

# The lesson by toni cade bambara essay sample

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



*The Lesson* by Toni Cade Bambara highlights the social inequality and injustice that happened during the 1960s in America. It used the point of view of Sylvia, one of the child characters in the story, thus making her the narrator.

The story revolved around a day in the lives of Sylvia, her cousin Sugar and their friends Big Butt, Fat Butt, FlyBoy, Mercedes and Rosie Giraffe, children from the slums of America and their trip to F. A. Q. Schwarz, an expensive toy store.

The story basically implies something about the natural human desire for power. An apparent example is seen on the character of Miss Moore. The black woman who was able to get a college education and aspired to change the lives of these children by thinking that her utmost duty is to share them what she learned from her education. Although there was this conflict between her and Sylvia, it did not come to her to neglect the poor situation these children are into.

But when we say that Miss Moore exemplified the desire for power, this desire does not mean that she wants to be superior over any of the other characters in the story. There are no other aspect in the story to which Miss Moore wants to be more powerful than the fact they are all living in a society which promotes exploitation and oppression as seen in the lives of Sylvia and her friends. She did not necessarily use her physical strength to overcome this situation but rather, utilized her intellect to affect change to the people around her and to free themselves from the powers of social injustice and inequality.

And this is why basically, she brought Sylvia and the other children to the toy store. For them to see that their situation in the society is unjust, as shown by Miss Moore saying “ imagine for a minute what kind of society it is in which some people can spend on a toy what it would cost to feed a family of six or seven. What do you think?” The children saw toys which cost them their whole meal for a month or so and yet for other people, this amount is only meant to buy worthless things such as toys.

Through this symbolism, Bambara was able to show that this is what the American society was during the 1960s. A society where inequality and injustice haunt the lives of the people specially the African-American communities. And through this story, Bambara was able to affect the lives of her readers and the whole Black community most specially.