Sample Student

English 9

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Love, Marriage, and Literature

Entrepreneur James Altucher says, “Honesty is the fastest way to prevent a mistake from turning into a failure.” Honesty, among other characteristics, is essential in having a successful relationship. In *Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper, the dishonesty of the namesake characters and their companions brought danger to all of the characters in the play. In *The House of the Scorpion*, there is much dishonesty surrounding Matt and his status as a clone. Through the interactions of the characters in these texts, there is much to be learned about relationships. In *Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper and *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer, trust and kindness make a relationship strong, while dishonesty breaks a relationship.

In *Romiette and Julio* by Sharon Draper, relationships are strengthened through building trust; this is evident through Julio’s friendship with Ben, especially when they first met. Julio and Ben get into a fight at school and Ben covers for Julio; he says, “Mr. Prince! Nobody’s fighting! This dude here was just trying to help me up. I was running and I slipped on the ice on the front steps and hit my nose on the door” (Draper 23). Julio displaces his anger and hits Ben, but Ben keeps Julio from getting in trouble. Ben smooth-talks his way out of trouble and it strengthens the relationship of these two teenage boys because Julio knows that Ben is someone he can trust.

In *The House of the Scorpion,* kindness strengthens the relationship between Matt and Maria because Maria is the only person who will visit Matt while he is quarantined in the servants’ quarters. Maria treats Matt, a clone, the same as she would treat anyone else; she even makes sure that he has enough to eat. She says, “Rosa said they didn’t give you dinner. She’s so mean! I have a dog at home and if he doesn’t get fed, he howls. Do you link mango juice? It’s my favorite” (Farmer 30). Even though Maria does not completely understand what it means to be a clone, she knows that it is important that Matt has enough to eat and drink, and that he has someone to keep him company. It is through these kind gestures that Matt and Maria are able to start a friendship.

While kindness and trust are both important in a relationship, dishonesty can break a relationship, as evident in *Romiette and Julio* and *The House of the Scorpion*. Romiette and Julio are not being honest after their interactions with the Devildogs. Julio asks, “Do you think we should tell your parents, Romi?” (Draper 179). Romi responds, “If we tell my dad, he’ll call the police and put it on the news. We do *not* want any public attention given to this. Their payback wouldn’t be done in the brightness of a TV studio” (Draper 179). When Romiette and Julio decide to lie to their parents, it takes them down a dark road of deception that ultimately leads to their downfall. This breaks the relationship that these two seemingly good kids have with their parents. Additionally, in *The House of the Scorpion*, Felicia lies to Matt about going to the Hospital to meet Maria. She tells Matt that Maria asked to meet him there, but when he finds Maria at the hospital, Maria is under the impression that Matt invited her. Matt thinks, “The pieces were falling into place now. Tom had pretended to carry a message to Maria, and Felicia had done the same with Matt. They had been working together. Matt had never thought of Felicia as dangerous, but he didn’t really know her” (Farmer 117). Before this occasion, Matt had never seen Felicia as an enemy, but because she deceives Matt in this trip to the hospital, he knows that he now needed to watch his back. Felicia stabs Matt in the back and now he knows he could no longer trust her.

Trust and kindness are essential in creating a strong relationship, as seen in the relationships of Ben and Julio and Matt and Maria; at the same time, one dishonest move can completely destroy a relationship, as seen through the betrayal of Romiette and Julio to their parents and Felicia to Matt. Sharon Draper, in *Romiette and Julio,* and Nancy Farmer, in *The House of the Scorpion* clearly depict examples that makes relationship strong and that break relationships down. If honesty is the fastest way to prevent a mistake from turning into a failure, the characters in these stories are not righting any wrongs. In literature, as in life, it is imperative to be honest and kind in order to strengthen the relationships that are most important.

Works Cited

Draper, Sharon M. *Romiette and Julio*. New York, Aladdin Paperbacks, 1999.

Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. New York, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.