

"landlady" by roald dahl and "chemistry" by graham swift essay sample

[Literature](#), [Fiction](#)



There are lots of great short stories out there, but in my opinion, both ' Chemistry' by Graham Swift and ' The Landlady' by Roald Dahl are two of the most unique and effective stories. They share both similarities and differences throughout. Comparing and contrasting the way the authors use their inimitable writing style to achieve their intentions in the story will give us more idea how these stories are alike and distinct.

In a way, these two stories are similar because both the authors had carefully chosen the words they used in order to tell the relationship between characters. In ' Chemistry', the line " Then one day-it must have been soon after Mother met Ralph-we watched the boat, on its first trip across the pond to Grandfather, suddenly become deeper, and deeper, and deeper in the water." The metaphor and the word choice author uses in this line give readers more detailed and concrete ideas about what the relationship is like between the characters.

" The voyages were trouble-free." tells the readers that the incident was a sudden shock, and it's where characters' relationship change, especially between mother and grandfather. The Boat represents mother's love and faith in grandfather has sank and altered. This metaphor gives reader a stronger feeling about how mom has changed and makes the readers thought about the reason why Ralph is so important to her that she can even break the ' equilibrium' between them. In my opinion, I think the reason why she abandoned her father is because she ' really want to stick by Ralph', she needed the affection and accompany from him and she doesn't want to loose

her beloved again. The repetition of the word 'deeper' also emphasizes how she's already made up her mind to abandon her father and be with Ralph.

Similarly, in 'Landlady', the relationship between characters has gradually changed throughout. In the beginning, Billy thought the landlady was 'terribly nice', which he was quite grateful to have such a nice landlady who gave him a well-appointed service, but as the conversations go on, Billy was then frightened by her weird and creepy contents, he 'sat there staring straight ahead of him into the far corner of the room, biting his lower lip.' This tells the readers that he's beginning to be frightened and suspect the landlady, foreshadowing the readers that she might be doing something that couldn't be trusted by Billy.

In another way, these two stories are different because the authors have been using different perspectives when narrating the story.

In 'Chemistry', the author has written the story in the words of the narrator, mixing both the perspective of an adult and a young boy's. Line "My father's death was a far less remote event than my grandfather's but no more explicable, I was only seven." can be a good example. Almost the whole story was written in past tense, added to the effect of recalling. He's shown a grown-up man recalling memories when he was back in 7-10 years old. This kind of writing style makes readers feel more personal, because the subject is 'I', when reading out the story, readers will feel like they're experiencing the narrator's life, as if they are the narrator. Also, another interesting fact about this kind of writing style is that if I were to look at the same events in other

character's perspective, it might be another whole different story because the same event was experienced by a different person.

In ' Landlady', author has written the story in third person's perspective, enable readers to look at the story as a whole, to look at events in detail, and to clearly feel the atmosphere author intended to create. To me, this writing style makes me feel like as if I'm watching a movie, while the whole story was said by a narrator , describing what's happening in the movie. This writing style makes reading more entertaining and fascinating.

The way authors creates characters in both stories are quite different as well.

In ' Chemistry', author uses the actions of the character to tell readers about character's personality. After reading the story, readers will notice that although Ralph hasn't done anything particularly bad, but because of his presence, the relationship between the entire family has changed, in a bad way. He's often quite selfish and has a strong acquisitive instinct, which readers can tell by noticing his actions towards grandfather and mother, he would ' shout over the table to grandfather : Why don't you leave her alone?!' he would also " said to the mother " For Christ's sake we're not waiting all night for him to finish!" which frightened mom. The author has uses the verb to " describe" the character's personality, creating a more interesting way for readers to understand in detail, instead of reading a series of adjectives, the author has inlay the words for characterization into the story.

In ' Landlady,' author uses character's dialogue to tell readers about the character's personality, which is dotty, creepy, or even evil. Author has also intended to use Landlady's conversation with Billy to foreshadow the later horrible thing that she'll do. Dialogue such as ' His skin was just like a baby's' and ' I stuff all my little pets myself when they pass away.' have all foreshadow and indicates landlady's creepy personality. This is another unique style for characterization. By reading the dialogue, you can be more familiar with the character.

In conclusion, the two stories, ' Landlady' by Roald Dahl and ' Chemistry' by Graham Swift has both similarities and differences. This two authors have used different perspective to narrate the story, as well as to use different style when creating the character's personality. However, they've also shared similarity. Both the way author tells the alteration of relationship between the characters are quite similar.