

# Week2

Literature



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Insert Introduction That there are many literary pieces that have been written in an attempt to foster environmental conservation is not in doubt. Both fiction and nonfiction works abound to underscore the importance of environmental conservation as is exemplified by Sarah Orne Jewett's *A White Heron* and Susan McGrath's *Feature: the Last Great Wilderness*, respectively.

#### Part I: *A White Heron*

One of the advantages that come with the use of fiction to advance the cause of environmental protection is the ability to capture interests and attention of the audience. This is because literary artists like Jewett are able to use literary devices and plotlines that may excite the audience eventually. For instance, the audience is left curious about the step that Jewett will take after locating the white heron; particularly whether her decision will be an environmentally moralist one, or a Machiavellian one where the end (getting money from the ornithologist-cum-hunter) justifies the means. This interest and attention of the audience remains critically important towards inculcating environmental themes.

One of the disadvantages of using fiction is the failure to elicit the seriousness that the tackled subject deserves. This is in total contrast to nonfiction such as McGrath's *Feature: the Last Great Wilderness*, where the migratory population of the 129, 000 caribous is shown to be endangered. By extension, by showing how the policies of Bush Administration on gas and oil drilling along the coastal plains affect aquatic and terrestrial life, McGrath's nonfiction readily elicits seriousness and responsible and corrective action from the audience.

The problem with nonfictions such as McGrath's is the inability to capture the

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interests of the audience, especially the section of the audience that possesses no predisposition towards environmental issues and ethics.

### Conclusion

To seal the shortcomings of both fiction and nonfiction discussed above, it would be very helpful to integrate their unique elements. In this effect, McGrath's nonfiction can start with an anecdote which is fiction. This would ensure increased interests in the matter.

### Part II: The Passing of Grandison

This is a story by Charles W. Chesnutt, which was published in Chesnutt's second collection of short narratives in 1899.

Apart from the usual revisiting of the nature and extent of slavery in the South, the story brought into the public, debates on the cognitive abilities of the African American and the African American slaves, in light of the Caucasian. This is because the story presents Grandison, a slave who eventually outwits his master, Colonel Owen.

Humor plays out in the story, especially in its conclusion, as a mere uneducated slave outwits his lord, a colonel. Conversely, that Col. Owens cannot see through Grandison's sarcasm (for instance, when Grandison says that slavery is good) sparks humor. Generally, humor plays out in the integration of sarcasm, trickster and irony into the story's plotline. The plot also uses caricatures of plantation figures throughout, and thereby readily and continually sparking laughter.

An alternative meaning that "passing" can take in reference to Grandison is his metamorphosis from a mere slave into a victorious protagonist.

Grandison passes himself on as a fool (being a slave, he pretends to vindicate slavery) before his master, only for him to pass himself later as the

master planner and schemer.

#### Works Cited

McGrath, Susan. Future: The Last Great Wilderness. 2001.

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