

Their eyes were  
watching god



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In the book *Their Eyes Are Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston there is a woman named Janie, who is forty years old and has experienced a lot of situations involving men and love.

Figurative language is used in the novel to show the struggle between love and individuality that Janie experiences. One of the first examples of figurative language that helps express the theme is located at the beginning of chapter three. The narrator directly asks "Did marriage end the cosmic loneliness of the unmated? Did marriage compel love like the sun the day?" (21) Here the reader must ask does marriage destroy a person's individuality. Also, the reader must ask does marriage create love.

Hurston uses superb similes to magnify the significance of the theme.

Another example appears in imagery at the beginning of chapter seven. The narrator describes Janie by saying "She got nothing from Jody except what money could buy, and she was giving away what she didn't value." (76)

In this quote Janie is unknowingly giving up her individuality for love or what she thinks is love. In the text it shows Janie doesn't value what she is giving up to Jody. The last and most powerful example of figurative language is located in the middle of chapter eight. Here Janie says "Mah own mind had tuh be squeezed and crowded out tuh make room for yours in me" (86) to Jody. What Janie is trying to do by saying this is show how she feels about him.

This is a brilliant metaphor describing how Janie hands over her individuality still not knowing what love is. It seems as if she's beginning to understand what love isn't. In final analysis Janie has been through

several relationships and has not been able to find love. The overall theme of the story *Their Eyes Are Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston is love versus individuality. Janie expresses the theme by giving up her individuality through marrying different men, having a relationship with Jody, and even giving up the ability to think for herself.

Janie has experienced many different types of relationships all eventually making her surrender her individuality.