Jeff Simon

Ms. Smith

English 9

23 February 2017

Comparative Writing Assignment

“We're all human, aren't we? Every human life is worth the same, and worth saving”
by J. K. Rowling. Society often strives to separate rather than unite. Differences in people are valuable in any society, and realizing this benefits all mankind. In society there is a need for people to recognize differences in humanity; difference should not lead to exclusion, however, to inclusion. **A central theme, all people have value despite differences and should not be discriminated, excluded or judged is represented in the realistic fiction novels *Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper and *The End of Time* by John Koch through characterization, and dialogue.**

**Recognizing value in all people was thematically depicted in *Romiette and Julio, through characterization.***Similar to society, characters in the novel struggle and are conflicted with the differences in people and exclude rather than embrace. Julio, who is Hispanic, encounters difficulty when he falls in love with a beautiful young black girl. Unfortunately, students/gang members are interfering because they do not think a biracial couple is acceptable. When discrimination takes place, Julio is forced to take a stand for their relationship, exclaiming: “Color does not define my character” (Draper 107). Never taking anything else into account, Julio is discriminated against and threatened due to his color and race and not due to his morals, values, or character. He stands strong and fights against the racism that undermines his value. In life, a person’s character is what matters most, despite false perceptions. Understanding and acceptance, rather than judgement, will minimize discrimination within society.

**In addition, John Koch supports the theme of personal value in his novel as the characters verbally fight against the prejudice that leads to social barriers.** Dialogue sheds light on the injustice, anger and frustration created from prejudice. The main character, Jordan, argues fiercely with his friends to stop the verbal abuse: “We are all people finding our own way and making a difference in our own way” (Koch 56). The ongoing tension in the book concludes eventually as Jordan explains, “Our fingerprints are different yet we all have a handshake to offer the world” (Koch 72). Everyone has fingerprints, a commonality, yet each person’s fingerprints are different from one another. Unfortunately, differences often lead to disapproval or lack of acceptance. With reflection, an open mind, and a voice, differences can be celebrated to broaden viewpoints and understanding of individuality. When thoughtfully chosen, the words people speak have the potential to contribute to unity and minimize division.

Both authors stand firm on the importance and value of all people in society, developing their message through characterization and dialogue. Discrimination, judgment, and exclusion will divide; uniting, despite differences, is the thematic message. Draper and Koch leave the reader with a valuable message for humanity, applicable to all ages, that transcends time.

 Works Cited

Draper, Sharon M. *Romiette and Julio*. Atheneum for Young Readers, 1999.

Koch, John. *In the End of Time.* Book Writers, 2005.

|  |
| --- |
| GOAL: Look at your writing assignments from the year -- determine an area of your writing where you could improve. Write this at the bottom of you paper and then focus on this goal throughout your writing. |