



Student Works

BY ANONYMOUS CITY TECH STUDENTS

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Many plays of the 20th century have been forgotten, however, some plays are unforgettable and are still being praised for the discussion of protracted controversies. Some plays are similar in some aspects, but not all scripts are the same. Every writer has a different point of view, and so do the characters in their works. In *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams and *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, two characters – Laura Wingfield and Beneatha Younger – live in similar situations. Laura lives with her mother and brother in a low-class apartment. She went to business school and plays a small role in the family's financial situation. Similarly, Beneatha lives with her mother and her brother's family in an apartment in poor condition, goes to medical school. Like Laura, Beneatha's mother wants her to marry a rich man to relieve the financial

problems at home. Despite sharing a similar lifestyle, Laura and Beneatha have different points of view.

Laura is a troubled young woman with a shy, sensitive personality. She lives with her mother and brother because her father abandoned their family. Tom (her brother) provides the primary income and Laura's mother still believes that she can make a change in the family's financial situation and forces Laura to attend business school. However, Laura thinks otherwise. She believes that her physical defect incites everyone to criticize her. She starts to feel insecure and stops attending classes. At home Laura possesses a collection of crystal figurines -- a menagerie where she goes to while listening to phonograph recordings when she feels under pressure, rejected or troubled. In her menagerie, Laura forgets everything that surrounds her. She forgets her past, her present, and everything else. She flows with

the music and lives in a fragile, beautiful crystal world.

Laura does not only have emotional problems, but also with her family. Laura's brother works for the family and loves her unconditionally, but he and Amanda – her mother – are always arguing for small issues. Laura dislikes it, and is often damaged emotionally. Despite the love Laura and her brother share, he abandons her and Amanda for some adventure – just as her father did. Her mother persuades her to live the life she lived as a young woman: surrounded by luxuries and young rich men, but Laura believes that love comes in different sizes and shapes. After all, she feels an unconditional love for her family.

Laura may not even consider what is good for her or not, but her mother does, and starts dragging her towards engagement. Amanda starts to nag her about getting married to a man named Jim O'Connor in order to get out of their financial urge. Jim,

as Tom says, is a “nice, ordinary, young man.” However, Amanda thinks that he is the opportunity they had been waiting for, the opportunity to be released from a life of poverty and despair. The opportunity that she can revive her young years as a beautiful, flirty woman. But Laura is not really interested. Her innocence allows Jim to know more about her than she knows about him and makes him behave like the typical high school hero he used to be. He gains confidence and hurts Laura's feelings by breaking one of the figurines from the collection she loves. Her hopes and dreams were shattered on the floor like the glass unicorn she identified with.

Beneatha is a liberal woman who lives with her mother, her brother's wife, and his son. Despite of living in a low-class neighborhood, she wears extravagant modern clothes. Her father passed away and unlike Laura's family, they have money in their possession that could help them get out

of the apartment they live in. Beneatha, does different activities despite her family facing financial issues. She finds ways to escape from her reality: she takes guitar and acting lessons, bought camera equipment, and goes to horseback riding activities which are expensive. She could use the money for different relevant purposes and support her family but she thinks otherwise.

Beneatha and her family believe that in fact, medical school will change their lives and therefore, her education is a priority in the family. Her high intellect makes her feel confident and self-centered and so she starts to behave more liberally, important and perhaps egoistical which makes her argue constantly with her mother about their different views. Until one day, her mother slapped her in the face for her blasphemous talk. Beneatha and her brother do not spend much time together and are rather distant, each one following their respective path.

Beneatha's views on love, have the same purpose as Laura's. However, her liberal and revolutionary views avoid manipulation from her actual boyfriend George Murchison – a rich, narrow-minded man who wants to show off, talk about himself and his experiences. He often argues with Beneatha in front of the family but she doesn't allow to be defied and fights back causing her relationship with George to end. Unlike Laura, Beneatha finds another man called Joseph Asagai – a Nigerian man who attends medical school with her and tries to lure her into his culture which she is fondly interested in. They both share interests, and in contrast to George, he respects her and gets gifts for her from his native country Nigeria. He finally invites her to move to Nigeria in order to pursue a career in medicine, proving her that love is more powerful than money.

