

Paper 2 Question: Characters in works of prose fiction are often running away or escaping from something or someone. Compare the means by which such flight is presented, and its narrative significance, in at least two of the prose works you have studied.

The presence of internal conflict can often lead people towards running away in order to avoid confrontation. Rather than dealing with personal issues right away, the idea of escaping the situation seems much more appealing. In the works, Jane Eyre and Great Gatsby by Charlotte Bronte and F. Scott Fitzgerald, the characters tend to ~~find themselves removing~~ remove themselves from their current locations in times of hardship. Bronte and Fitzgerald both explore this concept of flight through the development of the characters, the symbolic connections to obsession, and the constant changes in setting.

In Jane Eyre, Bronte describes the main character, Jane, as someone who suffered a great deal of abuse from her cousin, John Reed, and her aunt. She was constantly beaten and was also emotionally abused while she was isolated in a cold, dark room upstairs where her uncle had passed away. Her cries ~~at~~ for help were blatantly ignored, which caused Jane to build up resentment and hatred towards her own family. Jane expressed her desire to leave her home in Gateshead so she could begin attending school to broaden her knowledge and apply it in the world. At first, her aunt Mrs. Reed, refused. However, eventually she agreed to send Jane to a school for orphans in Lowood, allowing Jane to successfully commit to her plan of escape from the Reeds. Though Jane was only young at the time, she had already shown the readers that she had had enough of the criticism, ridicule, lack of support, and

ignorance. Bronte created this opportunity for Jane to free ~~right away~~ ~~so she~~ immediately at the start of the novel so the readers would be able to see the rapid growth in Jane that occurs once she meets Helen in Lowood's school for orphans. After Jane revealed her plots for revenge against the Reeds, Helen's insightful comments inspired an epiphany in Jane. ~~She insisted that~~ Helen insisted that revenge never worried her heart because she knew that in some way, she deserved the consequences that were given to her. Even if she did not deserve them, she admitted that she simply endured the pain ~~so someone else did~~ ~~in order for~~ so the attacks were not directed towards her peers. Jane realized how selfless Helen was, and intended to carry on her legacy of helping others by becoming a teacher, or governess, once Helen tragically faced her heart breaking death. This is significant to the development of the novel because Bronte is showing the readers that escaping from a negative situation does not always mean that a person was fearful or could not stand up for ~~his or her~~ oneself. It could mean that a person realized that he or she does not deserve abuse, negativity, and judgment, and has decided to search for the place where he or she belongs.

Fitzgerald touched on a similar concept when he wrote about Jay Gatsby's change of identity. In the novel, The Great Gatsby, Gatsby is described as a newly rich man who threw fancy parties, had a beautiful yellow car, a grand house, and everything that anyone could have ever wanted. Before all of his riches, he was a plain worker named James Gatz. He decided to escape from this old identity when he met the love of his life, Daisy. She ignited a flame in him to become wealthy and recognizable like her current husband, Tom Buchanan, who participated in infidelic acts with a woman named Myrtle. Fitzgerald examined the sudden change in Gatsby as a way ~~to~~ for him to impress the woman ~~that he has been~~ whose attention he has been trying

to catch. Fitzgerald prepares the readers to understand this identity change in *Gatsby* before the novel even starts. The author inserted a short quote from a previous novel that mentions a gold-hatted lover who bounces high for ~~their~~ his or her significant other and then the significant other screams, "I must have you!" (Fitzgerald). This quote tells the readers that Gatsby is willing to do anything for Daisy's love, even if it means abandoning his old identity as James Gatz to become the new and improved Jay Gatsby. This is similar to Jane in Bronte's *Jane Eyre* because she, too, leaves behind the life that she once knew to become someone better. She wanted to be successful, so she began working for a wealthy, Mr. Rochester, in *Thornfield*. Likewise, Gatsby improved his social status by using his newly-acquired wealth to his advantage. Both Bronte and Fitzgerald developed a change or identified a change in the main characters of their novels to emphasize the importance of taking risks to better ~~y~~ one's self or increase overall happiness, even if it means leaving behind the sense of familiarity.

The two authors also demonstrated the use of symbolism to show the ~~main characters'~~ ~~obsession~~ themes of obsession in an attempt to escape from or hide the characters' true feelings.

In *Jane Eyre*, Bronte examined this idea through Rochester's wife who lives in *Thornfield*. While Jane was staying at Mr. Rochester's home to work as his governess for little Adele, a wild-haired, crazy-eyed woman had made repetitive visits to Jane's room, as well as Rochester's, causing fires, running down the halls, and ultimately terrifying Jane. Jane was convinced that it was Grace Poole, the creepy old woman who lived in the attic, but later found out on her wedding day, that it was Mr. Rochester's wife. His wife's obsession with causing trouble and trying to remove Jane, led to Jane's escape. She could no longer handle the compulsive lying, possibilities of death, or the confusion.

