

Belonging: semantics and builds self- confidence assignment

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In your view, which of your related texts most strongly represents the idea of Belonging. Explain your view with reference to TWO of the collected texts. A sense of belonging can emerge from the connections made with people, group or a community. To connect with others we have to assimilate, we have to act and behave like those who we wish to associate with. From feeling connected and belonging we feel valued and accepted by others as social human beings. There are also implications from not belonging, our inability to connect can lead to isolation, alienation, vulnerability and dislocated from society.

These ideas are explored in *The Island* by Armin Greder and the article *Sense of belonging builds self-confidence* by *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. In *The Island* the nakedness of the man symbolises the insecurity and vulnerability of not belonging, this is also explored in the article *Sense of belonging builds self-confidence*, with references to 'alone' and 'by yourself'. Imagery is also used in *The Island* with the contrast of the large bulk residents and the small man to symbolise the powerlessness in not belonging.

Also the imagery of the young children bullying the isolated boy is used to convey the idea of powerlessness in not belonging, it also represents the societies values being passed on to their children. A major theme in both texts is that when we don't fit in we become isolated, separated and alienated from others. In *Sense of belonging builds self-confidence* this is explored through the simile "wishing you were somewhere else, like on another planet", this exaggerates to emphasises how not belonging can make us feel isolated.

Throughout *The Island* the man is contrasted against a white background with no other people or surroundings in close proximity, this is used to show how not belonging can make us isolated. In *Sense of belonging builds self-confidence* there are references to “connections”, “accepted”, “valued” and “community”, It emphasises that when we belong we feel connected we others, accepted and valued by the community. With a sense of belonging and connectedness it builds our self-confidence and self-esteem and we feel as a part of something bigger.

In *The Island* it shows that we have to assimilate to belong, we have to act, talk and behave like those we wish to associate with. It also shows how we put up barriers to those we don't wish to belong or associate with. This is represented by the symbolism of the great wall which was built, to not let any more people wash ashore. The title *The Island* is ironic because, we usually associate an island to an exotic location where people go to relax, but for this man the island is where the man is deserted and treated like an outcast, this emphasises the negative impacts of not belonging.

A major technique used throughout the short story is juxtaposition of the words and the imagery. An example of this is “so they took him in”, without the imagery it is seen as a kind gesture and makes him sound as he belongs, but with the imagery of the dark, bulk men holding pitch forks puts a different connotation to the words. This is used to emphasise the importance of belonging and how not belonging can make us vulnerable.

As shown in the two texts, connections made through people, places and the larger world can give a sense of belonging. We have to assimilate to belong,

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we have to act, talk and behave to those who we wish to associate and make connections with. With a sense of connectedness we get a feeling of value and acceptance by others. Also the implications of not belonging are explored in these texts, if we don't belong we are dislocated to society and feel isolated.