

# True comedy explores themes as serious and important assignment

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True comedy explores themes as serious and important as appear in any tragedy. Demonstrate to what extent Educating Rite contains serious and important themes as well as being a comic play. BY D.. Thomson Educating Rite True comedy explores themes as serious and important as appear in any tragedy. Demonstrate to what extent Educating Rite contains serious and important themes as Wily Russell play entitled ' Educating Rite' Is a dark and comic drama set within the confines of a University classroom. The play features two characters, Frank a troubled lecturer who has grown disillusioned with his existence, and Rite, a working class

Liveryman with a thirst for knowledge and a desire to find meaning In life. The drama tackles many serious themes including alcoholism, social class and exclusion, relationship troubles and gender roles. It addresses these issues in an engaging and comic way, the seriousness of these issues often disguised by the wit and charm of the characters. The way that Frank is introduced to the reader says a lot about his character. The curtain draws on Frank frantically scurrying about looking for a hidden bottle of whiskey that he has concealed in his bookshelf. " Eureka" exclaims Frank as he finally finds it.

This somewhat amusing scenario serves to highlight an unhappiness felt by the character and Issues around alcohol. This point Is further highlighted during a rather sardonic going and throwing with his partner. Frank concedes In this conversation that he Is taking on extra work " to pay for the drink", and the billing nature of the dialogue suggests that all is not well in his relationship. Rite enters the scene full of energy and life after battling with the door knob on the way in. Her demeanor is that of a nervous working <https://assignbuster.com/true-comedy-explores-themes-as-serious-and-important-assignment/>

class girl who is desperately trying to come to grips with surroundings that are totally alien to her.

Rite's brash and unconventional manner is perfectly illustrated in her attempt to converse with Frank about an erotic painting displayed in his room. " This was like the porn of its day, wasn't it? " Rite innocently asks. The characters repeated questioning disguises an awkwardness she feels amidst an overwhelming desire to gain an education and move up In the world. In amongst their troubles there begins to blossom a friendship between the pair, Rite compared to the elitist crowd with which he is familiar.

Frank on the other hand is an enigma to Rite, she does not understand why Frank is so unhappy in a life that she so separately craves for herself. This dynamic brings about some truly comic moments between the characters, an example of this being when Frank attempts to familiarize Rite with the works of E. M Forester. In this dialogue, Frank tries to emphasis to Rite the importance of looking at literature from an academic perspective. This point is somewhat lost on Rite when she Jokingly asks " Does the repeated use of the phrase " only connect" suggest that in reality E. M. Forester was a frustrated electrician. Rite's relationship with men is a theme that develops throughout the play. Rite feels eke she is being held back by her husbands expectations. Her relationship with her husband deteriorates as she continues to study against her spouses wishes. This culminates in her partners desperate attempts to keep her in her place by burning her books. Rite's charm is not lost on Frank, he tells her at their very first meeting that

he thinks she is “ rather marvelous”. As the relationship develops Franks fondness for Rite grows and he becomes increasingly protective of her and perhaps Jealous of her progress.

This point is illuminated when Rite begins to make friends amongst other students. When Rite is invited to travel with some new friends Frank immediately barks “ you can’t go”, this hasty response shows that Frank is fearful of losing influence over Rite and perhaps losing her altogether. Rite’s relationship experiences demonstrate the struggles that working class women were likely to encounter at this time and the opposition they faced from the expectant and often overbearing men in their lives. As Rite progresses through her academic studies she begins to feel a disillusionment with her present life and a feeling that she does not belong.

Her studies opened up a new world to her that she had not previously encountered. She began to feel ill at ease with her working class background as she regarded those around her as lacking in culture and ambition. She did not however feel at ease amongst academics and scholarly types either and this left her in a sort of limbo where she began to lose sight of what makes her unique. Her feelings are demonstrated in the following quote, “ I’m a freak. I can’t talk to people I live with any more. An’ I can’t talk to the likes of them on Saturday, or them out there, because I can’t learn the language. This frustration was further compounded by Franks desire to preserve Rite’s individuality at the expense of her progression. His criticism of Rite’s work as containing “ nothing of you in there”, illustrates Franks desire to conserve the things in Rite that he finds most alluring. The play ends on a rather sad

note as both of the characters are left with uncertainty surrounding their futures. Franks drinking and subsequent behaviors have taken their toll on his work and on his relationship. Franks future lay in Australia without his former partner as punishment for his actions.

Rite also faces upheaval in her life s she begins to come to grips with the changes that have occurred as a result of her decision to gain an education. What is clear is that the pair are unlikely to be sharing the play in a poignant scene between the characters with Rite giving Frank a haircut that she had previously promised. This moment of rare intimacy between the pair illustrates the warmth the characters feel for each other, it does however seem improbable that they will share many more moments like this in future. To a large extent Educating Rite tackles many serious and important theme's in a UN- evasive and thought provoking way.

It is a credit to the author that he is able to tackle such issues while maintaining a thread of comedy throughout the play. As examined in this essay, the play is able to look at issues such as social class, gender roles, alcoholism and relationship troubles without descending into morbidity and manages to keep the reader engrossed throughout. The humanness of the characters and their flawed nature helps the reader to empathic with the pair and their conflicting views of the world provide the catalyst for an often dark but comedic tale. Bibliography Russell, W. (2007). Educating Rite. 1st deed. London: Methuen Drama.