

# Who you want to be

Business



Have you watched the Olympics on tv and thought “ that is so cool, I wish I could do that, But it would be impossible for me to do because it’s too hard. It’s not who I am”? This is a common mindset for many people these days. We look at something we have the desire to do, and decide that it’s too hard or that it’s not who we are. The girl Ni kan from “ Two Kinds” by Amy Tan feels the same way. In the story, Ni kan’s mother encourages her to play the piano, but because Ni kan doesn’t believe that she can be something great, she decides not to try.

Eventually at the end of the story Ni kan learns that she has talent and that she could have been good at piano if she had made an effort and applied herself when she was young. Through advice, things directly stated, and learning, we see that the theme of “ Two Kinds,” is “ You can be whatever you want to be if you apply yourself.” The first way we see the theme in this story is through the advice given throughout. In the story Ni kan’s mother makes her learn to play piano. Ni kan decides not to try, she is able to trick her piano teacher into thinking she’s practicing. This is easy to do because he is old and cannot hear well.

Her mother sees what she is doing and tells her “ Not the best. Because you not trying” (Tan 98). As Ni kan grows up, she still continues not to try. Once she turned thirty her mother tries to give her the piano as a gift, and she reminds her again that she could have been great “ You could be a genius if you want to..... You just not trying” said my mother.

She said it as if to announce a fact that could never be disapproved”(Tan 103). Even though her mother reminds her time and time again that she

could be good at piano if she tried, Ni kan still ignores her mother's advice and continues to play half heartedly. Another way we see the theme is through things directly stated in the text. Ni kan clearly states toward the beginning of the story that she could have been good at piano " I did pick up the basics pretty quickly, and I might have become a good pianist at that young age."(Tan 99). She acknowledges the fact that she never became good.

She didn't believe she could be good at piano because she didn't think that was who she was. " But I was so determined not to try, not to be anybody different..."(Tan 99). Ni kan knows she could have become great at piano if she had listened to her mother's advice and applied herself. The last way the theme is shown in this story is through learning. Near the end of the story, Ni kan ends up sitting down at the piano and starts playing the song she played (and hated) at the recital. She realizes that the notes came back to her easily " I played a few bars, surprised at how easily the notes came back to me.

" (Tan 103). When she looks to the right hand side of the book, she sees that there is another half to the song " And for the first time, or so it seemed, I noticed the piece on the right-hand side." (Tan 103). And after she plays it she realizes that it was the second half to the song she played at the recital " And after I played them both a few times, I realized they were two halves of the same song."(Tan 103).

I think this part of the story is telling us that Ni kan had only learned one part of the song, and that if she had learned to play them together it would have

been beautiful. She realizes if she had believed in herself and tried to be good, she could have been a great pianist. The theme of “ Two Kinds” “ You can be whatever you want to be if you apply yourself,” is shown through three things; advice, things directly stated, and learning. Ni kans mother gives her advice many times throughout the story that she could be good at something if she would only try. Through things directly stated, Ni kan admits that she did pick up on things quickly. She knew she really would have been excellent at piano if she had applied herself.

Learning is something that happens at the end of the story when Ni kan discovers that she did have talent, and that if she had truly applied herself she would have been A great pianist. So what are you going to do next time you feel like giving up because something seems too hard? Are you going to be like Ni kan and not try? If you ever feel like you can do something because it seems to hard or just isn't who you are, remember that you can be anything you want to be if you apply yourself and believe.