

# Madeleine l'engle's "a wrinkle in time"



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Madeleine L'Engle's "A Wrinkle in Time" ranks with the best known classic children's stories. Perhaps a "Lewis Carroll Shelf Award" and a runner-up position in the "Hans Christian Andersen Award" would prove this claim.

However, all the prestigious awards and the wide readership were not enough to put "A Wrinkle in Time" in the pedestal of being one of the best works classic children literature.

L'Engle's science fantasy had received a barrage of criticisms from literary critics. The aspect of the story that had received much damage is the story's ending. Before we go on further with this exploration of "A Wrinkle in Time", it is essential to reiterate that the story is categorized as a children's story—it is intended audience were children.

The critics of the novel had approached the narrative in an overly critical fashion that is opposed to the book's nature of being a light and fun read. And because of much overly critical approach, many had failed to appreciate that "A Wrinkle in Time" is packed with valuable insights that are likely to have a positive effect on young readers.

The composition of the story seems to aesthetically decent for its intended audience. The plot was rich in exciting adventures and entertaining elements like aliens and inter-space travels—elements that grab the attention of children.

The protagonist of the story was a fourteen-year-old school girl by the name of Meg Murry. Having a child as a protagonist makes it easier for young readers to relate more to the book. Moreover, before all the science fantasy

elements were introduced, predicaments that are normal to a child were discussed through the character of Meg.

She is considered to be an underachiever and short-tempered by the people around her. These kinds of predicaments, more commonly called peer-pressures, are faced by average children worldwide.

In addition to that, Meg is set to have an adventure of a life with her brother and friend to rescue her father. This kind of adventure would sound very interesting and fun for children readers.

The effectiveness of the narrative as a story for children owes much to its uncomplicated language. The language that L'Engle had incorporated in the text was uncomplicated enough for easy absorption for children of reading level.

But more notably is that although there was science fantasy elements in the story, L'Engle did not presented those elements a scifi-geeky way. The uncomplicated language can be seen when Mrs. Whatsit was explaining the "tesseract" to a child like Meg (L'Engle 85).

The fact that " A Wrinkle in Time" a wide readership is arguably already enough to prove its effectiveness. The critics of the novel had made an approach that is considerably unnecessary. They had stripped a children's story off its very essence. This paper would stand beside the argument that any overly critical approach to this particular text can be considered an over-reading.

The novel was not written for critics, it was for the children's enjoyment. And because of an overly critical approach, many had failed to appreciate the

ending of the story. What makes the ending appreciable is it is rich with insights that are likely to have a positive effect on young minds.

For us to have a better vantage point in reviewing the ending, let us divide the ending into three significant parts: Meg's final battle with IT, the reunion of the family, and Mrs. Whatsit's invitation for further adventures.

In Meg's final battle with IT, the children are given the suggestion that they are capable beings. Meg is just an average child defeating an alien disembodied brain. This aspect could boost a child's confidence towards facing challenges in life.

In Meg's reunion with her family, children are taught how to care for others. Her father and other characters were anxiously waiting for Meg's safe return. This had taught Meg that she is important as person. Just like the protagonist, children readers could also have the same positive realization.

Mrs. Whatsit's invitation for further adventures suggests that after some challenges in life, may it be being an underachiever or getting lost within the continuum of time, better things and more adventures are waiting for us.

The optimism that this could instil in the minds of the children would be very useful to them for this will teach them a positive outlook in life. A positive outlook would help the children through challenges in life, especially when they grow and move to adulthood—where scepticism and pessimism are prevalent.

The ending should not be tampered with by the readers as changing the ending would violate the concept of authorship. Revising the ending is plain plagiarism and with simple logic, this is L'Engle's story—not the reader's.

Although, it is understandable that the readers and critics to have opinions and interpretations. But they should not tamper with a classic of children's literature that was enjoyed by generations of young readers. What they could do with their opinions and interpretations is to keep those as writing materials. Who knows? They may end up writing a masterpiece for children just like " A Wrinkle in Time."

#### Work Cited

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*. NY: Dell. 1973