This theme overrides the whole story and one is able to notice that Franklin applies the situation in all matters. The author has used a number of stylistic devices that contribute majorly to the theme. First, there is a strong use of imagery. The whistle has been used figuratively in the story. Benjamin Franklin consistently reveals how he perceived objects to be purchased as “ whistle” or as “ time with value. In an excerpt, he suggests that when he saw another fond of popularity and constantly engaging themselves in political bustles while neglecting his own affairs, he would compare himself with such a man and conclude that the man is paying too much for the whistle, something he would not want to do.

The author has further used repetition in the entire work. Repetition is a style that is always used when one wants to create some sense of musicality, memorability, emphasis, or create some stress on an idea. (Ishizuka, Kenkichi, and Takehisa Onisawa, 13)In this case, the author has utilized the style of repetition to present the four meanings. In the first instance, the author makes emphasis on the whistle, to inform the reader to develop strong imagery on it. In another instance, the word whistle is repeated to

break the boredom of continuous narration. It, therefore, sets a breaking point. This breaking point announces a new transition, and as such activates the mind of the reader to be alert for the new approach. In the whole story, Benjamin uses the concept of the whistle to emphasize the theme he intends to present. At the conclusion of his story, he reminds us that the whistle has shaped the manner in which he views wastages of time and money and how he manages to save his money. The whole story by Benjamin has been presented in a narrative form using the first person. This is a style that authors use to present two main ideas. The first idea is to demonstrate immediateness in the speech. Through this, the writer reveals the use of soliloquy. He notes that “ I say to myself”. This gives the reader some ideas on the attitude the author has towards the scene and broadly defines the general mood of the story. Secondly, the narrative aspect is borrowed from the traditional narration that keeps the reader glued to the reading. It creates some urge for the audience to desire more of the story. The audience can easily follow the buildup of the theme by following the plot of the story. The styles that the author has used to have a strong influence on the determination of characterization. At the beginning of the story, one is able to meet a naïve Benjamin Franklin who can be tricked easily. In the story, it is easy to trace Benjamin as he grows to maturity. In the process, he interacts with several people who shape his character and ultimately enriches his theme of spending. At first, Benjamin is a spendthrift individual who is overwhelmed with the fact that he has a copper and must use it in the shop immediately. He meets Another boy, who is exploitative and takes the advantage of Benjamin by exchanging the copper with the whistle. In the

story, Another boy stirs a new concept that contributes to the theme. He allows Franklin to understand that the decisions that people make affect them. There is no certainty that people will help one in making decisions. This is because Franklin notes, “ I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one”. At this point in the story, the character of Another boy, allows the audience to understand that there will always be other people who would be ready to exploit one, lest one makes the decision to think for them. In the story, we also met Benjamin’s brothers, sisters, and cousins. The first meeting with the sisters, brothers, and cousins, portray them as scornful people. They laugh at Benjamin, amidst the sorrows that he faces. Benjamin notes that “...they laughed at me so much for my folly...”. A deeper understanding of the character of the family members reveals that they were so much preoccupied with reproaching Benjamin on his gullibility. Ideally, it is the family members of Benjamin that allows him to realize his weakness. Their character allows the theme of the story to shape up in a better way. The author notes that “ this afterward was of use to me”. Benjamin takes painless lessons from the family members' scornful attitude in the subsequent reading, one is able to realize that indeed the behavior of the family members was the turning point for his success.