In conclusion, these characters may be experiencing similar events in their lives

but they are different from each other and their perspective is quite the opposite. Laura has an innocent and quiet mind, left school, was abandoned by her old high school crush and her hopes were destroyed. Beneatha is extravagant and verbalizes her views in a household that barely understands what she is trying to convey. She continued studying because that was her forte and was invited to move to a different country by the man she liked. In some ways, the differences parallel

their personalities – Laura as an innocent child and Beneatha as a rebel spirit. The differences also show how they both try to solve their problems. Beneatha never hesitated and Laura was not really interested getting out of her box. However, this shows that they both found out that life brings many surprises and that their stories lay in the hands of two different writers facing the principles set by society.

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2001-D530

The Island of Fear

Fantastic and realistic elements are found in many forms of art. However, the way they are developed differ from each author. A fantastic element is one that captivates the audience with its farfetched realms. A particular author has been able to develop a novel with realistic and fantastic elements that make the reader –and protagonist of the story– doubt what may be real or not. In *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, H. G. Wells plays with fantastic hesitation to develop his novel and touch delicate themes in society.

Edward Prendick is the narrator of the story, he has been lost and found in the middle of the sea. Mr. Prendick is rescued by some passerby strangers who, at first appear to be animal exporters but are later discovered as scientists experimenting on

these animals on an island. The scientists performing the experiments die from the consequence of their actions, and Prendick is left alone on the island, with the beasts.

“A dreadful thing that I was only beginning to realize was that over all this island there was now no safe place where I could be alone and secure to rest or sleep...I felt I ought to cross the island and establish myself with the beast people, making myself secure in their confidence. And my heart failed me. I went back to the beach, and, turning eastward past the burning enclosure, made for a point where a shallow spit of coral sand ran out toward the reef. Here I could sit down and think, my back to the sea, and my face against any surprise. And there I sat, chin on knees, the sun beating down upon my head, and a growing dread in my mind, plotting how I could live on against the hour of my rescue (if ever rescue came). I tried to review the whole situation as

calmly as I could, but it was impossible to clear the thing of emotion.” [149]

In the previous passage, it is shown how Wells describes Prendick’s feelings. Now that Dr. Moreau and Montgomery are now dead, Prendick is alone on the island, pondering on his future, planning how to escape from the island. He is afraid of the Beast Folk, he is afraid of what they may do to him and he fears his fate will be the same as Dr. Moreau’s. The protagonist tries to calm down and find a way to survive while waiting for his rescue. He can’t believe what is happening. Prendick may now be the leader of the island, but his attempts to be part of the island are rigged by his fear of the Beast Folk. Wells has created a moment of too many sore experiences, to a point where Prendick can’t desist but find a way back home.

Prendick is alone with the Beast Folk, but this experience helps him through a great character development.

Whether Prendick joins the Beast Folk or not, he must escape, and that remains his only true motivation. He grows interpersonally and he starts thinking only about himself. “I was only beginning to realize was that over all this island there was now no safe place where I could be alone and secure to rest or sleep” (149).

Concerned about his future, and his welfare, Prendick explains how desperate he felt during these crucial moments of his time in the island. What was of the Beast Folk, didn’t matter to him anymore.

Additionally, he wanted to befriend them, however, his fear held him back. The sentence “and then I sat, chin on knees, the sun beating down upon my head, and a growing dread in my mind,” explains his true fear for the Beast Folk. He wants to escape but can’t find a certain way of doing so. His position, “chin on knees,” is a characteristic Wells included in the text. A form of body language communicating

reflection and desolation – like a child. Throughout the story, it is known that Prendick depends a lot on Moreau and especially Montgomery, but now he is alone and has to think for himself which worries him.

Altogether, Wells has described a terrifying world full of uncanny scenes throughout the novel not very different from the real world. Like Prendick, there must always be a time where the bird must fly away from the nest. Our culture, religions and society itself have made us dependable on them. We do not think for ourselves, but we sometimes must do as we are told or should we face the

consequences of our rebellious actions. The Beast Folk feared the Law, and Prendick feared the Beast Folk at the lack of a law. If the Beast Folk are seen as a representation of society, does that mean we have greater power than any other force on Earth? Is the only thing holding us from discovering a maximum potential, a law? Wells has not only created fantastic hesitation, but with his use of character and symbolism, he has created a way of communicating the problems of our society. Whether law is necessary or not, we continue our everyday duties, and challenges learning everyday and from every experience just as Prendick did.

