

The bean trees- outsider

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In *The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver, being an outsider is not just one main theme, but it is one theme that is reoccurring throughout the whole book. When someone is an outsider, they are different from everyone else, and somewhat stand out. Right off the bat, outsiders don't fit into commonly used stereotypes. Kingsolver uses Taylor, Turtle, Esperanza, and Estevan to portray this theme. Taylor is an outsider because she is just not a typical girl. Unlike many other girls in her town, Taylor does not want to become pregnant. In fact, she wants to graduate from high-school, or at least intended to, and wants to have a good future.

Even though Taylor doesn't want to get pregnant, she gets stuck with being a mother anyways. Taylor travels to find a more meaningful life, but she still feel like she doesn't fit in, or even belong. Because Taylor doesn't share any specific 'bond' with anyone, she is an outsider. Later on in the novel, she meets Esperanza and Estevan, who share common values as her. Turtle, Taylor's adoptive daughter is as well an outsider. As Turtle was abused, she suffers to be an outsiders to her own body. Because of this, Turtle will never develop mentally as quick as other children her age. For the first half of *The Bean Trees*, Turtle is silent.

She cannot communicate with others, as her own words are trapped inside of her body, causing her to be an outsider from the ones who love and surround her. Kingsolver converts the message that many different barriers can cause people to become outsiders, as Turtle's is a language barrier. When turtle finally overcomes these barriers and finds someone who shares common strengths and weaknesses, she is finally an insider. Esperanza is living in a country where she is not welcomes because of her culture. She was forced to

give up her own child, and does not express herself because of a language barrier.

Everyday, she lives holding her emotions inside, feeling as an outsider, thinking she doesn't even belong here, which eventually bottles up, and leads her to try and kill herself. Although she is married, she is still missing a puzzle piece, her daughter. Estevan is clearly an outsider, as well is his wife, Esperanza, because they are immigrants. Estevan is used to all of the hate against immigrants, and he becomes accustomed to being an outsider. Estevan states " What I really hate is not belonging in any place. To be unwanted everywhere. " Conveying these thoughts, Estevan believes him nor his wife, Esperanza, have a place in society.

Later in the novel, Taylor, Esperanza, and Estevan become insiders as they find outsiders who they share common morals and bonds with. In life, everyone has numerous obstacles and barriers they think they may never overcome, but once they do, they are finally able to communicate to the world and create friendships with people who have similar interests. When everyone comes together as a family, each and every person is finally appreciated for every attribute that makes them unique. Being an outsider is not particularly a bad thing, as it might just be what keeps one human and especially different from everyone else.