

Discuss character development in everyday use

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



number Character Analysis of Dee As the story begins it becomes clear that Dee, one of its central characters, may be regarded a driving force of the plot. Alice Walker, the author of the story, uses this character to illustrate the way traditional life of Afro-Americans transforms. Dee represents the new way of thinking, while her mother and sister prefer to follow traditional lifestyle. Thus, the story describes confrontation between two worlds, the so called “ progressive” and the “ traditional” ones.

Readers see that Dee does not want to be a part of the traditional world. She wants to fence herself off it at any cost. She even decides to change her name, though its history may be traced back to the Civil War “ I couldnt bear it any longer, being named after the people who oppress me”. Instead, she chooses name Wangero, which her mother finds difficult to pronounce. What Dee desires is to become a new person.

It becomes obvious that Dee’s mother and sister worship her. It is noticeable from the first lines. “ Sometimes I dream a dream in which Dee and I are suddenly brought together on a TV program of this sort” acknowledges her mother. What she wants is to achieve her daughter’s approval. At the same time, Dee is unlikely to desire it. What she seeks seems to be attention and personal meaning. Even more, she seems to behave like a selfish, arrogant, and insensitive person.

The story is told on behalf of Mama, that is why readers are not given an opportunity to trace the way Dee thinks. Instead, readers are offered to judge her by her actions, words, and relations to others. For example, these lines “ At sixteen she had a style of her own: and knew what style was”. It says a lot about a girl who comes from a family which leads a labor-intensive

life. " In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands" that is how Mama describes herself. At the very beginning readers understand that Dee is totally different.

She wants to be a part of idealistic Africa. Consequently, she rejects actual experience and severe realities that Afro-Americans face. That is what unites her with Hakim-a-barber. This couple stands in stark contrast to Dee's mother and sister. At the same time, readers may only guess what kind of relationships Dee has with this man. " They didnt tell me, and I didnt ask, whether Wangero (Dee) had really gone and married him" comments Mama. It is clear that Maggie and Mama cannot let themselves live in a world of illusions. At the same time, rustic realism of their world becomes a ploy for Dee. " Thats it!" she said, " I knew there was something I wanted to ask you if I could have". She behaves as if she is a true lover of antiques. " Maggie cant appreciate these quilts!" exclaims Dee when she tries to prove that a thing of everyday use may turn into true valuables.

She takes pictures of her own house as if it is a museum piece. " She never takes a shot without making sure the house is included" that is what Mama notices when Dee is taking photos with her Polaroid. An outside observer may think Dee is just a tourist, or at least a guest, but not a family member. Thus, Walker uses Dee's character to show how people forget their own roots, heritage, and family. Instead of due respect and honor Dee demonstrates condescension and insensitiveness. She strongly believes she is above Mama and Maggie.

Works Cited

Walker, Alice. *Everyday Use*. *The Story and Its Writer*. Ed. Anna Charters. Compact 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2011. 852-858. Print.