

A comparison of "when the bomb drops" and "the choosing" essay



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"When the Bomb Drops" is about a lady trying to choose a family who live on her road to share her bomb shelter with. She uses a process of exclusion rather than including and through this she portrays her character as a narrow-minded, snobbish housewife.

"Those people without an inside loo should be crossed off the list." This statement alone shows her prejudice to those people and families with whom she feels are not as wealthy as she is. "We had another think and deleted the Ahmends whose skin isn't pink," also shows her prejudice from a racial view. The speaker excludes all those people who she feels are inferior to her, "We decided against, communists, dustmen.

.. senior citizens..

" and chose those people who were in her same social class. As the speaker describes her "difficult decision," she likens it to a Christmas card list, which shows her ignorance to the whole situation. Her ignorance is also shown in the final line, "Actually, we think it might be rather fun." It suggests that she has no understanding of the situation and does not think of the consequences to others, as she knows she, Tom and her chosen family will be safe.

The poem shows a lack of feeling for others and her selfish way of thinking. The speaker obviously feels that she needs to make an impression on people as she felt it necessary to have a "Georgian card table inlaid in brass." The fact that she was "sipping Perrier" rather than drinking water also shows her posh character to the reader. The writer has used rhyming couplets and

regular rhythm to ensure that the poem appears light-hearted, which emphasizes the way in which the speaker views the whole situation.

The poem is a monologue, which consists of two verses of 10 lines, and one of 7 lines. It has been written in a colloquial way and it has been made easy for us to envisage the woman speaking, "dear, dear neighbour" is an example of this. Her possessions have been used by the poet to emphasize her snobbish character. For example, "our Georgian card table inlaid in brass" and "my Gold Parker pen," shows her need for self-importance. The family who they eventually choose to share their bomb shelter with are obviously in their same social class with a double-barrel name and it is just then the speaker decides that they are friends. The speaker "hurried over there and made a pact.

This is also used to portray her selfishness that nobody else is allowed in the shelter and her final thought is that if anyone else tries to come into the shelter, "Tom's got a gun." In other words, the speaker would ask her partner to shoot someone as opposed to let them into the bomb shelter that they are going to share with the Snodgrass-Rhys family. This light-hearted poem with the selfish self-centred character contrasts well to another light-hearted poem, "The Choosing". The choosing is about a woman who looks back on her childhood and reminisces on the past. The poem is split into eight stanzas all of different length. Each stanza describes a different part of her childhood and by the sixth stanza, it is ten years later.

The speaker talks in a colloquial way describing her friendship with her best friend called Mary. Throughout the first half of the poem, the poet

emphasizes the idea of the two friends being equal in all aspects. "First equal", "Same coloured ribbons", "equally shyness", "first equal, equally proud" are ways in which the writer shows their similarity within the first stanza. There was obviously a lot of competition between the two girls as they were always equal at everything, "competition for top desk", however the speaker does admit that she was worried about not being Mary's equal. "And my terrible fear of her superiority at sums" shows this.

Throughout their early childhood, they lived in the same council estate in similar houses until "the choices got made." Mary's father had obviously lost his job and so Mary and her family were forced to move away. At this point the two friends took different paths and their lives became very different. The end of stanza three is the changing point in this poem. From this moment, the friendship between the two girls is never the same again.

The speaker becomes distant from the family, "I'd glimpse among the others... Mary's father.

"As the girls move different ways, the speaker carries on with education at high school whilst Mary is taken out of school because she could not afford it.

"He didn't believe in high school education, especially not for girls, or in forking out for uniforms." Between this stanza and the next, we are moved on ten years. The speaker describes how she saw Mary on the bus and notices their very different ways of life.

She notices that Mary is married to a handsome man and that she is pregnant. At this point, the speaker becomes jealous of Mary's way of life

and becomes slightly envious. She compares her way of life studying at <https://assignbuster.com/a-comparison-of-when-the-bomb-drops-and-the-choosing-essay/>

university and remembers the opportunities for happiness and queries what happens and states that she does not remember making the choices to separate from her friend. " and wonder when the choices got made we don't remember making. " The two poems are similar in the way that they are both written by two women who look at their situation in life.

Both women are comparing themselves to others and relating to choices that have been made or are being made. They are both written in a colloquial form. " The Choosing" focus' on a similarity between the two friends whereas " When the Bomb drops" focus' on the differences between families in a neighbourhood. Both poems are fairly easy to relate to and are fairly light-hearted. Both poems place an emphasis on decisions; in " The Choosing" the decisions made separate two really close friends whereas in the poem, " When the Bombs drops", the decisions made are decisions that will affect a life or death situation. In " The Choosing" the decisions made were done so without the speaker being aware of them and the implications.

However in " When the Bomb Drops", the speaker makes harsh decisions, which she chose to do so in order to exclude people. Both of the women are very different in their character. The lady in " When the Bomb Drops" is a selfish, self-centred snobbish woman who feels the need for self-importance. The Character in " The Choosing" appears to be a more sensitive relaxed lady who shows her feelings and emotions to the reader. " not that I envy her, really. " The poems are similar in many ways and different in others.

Both Characters have very different personalities and very different reactions to situations and are different in the way that they are written. One of the

poems is written in a very regular rhythm and rhyme and the other is written in a more colloquial way that makes it easy for the reader to envisage someone actually speaking it. The regular rhyme and rhythm in "When the Bomb Drops" emphasises the very regular and strict personality of the speaker. The Characters personality in "The Choosing" is shown to be more relaxed as one line flows to the next i.

e. enjambment. I personally prefer "The Choosing" because I feel that it is easier to relate to the speaker and her situation. I also feel that it has more feelings and emotions which I think help add to the readers understanding of the poem and also relate to the whole situation. I find "When the Bomb Drops" very difficult to relate to because I do not think that anybody could act this way and would be willing to stand-by and watch people die.

I feel that this poem is written in a way, which is too light-hearted for the situation. I find "The choosing" has more effect on me and that it is more realistic than "When the Bomb Drops."