

Amy tan's life experiences in "two kinds"



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“ Writing is an extreme privilege but it's also a gift. It's a gift to yourself and it's a gift giving a story to someone”. Amy Tan knew she had a gift and perfectly executed it by writing “ Two Kinds”. Amy Tan's life exceedingly impacted her works of literature. Amy Tan's writing was influenced by her family, childhood, and her culture.

Tan's writing is largely influenced by her family. Tan uses her experiences and forms them into her novels and stories. Amy Tan's father was a Baptist minister, but her mother would tell her gory stories which started Tan's love for grotesque stories and a touch of rebellion. Tan later had many family problem such as her father and brother both passing away due to brain tumors. Tan also learned later about her mother's abusive relationship which influenced her writing as Tan mentions similar aspects to that relationship in “ Two Kinds”. Tan's past experiences with her family is largely influenced in her works.

Not only was Tan influenced by her family, but into further detail she was influenced by her childhood. Tan read “ Jane Eyre” and “ Catcher in the Rye” when she was a child which inspired Tan's writing. Throughout Tan's childhood she was inspired by these books which the love for those books all started with her mother's stories. Tan's father was a Baptist minister which led Tan into a more of a rebellious phase which can be seen in “ Two Kinds”. Tan uses her life experiences in her stories which makes the story seem more real and personal. In further detail of her family, most would say Tan was influenced by her childhood.

An overall look over how Amy Tam was influenced was by her culture. “ Her own life and that of her mother and grandmother in pre-revolutionary China has been dodged with astonishing drama, tragedy and violence. While the inheritance can be traced in her novels. What stands out the more is the changing, often abrasive, interplay between generations between Chinese mothers and their American daughters.” There was no doubt that Tan's life was influenced by her culture because she grew up as a Chinese-American. Since Tan is a Chinese-American her readers can have a sense of what it is like since she intertwines her culture into her stories to help her readers visualize what it is like to be a Chinese-American. Tan's culture influenced her writings which is an overlook of her family and childhood.

Tan was greatly influenced by her culture, family, and childhood. Tan's culture of a Chinese-American, who's family greatly inspired her by telling her stories in her childhood gave her a different perspective on life than most. Tan's short story, “ Two Kinds”, gives her readers a little a taste of her own life. Amy Tan perfectly puts her life into her stories to show how widely she was influenced by the ones around her.

“ Tan describes herself as a lover of language, not a scholar of English.” Tan illustrates her story “ Two Kinds”, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, for her readers to understand her point of view. Tan uses her culture and her past experiences to express how she felt during those times. Tan's plot of her story is intriguing because of how she uses similes, metaphors, and irony to illustrate to her readers how that moment felt or seemed like, so the readers can fully grasp the concept.

'Two Kinds' tells of a mother and daughter expecting a great life in America. Her mother wants Jing-mei to be a prodigy, making her do pointless tests that she sees other prodigy children doing in magazines. The tests prove to be useless, but Jing-mei's mother decides to make Jing-mei take piano lessons with their neighbor, Mr. Chong. He is deaf and has poor eyesight, but having a teacher with disabilities gives Jing-Mei the ability to play as she wants to and basically not learn. Later, Jing-Mei's mother signs her up for a talent show. She plays a song called Pleading Child and does absolutely awful. She thought her mother would be mad because the whole town was there watching, but surprisingly her mother says nothing to her about the recital. Later, her mother asks if she is going to the piano lessons. Jing-Mei did not want to pursue playing the piano. Her mother forcing her to go, Jing-Mei exclaims 'I wish I had never been born; I wish I were dead! Like them [referring to the mothers dead twins in china].' This left a blank face on her mother, horrified by what her daughter had said. The piano lessons had stopped and she did not have to do any of the prodigy trivial tests her mother had forced her to do before. Her mother later dies, and Jing-mei, now an adult, is asked to take the old piano and her notes. She takes the piano and begins playing through her old music. She finds that the song 'Pleading Child' was only half of the song she had been playing. The other half was called 'Perfectly Contented.' Tan shows her readers in this story to be careful of what you say to others because one's words can hurt another.

In "Two Kinds", there are many of literary elements. Firstly, Jing-Mei uses a simile when she compares her 'screams' to a 'crazed animal' when she looks in the mirror and believes that she is a failure. There is another simile

later on in the story when she describes the aged hands of old man Chong. She says, for example, that his fingers are like an ' old peach' that she once found in the refrigerator. Tan uses those similes so the reader can visualize or understand how something is happening. Tan's similes describe those instances very well and helps the reader to understand what is happening.

Another literary element in the story is a metaphor. It is used by Jing-Mei when she compares her words of hate to ' worms and toads' climbing out of her chest. This metaphor is effective in emphasizing the anger and resentment that she feels toward her mother. Tan also uses metaphors to help understand how the characters are feeling and to set the mood in the story. The metaphors help the reader to see how Jing-Mei felt in this situation. Tan uses metaphors to show how the characters feel , so the readers can know the mood of the situation.

Finally, there is some irony in the story too. As a child, Jing-Mei hated the piano because it represented her mother's expectations. As an adult, however, Jing-Mei rediscovers the piano and learns to love it. This is ironic because her feelings toward the piano end up being very different to what the reader would have expected. Tan uses this irony to set the two tones in the story. The first tone that is set is anger however the second time is apologetic because Jing-Mei regrets what she said to her mother when she was angry which left her mother hurt for a very long time. Tan uses the irony so the readers can grasp the concept of the story.

Overall Tan perfectly describes her story using similes, metaphors, and irony. She uses these certain devices so that her readers can grasp the idea of

what Tan wants the readers to learn. Tan wants the readers to understand that one's words can go a long way. Also Tan wants her readers to know that it is okay to disagree with what other people want for you , but do not disagree with them by hurting them with one's words. Tan uses simile, metaphors, and irony in " Two Kinds" so the readers can fully understand.