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2001-D530

Fatalism or Existentialism

Over the years, people have discussed an endless argument: are some events caused by destiny, or are these consequences of our actions? Several people may say that “you choose who you are,” or that “it is fate”. However, how true is this? Chinua Achebe, author of *Things Fall Apart*, discusses the theme of fatalism versus that of existentialism to demonstrate that some things are within -- while others are beyond-- our reach. Okonkwo, the protagonist of this novel, is described as a man of great reputation and is well known in his clan for his hard work and commitment. Okonkwo always tried his best in order to defend what he stood for, however, he encountered forces that held him back from being completely successful.

In the fourth chapter of the book, it states that Okonkwo is outstanding among

other members of the tribe and worthy of various titles. He had his own future in control, his commitment to his status in the tribe had been rewarding.

“At an early age he had achieved fame as the greatest wrestler in all the land. That was not luck. At the most one could say that his *chi* or personal god was good. But the Ibo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his *chi* says yes also. Okonkwo said yes very strongly; so his *chi* agreed. And not only his *chi* but his clan too, because it judged a man by the work of his hands” [27].

Okonkwo was successful as he was motivated by his father’s failure. Unoka – Okonkwo’s father – was known for being lazy, and unable to maintain his family. His life choices led him to defeat. Furthermore, he did not try to become a better man, “In his day he was lazy and improvident and was quite incapable of thinking about tomorrow.” Seeing this, Okonkwo did not

want to be criticized as his father's shadow. Unoka's lack of enthusiasm lead him to die as a dishonored man. Okonkwo never liked this, and tried his best to be unlike his father. Whatever Unoka favored, Okonkwo disliked, and this was a factor in Okonkwo's life decisions. He was determined to be a successful, and respectable man.

Not only was Okonkwo a prominent member of his clan -- due to his success -- but also because of his decisions. He was a man of action. Okonkwo did not wait for a miracle from the gods or truly rely on them. Occasionally, he would defy traditions and customs to demonstrate his strength and courage. For example, he killed Ikemefuna, a young man who was brought from another clan -- along with a young woman -- in order to avoid war. Although Okonkwo had grown fond of Ikemefuna, and was advised not to take action in his sacrifice, he ignored the suggestion and killed the boy himself because "he was afraid of being thought

weak". Another defying moment takes place at his second wife's hut. Ekwefi -- as she was known -- cut some leaves from Okonkwo's tree to wrap food. As soon as Okonkwo heard this, he hit her. As customs were known, if a man was unable maintain control of his family, he was not a man. Okonkwo's "life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness". This fear overtook him and he overreacted to some actions. Right after hitting Ekwefi, he grabbed his gun, and she called him weak under her breath. Unfortunately, he heard it and nearly killed her during the New Yam Festival -- which is supposed to be a time for peace. This disturbed some members of the clan but Okonkwo's pride remained intact.

Altogether, Okonkwo may sound tough and mean, however he had a soft side that he did not want to demonstrate. He particularly cared for his daughter Ezinma, an example of this, is shown in chapter nine. Ezinma develops a fever and Okonkwo

cares for her with the help of herbs and medicinal leaves. He had a strong bond with his daughter, as stated multiple times in the book, “he never stopped wishing she were a boy”.

Okonkwo’s good reputation was outstanding in the village, however, he did not have control over many things happening around him, especially in the village. The things that were happening in Umuofia were foreseen from the beginning of the novel. In the third chapter of the book, Okonkwo had “bad luck” growing his seed-yams even though he tried his best to grow them.

“The year Okonkwo took eight hundred seed-yams from Nwakibie was the worst year in living memory. Nothing happened at its proper time... Okonkwo had begun to sow with the first rains. He had sown four hundred seeds when the rains dried up and the heat returned. He watched the sky all day for signs of rain clouds and

lay awake all night... But the drought continued for eight market weeks and the yams were killed... But the year had gone mad. Rain fell as it had never fallen before. For days and nights together it poured down in violent torrents, and washed away the yam heaps...

That year the harvest was sad, like a funeral, and many farmers wept as they dug up the miserable and rooting yams. One man tied his cloth to a tree branch and hanged himself. Okonkwo remembered that tragic year with a cold shiver throughout the rest of his life... He knew that he was a fierce fighter, but that year had been enough to break the heart of a lion. ‘Since I survived that year,’ he always said, ‘I shall survive anything.’ ” [24]

Sadly, Okonkwo overestimated himself, and his tribe was doomed to fall apart. The destruction of the tribe as one,

was unstoppable no matter what Okonkwo tried. The rain falling and the violence in the setting of this excerpt from the novel foreshadows the imminent crumbling of the tribe. The English conquerors were coming and it was stated multiple times throughout the book. Another example of this occurs during the arrival of the locusts to the village. “They settled on every tree and on every blade of grass; they settled on the roofs and covered the bare ground (86)”.