She now knew when to leave because she had done it before when she was abused. However, this time she harbored no hatred. Instead, she allowed Mr. Rochester to feel sorry for his mistakes and let life decide his fate. This escape has narrative significance because it shows that Jane has learned her limits. She realized that when someone wrongs her, they have to pay the consequences and she has to move on to greater things. This is an important lesson for the readers to understand as well because domestic abuse, infidelity, and manipulation are major issues that are present in the lives of many people today. ~~Most~~ Some people continue to tolerate the abuse, the lying, ~~the~~ and the cheating, but fail to realize that no one deserves that kind of treatment. Everyone deserves to be loved and cared for, and nothing less. Bronte made it apparent that Jane has realized this through the symbol of a monster of a woman, who symbolized all of the negativity that surfaces in life.

Fitzgerald also examined the theme of obsession through Gatsby's character. Unlike Jane in Jane Eyre who knew her limits, Gatsby consistently pushed himself to be someone ~~he~~ who he was not. He threw numerous parties which left behind huge piles of orange and lemon peels, which he ordered every Friday. He was ~~the~~ always surrounded by many, but rarely knew any of the faces he encountered. The only one he cared about was Daisy's. His hopes of finally possessing her love would increase every time he looked out his window to see her green light flickering across the bay in East Egg. With Nick's help, he was finally able to spend time alone with Daisy. He impressed her with his wide array of patterns, colors, and designs on his shirts that he would throw over the railing into another huge pile. Gatsby seemed to have an excessive persona to escape from his feelings of loneliness and self-consciousness. ~~He~~ One might

assume that Gatsby is not lonely, but even when he throws parties, he is the one standing at the top of the staircase by himself watching everyone else have fun. So all of his excessive, obsessive behavior is used to escape from his loneliness that he feels due to the lack of love from Daisy and the absence of his parents.

Fitzgerald and Bronte had different approaches when it came to obsession and its symbolism in relation to the characters. Bronte directed her attention towards teaching a lesson about when to let go from an unhealthy relationship whereas Fitzgerald was more concerned with explaining Gatsby's unusual behavior. However, it could also suggest that obsessive behavior is not the right way to achieve ~~that~~ love, but rather expressing a true personality.

Lastly, both Fitzgerald and Bronte shifted the settings in their novels multiple times to show the constant method of escaping and to show the development in the characters.

Bronte began by introducing Jane as an abused girl in Gateshead who had no support system, education, or love. Jane escaped this negative environment by begging to go to school in Lowood, where she learned much of skills to become a governess, and gained wisdom from her friend, Helen. This is a turning point for Jane because she begins searching for a job where she could apply her knowledge and skills to help

young girls who want an education just as much as she did. When she runs into Mr. Rochester on the road, she helps him mount his horse after he fell due to the slippery pavement, earning her a greater chance of being his governess when she shows up at his house in Thornfield. For Jane, it is possible that she changed settings in search of greater opportunities. When a certain location no longer benefited her, she ran away to find a place that would. Bronte reveals this idea to the readers to encourage them to always be on the lookout for opportunities, and to not be afraid to take them. If the opportunities do not bring positive results, it is simply a lesson learned. She wants the readers to learn from Jane so they could be more confident in their decisions.

Fitzgerald, on the other hand, has Gatsby change settings to ~~escape~~ accommodate to Daisy. Gatsby befriends the Buchanans and attempts to invite himself to one of their dinners in East Egg so he could be closer to Daisy, but this fails. In an essence, Gatsby would escape any location to be where Daisy resides. The characters in the Great Gatsby are always partying, cheating, or visiting houses perhaps because to them, what they have is never enough. For example, Gatsby ~~is~~ complains of his loneliness because he ~~does~~ it does not have Daisy, but he has Nick, who admires him greatly. Yet, it still is not enough. Similarly, most of the characters in the Great Gatsby cheat on each other because one significant other is not enough. This is important to the novel because it suggests that no matter how many times the characters try to escape from their feelings or from their unhealthy relationships, they never will because they always find themselves in the same predicament because enough is never enough to them.

Bronte and Fitzgerald ~~exceeded~~ succeeded in creating novels that explored the concepts of running away or escaping

from something of someone. They achieved this through their examinations of characterization, symbolism in the theme of obsession, and the shifts in setting and how it influenced the characters in Jane Eyre and the Great Gatsby.

**CAUTION:
IB SCORES ARE
REVEALED
BELOW!!!**

*****PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU
EVALUATE AND CRITIQUE THE
ESSAY USING THE PAPER 2 RUBRIC
BEFORE YOU LOOK AT THE
SCORES*** THANK YOU 😊**

IB PAPER 2 SCORES

The student who wrote this paper was a 2016
Reagan Graduate

Paper Total: 21 / 25

Total Mark / Max Mark

Criterion A 4 / 5

Criterion B 4 / 5

Criterion C 5 / 5

Criterion D 4 / 5

Criterion E 4 / 5