

A rose for emily reaction paper



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

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A Rose for Emily

The first short story published by William Faulkner (1897-1962), *A Rose for Emily*, invites the reader into the dark and oftentimes deranged world of Emily Grierson. The Southern Gothic story takes the reader on a transforming journey alongside the main character from a sweet and innocent young girl to a mental-ill spinster. The main character Emily was once a bright and promising young girl who becomes a mysterious eccentric recluse, and a focus of obsession in the town.

Emily may fall far from grace but never gives up on living life on her own terms. She somehow maintains her old southern traditions, resisting change and the coming to age of a new south brought on with a new generation. It is not until the death of Emily and the end of the story that the reader comes to know just how far the heroin has fallen. The story “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner uses several strategies such as irony, symbolism and, narration to convey the story. The author uses irony to set the tone for the story early. The irony in the story starts with the title, “A Rose for Emily. A rose is a beautiful flower with a pointy, which can be painful, stem with thorns. The title represents the beautiful flower and the story represents the sharp thorns. A rose is something one may bring to the funeral of a beautiful woman, here this story begins. The irony lies in that Miss Emily is never brought roses but continues to receive thorns throughout her life. These thorns include the illness and death of her father and the null chances of a proper suitor. In response to these situations she creates here own thorns against life.

The thorns created by Miss Emily do not come to light until after her death, when the body of impossible lover is uncovered, which, “ once lain in the attitude of an embrace. ” (Faulkner, 1930, p. 710) The irony in the story adds to the tone and helps create the sense of tragedy and pity the reader is left feeling for the character. Symbolism is used throughout the story in various ways to reinforce meaning and provide enrichment to the story. The reader must be open and willing to think deeply about life and experience to see the larger, hidden meaning of symbolism used.

Symbolism is used in the setting of the story. The house that Emily lived in for so long functions as an analog to Emily herself, “ lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay” alone and apart from society. The description of the house is not just about the house alone, but an accurate description of Emily and the way Emily has come to live her life. The description to the house also symbolizes the theme of social and culture conflict. Symbolism is also used to describe the character in the story. The unknown narrator of the story describes Emily as a “ fallen monument” (Faulkner, 1930, p. 01) and her appearances in the windows of her house looking like a “ carved torso of an idol in a niche” (Faulkner, 1930, p. 703) provide her function as an icon in the past. The symbolism used in the story creates descriptions that the reader will not soon forget, thus adding to the impact and presence of the story. Every story has a teller, a narrator; the narration of the story impacts the telling of the story and how the reader preserves the story. The narration of the story had a huge impact on the telling of the story.

The reader is not sure who the narrator is or what their interest is in the subject of Emily. The person telling this story is an observer of the story. It is

unclear what side the narrator is on when it is stated that, “ We did not say she was crazy then...she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will. ” (Faulkner, 1930, p. 703) The narrator defends Emily and speaks out against her lifestyle. The person telling the story assumes to be talking on behalf of the entire town. It almost appears as the town itself is speaking and telling the story as it has happened over the years.

Setting Analysis of the Story a Rose for Emily

This is apparent when it is said, “ our whole town went to her funeral” (Faulkner, 1930, p. 701) and the repeated use of “ we. ” Through the use of narration, Faulkner is able to make reader feel as, though they are a part of the story being told. A Rose for Emily, by William Faulkner, highlights what can happen when the clock moves forward but time does not. Emily Grierson is seen as the victim in this story because it somehow appears that she was not able to fulfill her potential and find her place in the world.

Thus the town takes pity on her. In the end the reader is also somehow compelled to have pity for Emily even though the reader grossly disturbed by her behavior. By using irony, symbolism, and narration, Faulkner is able to direct the readers’ reaction away from a grotesque and morbid story to a powerful story of sympathy. Reference Faulkner, W. (1930). A Rose for Emily. (pp. 701-710) Barnet, S. , Burto, W. , ; Cain, W. (2011). Literature for composition: Essays, stories, poems, and plays (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Longman.