Towards the end of chapter thirteen, Okonkwo faces an inadvertent event. He mourns the death of Ezeudu, the man who had advised him not to be part of Ikemefuna’s sacrifice. However, a random, unforeseen event changes the development of the story. Okonkwo not only killed Ikemefuna with his machete, he accidentally killed Ezeudu’s youngest boy. For this, Okonkwo and his family temporarily deserted their place in the clan. He had committed a crime that only the weakest

commit; he shed blood within the clan and now he had to leave for seven years to avoid contaminating clan members. He clearly had no control over the randomly exploding gun, yet he had to face the consequences.

Finally, the story resolves Okonkwo’s fight against predominant fate. The conquerors take over Umuofia with the purpose to “bring civilization to different parts of Africa (208)”. The clash of cultures in this story drives Okonkwo to death after he tried his best to claim himself as part of the clan – after his leave. However, he noted that things had changed. Everyone seemed to have forgotten their principles as a clan. This was revealed to him after the clan meeting the Ibo tribe was interrupted. Okonkwo once again overreacted and killed the missionary who had stopped the meeting. Everyone seemed confused and asked “Why did he do it? (205).”

Okonkwo knew he was defeated and the tribe was not the same anymore, and

hung himself as the man who couldn't cope with the death of his yams in the previous excerpt.

Although Okonkwo always tried to excel and stand out among other members in his tribe, he felt defeated after the clan members were influenced by the conquerors and abandoned their clan. He was defeated by forces that were beyond his own will.

Okonkwo's death was not surprising, but the events that come randomly bring interest to the reader. The relatability of this story to real life is remarkable. People, as humans do not always have control of their own fate, Achebe articulated this by explaining the influence people have in other's lives and that willingness is always a factor where destiny is full of possibilities.

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2001

An Analysis of Hours: Character and Plot
Development

The Story of an Hour by Kate

Chopin, is one of the most controversial short stories of the 1890s for its protagonist and for the feelings she portrays after her husband's presumed death. Mrs. Mallard's feelings grow stronger as the story develops. The elements of fiction are essential. An analysis of the story proves that Mrs. Mallard's thoughts are of vital importance to the story to create the plot and send a message to the reader.

Mrs. Mallard, a woman with a heart disease, is living in the shadow of her lovely husband, and is overcome with grief after the news of his death. The following passage, is perhaps an important part of the

story, due to what developed after it: "She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her."

Mrs. Mallard is immediately afflicted, her feelings are genuine; and that she is truly sad. However, the writer mentions that she did not want to be in company, and goes to her room, a personal place where she can ruminate freely on the nature of her husband's death. Afterwards she begins to experience emotional changes.

After that, things start to change inside her mind -- climax is approaching. The protagonist feels actual happiness being dragged into her own body. The author introduces joyful scenes that are not commonly felt at a moment of grief. "The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the

street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the waves.” The moment in which she feels a “delicious breath” and the “sparrows twittering” are perhaps too positive for the moment. She realizes that life continues and time would not stop for her. Happiness surrounds her as she goes through the same feeling.

Our protagonist continues to ponder over the problem but it is not until she develops different feelings; thoughts that would change the course of the story -- conflict. The author introduces a new phase in the character, something she is afraid of, something “creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scent, the color that filled the air.” Mrs. Mallard is no longer drowning in grief, but something else is perpetuating her. Her mind is taken off to experience new views, but she is reluctant about it. Involuntarily, Mrs. Mallard,

experiences freedom, she liberates herself from the repression that society had laid upon her miserable soul.

She didn't care anymore whether the strange feeling was good or evil, she wanted it to be with her forever. The protagonist is no longer afraid of that “monstrous joy”. On the contrary, she is content there would be no authority to repress her, because “there would not be powerful will bending hers.” Meaning that she will no longer live for her deceased husband, she would not live for anyone or any other loving authority but herself. She is truly free, and she was getting prepared for it.

