

Good comparison-contrast essay example

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



Comparing Langston Hughes's & Maya Angelou's Understanding of Spirituality in Their Childhood

The narrative of Langston Hughes's "Salvation" and Maya Angelou's "Sister Monroe" is quite similar, especially since both essays are written from a child's point of view and are based on the authors' previous childhood experience in their respective churches. Both Hughes and Angelou support their thesis by giving vivid descriptions of the reflections they had about their encounters at the church. Hughes and Angelou take a very similar approach towards narrating their childhood experiences and the purposes of their respective narrative essays inform their audience their understanding of their spirituality.

Personally, I was very satisfied with both the texts. I loved the high quality imagery and vivid images that both authors used, as if they were actually painting a picture for me. As the narratives of both the essays reach their end, the outcome of both the essays seems to be equally shocking in their own ranks. Both the authors seem to share the belief in their respective narratives that society at the time was hell bent on enforcing the rules of religious decorum onto children, whether it involved forcing them to go to the altar or punishing them for misbehaving in church.

Both Langston Hughes's and Maya Angelou's narratives mainly focus on their understandings of their spirituality as young children. Another common aspect of their narrative is how their expectations of their spiritual encounters were molded by adults. For instance, in paragraph 2 Hughes narrates how his aunt told him that he saw a light when he was saved and that he could feel and hear Jesus in his soul. Similarly, religion is an

important theme in Angelou's early life at least because her mother is a very religious woman, and from a very young age she is taught to love and respect God, and behave in church.

Through their narratives, Hughes and Angelou also try to signify that children do not have a spiritual viewpoint of things; rather they take things quite literally. For instance, Hughes is not able to understand the spiritual viewpoint of his aunt's words; rather his mind was set on the literal aspects of them. Thus, his narrative stresses the fact that he waited for a long time to "see" Jesus, and it was further perplexing for him to witness a friend of his being saved by God, even though he disrespected Him. In Angelou's narrative, again it is perplexing for her to understand as a child why an adult woman like Sister Monroe does not face any consequences for being offensive and even violent in church, while she and her brother are punished for their misbehavior.

Thus, a childhood understanding and viewpoint of spirituality is at the center of the narratives in Langston Hughes's and Maya Angelou's narratives in their respective essays. By narrating their childhood experiences with faith and spirituality, both the authors show how some people tend to throw themselves into the religious and 'church' experience. Their narratives try to show how important people feel it is for them to abide by religious doctrine and even enforce it upon their children. However, personally, I believe that the authors took such an approach for their narratives was to inform their audience that they ought to teach their children not only about religion, but also about the realest things in life, so that they would have faith in God, without having any doubts.