

# Maya angelou pivot point essay



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Graduation. A memorable turning point in life. An important turning point for Maya Angelou the author of Graduation. Angelou does an extraordinary job at taking her readers through her graduation with a feeling of being present. As a young black girl in Arkansas around the 1940s, her graduation was a turning point. It defiantly opened her eyes to a realization that was needed to help her through life. With careful word choice, Angelou leads her readers through her essay with a sense of mood and feel as if the reader was right next to her during her graduation experience.

The first part of the essay, Angelou expresses her excitement for graduation. She was the person of the moment, the birthday girl (paragraph 6). Everything this girl ever lived for was narrowed down to her graduation. She even thanked God for letting her live for this day which shows how special this day was for her (paragraph 20). Her dress fitted perfectly and she looked like a sunbeam (paragraph 25).

Angelou was certainly excited and ready for this memorable day of graduation. She put a lot a practice into getting ready for it, and her excitement is obviously felt within the lines of her essay. Quite unexpectedly, her mood changed when an ugly feeling came in during the ceremony of this exciting moment of life, an ugliness like an unwelcoming guest (paragraph 49). Mr. Edward Donleavy, the invited guest speaker, changed the mood for Angelou to a very negative and depressing one by the speech he gave which was negative towards the blacks. " Graduation, the hush-hush magic time of frills and gifts and congratulations and diplomas, was finished..." (paragraph 44). Angelou becomes depress, and her word choice and mood change

dramatically from the previous excited girl. She felt as if all control on life was lost for her because of her race, life was “ awful” (paragraph 46).

Hope and pride was not all lost for this graduating student. Angelou was on top again after Henry Reed, the A student, began to sing a poem by James Weldon Johnson (paragraph 53). This was a pivotal turning point for her.

This student opened her eye’s and gave her the hope she needed. The words of Patrick Henry came to her “ I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death. ” (paragraph 58). Angelou’s sense of pride and motivation came back and can easily be felt within her essay at this point.

She was proud to be a “ member of the wonderful, beautiful, Negro race. ” (paragraph 61). What an encouraging message Angelou gives her readers through this life experience. I didn’t think I would enjoy reading about someone’s graduation, it sounded like a boring topic, even though it normally means a lot to the person who is graduating, but by Angelou’s choice of words and dramatic mood changes, it was easy to read with feel.