She opens the window and it fills the room with hundreds of colors but, it does not last long; shadows soon approached her and we descend to the conclusion. She is strongly attached to her self-possession and it is becoming something precious to her. Chopin lets us know that “It was only yesterday she (Mrs. Mallard) had thought

with a shudder that life might be long.” The reader, immediately foreshadows that bad news is coming to her. As it was expected, her sister and friend came with the news; Brently Mallard, who is her husband appears, safe and sound. Now, irony takes over the story, killing Mrs. Mallard. The doctor assumes her death was ascribed to be from the happiness. However, the reader knows the true reason of her death.

Something valuable to her is inadvertently snatched and, with a fragile heart, she can't bear it with the cost of the sacrifice; she dies “of joy that kills.”

It is deducted that the protagonist's characterization is the main reason the story is able to move forward and develop the plot. Although there are about five characters in the story, it only centralizes on Mrs. Mallard, who, by the end of the story – in terms of character development – becomes round and dynamic. Unlike the minor characters who remain flat and static,

they don't have a slight change in their persona from the beginning. Her heart disease plays a big role, making her defeat in this game of hearts played throughout the story, somewhat predictable. This depressing story relays completely on Mrs. Mallard, whose life is burdened by society's view on women, creating self-conflict, and making her choose death over oppression.

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Final

What Role Should High School Athletics Play in a Young Person's Life?

For a great number of decades, sports have been a part of societies all around the world and a part of young people's lives, so have their educational skills. Whether it's basketball, baseball, or football, young students' school routine becomes revolved around everything but school. With sports being a part of young people's lives, mainly students, the question of how it affects their ability to perform academically comes to form. While many may claim that there are no negative effects, a closer look shows that an increase in sports leads to deterioration in academic achievements.

Sports can be seen as a cause to the countries who value them more than anything else, being intellectually inferior to

the other countries. The inclusion of sports harms students' academic performance by being a distraction, giving them different agendas, and even affecting how the teachers instruct the students.

Achieving victory in any sport-revolved competition will lead to a distracting celebratory moment. Amanda Ripley stated in her article "The Case Against High School Sports" (Ripley 1), "both men and women reported that the better their football team did, the less they studied and the more they partied" to exercise her point that the football games were a distraction to the students' academic development. Such a display of school pride and celebration became a nuisance to the grades of the participating individuals. The students found less time to study and more time to practice football and boast about winning, rather than studying and giving rise to their grade point average. The involvement of sports in one's academic life

is not only a mistake, but will lead to a downfall due to it being a “low-level distraction” (Ripley). Not only do sports serve as disturbances to students, but also to the schools by implementing large cost amounts into the budget.

Institutions that see sports as an important aspect of a student’s life suffer financially when the sports budget is compared to the academic budget. Equipment cost outweighs supply costs by costing almost four times more. Ripley reveals the truth by stating “Some schools hire professional coaches at full salaries, or designate a teacher as the full-time athletic director” (Ripley), which not only shows sports as being more expensive but also gives a person a gist of how much athletics are being stressed. The institutions are giving their students the idea that intelligence is a secondary priority in life and that it is less appealing when compared to sports. Many may try to counter such a

claim by thinking sports can boost the students’ health in a positive direction but they are wrong. A school spending the majority of their money on sports doesn’t benefit the students’ health because not all of them are on a team. Most spend time celebrating and being distracted by the team. Although the budgeting and costs of an institution are important, the central significances are also being affected by the inclusion of athletics in education.

Schools around the world, when compared to schools in the United States do not include sports as a main priority to keep education as the core task. Most colleges in the United States scout athletes in High Schools and give them scholarships, rather seeking out the children who possibly carry a higher IQ and grade point averages. Ripley states “college scholarships rewarded high-school athletes and the search for the next star player trickled down even to grade school” (Ripley), furthering emphasis that a

future with more brawns than brains is slowly approaching and intelligence is slowly being diminished. Schools that are focusing on sports are devouring the minds of the young and are producing students who are less intellectually fueled by instilling different memos into their lives. Although students having different priorities as their true focus, the teachers instructing them are contributing to the decay of the students by aiding the falsified school system.

In retrospect, the enticing presence of sports in an academic environment has

harmful effects on students and their young minds. The schools suffer economically, the students are being distracted and lured away, but most importantly they don't have set primacies based on intellect. Enduring such a future would be difficult for a being of great intellectual advancements. Sports should not play a big role in a student's life and should only be seen as a hobby, not a national symbol of pride. Test scores are being lowered and majority of a school's finances are being put towards athletics, while it decays slowly.