A Seperate Peace Essay, Research Paper

Literary Analysis for ?A Separate Peace? By John Knowles

• Self Reflection- Last week I was driving around Redlands with a friend. We were headed to a park but got off on the wrong off ramp. We decided to find the park by using the back streets. We ended up going by my old school. I had gone to that school in 1st grade and ? of 3rd grade. It was my favorite school I had ever gone to. When we approached the school I began to be rushed with memories of the time I had spent in the school. The bus rides, the classrooms, the teachers,, my best friend Sheena and the chasing games I had with Jessie. I loved those times, and I cherished them longingly as we went by, it was such a carefree time. Oh and by the way? we made it to the park ϑ

• Literary Terms- There was three literary terms I had noticed in this book as I read through. They were Allusion, Antithesis and Antanagoge. The meanings of these three terms are;

• Allusion- A casual and brief reference to a famous historical (could be referring to the war, even though it wasn?t historical exactly, yet) or literally figure or event (WWII).

• Antithesis- establish a clear contrasting relationship between 2 ideas and/or people (Finny and Gene) by joining them together or juxtaposing them. Human beings are systematic and catorgorize so the mind as a natural love for antithesis which creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas.

• Antanagoge- placing a good point or benefit next to a fault criticism or problem in order to reduce the impact or significance of the negative point.

How these points were used I will explain. First off Allusion. Allusion is used when referring to the WWII, and when the characters in the story state that the weather is sure like the war, comparing its circumstances happening to the war and comparing them with what they experiencing [cold weather (dark and gray) ] and things like that.

OK now second of all, Antangoge. When Finny yells at Gene or when he is upset at Gene for making him fall off the tree he always reduces the impact of his bad deed by always saying he was still his best friend and that he was always a good friend (except when he was pushing him out of the tree of course).

Now for the 3rd term; Antithesis. It is used when Finny forgives Gene over the night he had broken his leg for the 2nd time, because the next morning you?d except that Finny would still be angered At Gene for doing something that horrible. But the next morning Finny was calm and forgave Gene.

Finny and Genes friendship was also an antithesis. They were opposites made into good friends. Gene was the intellectual who got good grades and Finny was an average school guy who was Mr. athletic. They are antithesis?s because they got along despite their opposites, they are the true meaning of when people say ?Opposites Attract?.

• Flashback- The whole story was basically a flashback because in the beginning Gene is older and goes back to Devon. He there reminisces and flashes back to his days at Devon which is most of the story.

Another point when there is a flashback is when Gene is being accused of pushing Finny off of the tree, It forces Finny, Gene and Leper to recall the event and flashback to what had really happened that afternoon.

The whole general Flashback of Gene, of his earlier days at Devon represented that Devon was a part of what made Gene the guy he was now, it also showed that he still had not overcome those days, and by coming back, it was his release of the feelings he had kept in for so long.

• Point Of View- The narrative method of this story was first person main character. The author probably chose Gene to be the narrator because he was the one who had the guilt trip and had everything going on in his mind, and he could be the one who flashes back because Finny couldn?t, because he was not around any longer?

Also I believe that the author chose Gene to be the narrative part because most the time authors? choose the main character who is the ?good guy?. I?m not saying that Gene was a ?bad guy? the whole time and that he was like the enemy but he did push Finny out of the tree, causing him to miss out of the completely ?good guy? reputation. The author wanted the book less clich?, that’s why I think he chose do write it from that point.

• Setting- The boys are located at Devon, which is their school. Most of the action takes place there. The climax of the story or climaxes in the story all happen within Devons boundaries. Out of the boundaries of this school though in the years the story was occurring or the flashback was occurring (1942-1943) WWII was happening.

• Symbol- 1) The tree obviously is the biggest symbol in the story. It is where Finny and Gene become friends, where they take life threatening risks together, where Finny controls Gene, and the where the end of Finny begins. It is a symbol of the base of their friendship and what it held. It is what makes their friendship start and end.

2) The tree limb, even though this is part of the tree, is also something that is symbolic to the story, at least in my opinion. The limb is a symbolism because of the instability of Genes feelings toward finny. It represents he thin line between hatred, jealously, love and friendship.

3) I think another symbolism occurrence was when Finny tried to beat the swimming record of the 100m and beat it without trying to prove himself to anyone else. The symbolism is that it shows that Finny is sure of himself and doesn?t need the proof of anything to prove himself to anyone or anything. It also showed that Gene was not yet that mature secure person yet because he was the one urging Finny to show and prove it to everyone else claming he would have done the same.

• Conflict- Gene has conflicts with himself internally. He was fighting with himself with the ideas of Finny thinking he was better than Gene and thinking that Finny was trying to compete with him and trying to make him get worse get grades and the idea that Finny was just being his friend and that’s all he was about.

Later on in the story Gene had conflicts within himself about feeling guilty about pushing his best friend of a tree and breaking his leg and destroying is future.

Finny has to struggle with the conflict of accepting that his best friend has pushed him off the tree destroying his life. And he has to struggle with his whole future of what it was going to be was now over.

Gene and Finny never really fought with each other, only in their own minds, except when Finny had just found out that Gene was the one who caused Finny to fall out of the tree, Finny was very angered at Gene and showed it at that point.

• Protagonists- I think that Finny was the main character in everyone?s life at Devon. In the story, though, I think that Gene was the main character because he was the one who was the twisted character, had so many things going on in his mind, and was the one who was the cause of every climax in the story. Finny was also a main character I believe, in the story, everyone loved him and he was the one who made the impact on Genes? life, he was the one who was everything to everyone, while Gene was somehow in the corner looking in. I think that Finny was the 2nd Main character, even though most would think Finny was the 1st main character I think it is Gene.

• Theme- ?Not everyone is against you? is the theme I think the novel is trying to show. A main example is that Gene thinks until the end that Finny was always trying to be better than himself when in reality he was just trying to be his friend, and do friend things. The ending of the story which I believe is the conclusion including the overall effects of all that happened, is what it is stating that ?Not everyone is against you?.

• Reader Response- This story was a little bit intriguing, but really I didn?t have much taste for it. It didn?t have much action and it rambled on too long about things that were rambled on enough about. It explained the story well and had good structure though.

read the seperate peace