

"the witch" by shirley jackson and "the storyteller" by saki essay sample

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



“ The Witch” by Shirley Jackson and “ The Storyteller” by Saki Essay Sample

The art of storytelling has been around for many generations. “ The Witch” by Shirley Jackson and “ The Storyteller” by Saki share the common act of storytelling. The stories reflect each other’s main concept of telling a story within a story. Both authors provide imagery and detail within the ambience and characters.

The stories share similar surroundings. “ The Storyteller” and “ The Witch” begin in a railway carriage. As both stories advance so do the settings. Both stories take a twist by continuing the act of telling a story within a story. In “ The Storyteller,” an Aunt and Bachelor compete in telling a tale to three children. Saki seems to acknowledge the Aunt’s lack of talent in storytelling as he proclaims “ evidently her reputation as a storyteller did not rank high in their estimation” (pg. 2). Concurrently, the Aunt tells a dull, moralistic story with no detail to atmosphere. Her lack of acknowledging surroundings unfulfilled the curiosity of the children. The bachelor however, excels and entertains the children by telling a thrilling tale. He describes his setting to have contained “ lots of other delightful things in the park. There were ponds with gold and blue and green fish in them, and trees with beautiful parrots” (pg. 4). His story contains lots of imagery and detail. “ The Witch” carries the act of telling a story within a story as a mysterious stranger tells a gruesome story to a young boy. The story told by the elderly man is similar to that of the Aunt from “ The Storyteller”. His story provides little attention to setting. Similar to the bachelor from “ The Storyteller”, the stranger grasp’s the

attention of his audience as " the little boy nodded more vehemently, and the mother lifted her eyes from her book and smiled, listening" (pg. 3). Both stories excel in grasping the attention of the reader. The setting of " The Witch" reflects " The Storyteller" through imagery and detail.

Both stories distinguish similarities between characters. The characters of " The Storyteller" and " The Witch" portray one another. Both stories involve children, guardians and an outcast. In " The Storyteller," the Aunt carries an envious, rival role while the Bachelor is the protagonist of the story, making the reader question the definition of a bachelor. He was quite curious and talkative. He was quick to state his opinion as he proclaimed " I don't agree with you,"(pg. 3). He wasn't afraid to speak his mind just like the mysterious stranger from " The Witch." Shirley Jackson mirrored Saki by writing " The Witch." The short story continues the use of children, guardians and an outcast by giving similar roles. " The Witch" contains a small boy, mother and elderly man. The mother play's a protective, maternal role in the story. She spoke with a over-powering tone as she said, " Just what do you think you're doing" (pg. 4). She appears a watchful guardian just as the Aunt from " The Storyteller."

The stranger from the " The Witch" appears " an elderly man, with a pleasant face under white hair" (pg. 2). Just like the bachelor, his story doesn't reflect his image. As the story diverts by having a story within a story, the characters express their own imagination through storytelling. The Aunt from " The Storyteller" speaks of " a little girl who was good, and made friends with everyone" (pg. 2). She provides no imagery and detail within her

non-existent characters. The stranger from "The Witch" reflects Aunt's characters as he tells a story of his little sister who he "loved more than anything else in the world" (pg. 3). In contrast, the Bachelor from "The Storyteller" describes his character well. He uses imagery in describing Bertha who "won several medals for goodness, which she always wore, pinned on to her dress"(pg. 4). Both the stories use descriptive words to address the characters.

Both stories use setting and characters in a corresponding manner. "The Witch" and "The Storyteller" contain characters that share a competitive nature as to who can tell the better story. Both stories carry the setting of a railway carriage and presence of children which adds imagery to the stories. The concept of telling a story within a story which is displayed by both authors is unique and entertaining for the reader.