Name:

Date:

# Graded Assignment

## Honors Project 3: "A White Heron" and “The Open Boat”

Read the stories, and complete the online lesson. Then answer these questions, using examples from the stories to support your answers. Turn this assignment in to your teacher by the due date for full credit.

***Each response must cite specific examples from the poem using MLA format. Be sure to fully answer each question in its entirety using specific examples and original analysis.***

Total score: \_\_\_\_ of 100points

(Score for Question 1: \_\_\_ of 30 points)

1. Why is Sylvia so torn about whether the help the hunter? What does she decide to do? How is the entire episode depicted by Jewett in this story shown to be a rite of passage for Sylvia?

Answer:

The main reason that Sylvia is torn about helping the hunter is because of her love for nature. Prior to coming to the farm, Sylvia was used to living in a crowded manufacturing city and had no connection to nature itself. Upon arriving at the farm, she realized her love for nature which is evidenced in her connection to her grandmother's cow Mistress Molly. When she discovers the White Heron, she is excited by it which makes it hard for her to help the hunter kill it. Had it been any other hunter, the decision would have been easy but this hunter was a charming young making who was kind and had bonded friendship with Sylvia. Even so, she could not understand how he claimed to love birds, and yet he killed them for his collection. Sylvia, therefore, decides not to give up the location of the White Heron in the long run. We can consider this episode as a rite of passage due to the fact that it seems like an orientation for Sylvia as she switches from her Urban Life into the Rural Life. Every rite of passage is seen to consist of an obstacle that one must pass, which in this case is the dilemma that Sylvia is put in on whether to follow her love for nature or to make a decision based on friendship rather than what is right. (Score for Question 2: \_\_\_ of 20 points)

1. What qualities does Sarah Orne Jewett attribute to rural New England and its people in "A White Heron"? Do you think readers who hailed from this part of the country when the story was published in 1886 would have appreciated or agreed with Jewett's depiction of themselves and their region? Why or why not? Use examples from the story in support of your response.

Answer:

 Some of the qualities that Jewett attributes to the rural New England include the fact that the place was nature filled. She describes how there were many trees and the sunset could be seen glimmering from the tree trunks at the beginning of her story. This, therefore, depicts an area that was eco-friendly, with trees in the surrounding contrary to modern developed cities where skyscrapers have replaced trees. The other reason why her description of rural New England depicts an eco-friendly place is that there are exotic and rare birds residing in the ecosystem. The White Heron was a highly sought after bird which is the reason the hunter had traveled from a far distance to look for it. This meant that there was a great value to the birds and that the ecosystem that it was living in was a natural habitat that altered for all its needs. Jewett also depicted the people in this rural area to be friendly considering that the hunter who was a stranger was well received by Sylvia’s grandmother. Readers from the area described by Jewett would have agreed to Jewett’s description because she depicted the area in good light describing its natural beauty as well as its friendly people. Even though the description does not show a lot of infrastructural development, it depicts the area as real as it could be in the year 1886. (Score for Question 3: \_\_\_ of 20 points)

1. Consider Stephen Crane’s story “The Open Boat.” Describe and explain the feelings that the men in the boat have toward nature, fate, and their fellow human beings as they are able to make their way close to land but are unable to reach it and the safety it offers. Cite specific examples and details from the text in your response.

Answer:

The men in the boat have mixed feelings when it comes to nature. At some point, they feel like the sea is working against them and frustrating all their efforts to reach ashore or even to get some help. As they struggle with the waves and the sea, they reach a point of desperation where they stop thinking of the sea as the enemy, and they begin to feel like they are insignificant creatures in the eyes of nature. Here they feel that nature does not care if they live or die and that the things that happen in the world happen randomly without cause or intent. In regards to fate, the men felt that they have to try their best to achieve their goal of reaching the shore and not resign to letting fate make a decision for them. Following the several disappointing situations that left them disappointed, they would have thought that fate had decided they die at sea and they would have stopped trying. Even after the sight of a tourist waving at them not knowing they needed help and they do not stop pushing their hope. Their reaction towards human beings at some point was scorn especially regarding the tourist waving at them without reckoning they needed help, however, in general, they had no ill feelings towards mankind as they felt that during the rescue the men acted as they were expected to. (Score for Question 4: \_\_\_ of 30 points)

1. In "The Open Boat," Stephen Crane includes the following passage as the likelihood of the men surviving their ordeal continues to diminish:

When it occurs to a man that nature does not regard him as important, and that she feels she would not maim the universe by disposing of him, he at first wishes to throw bricks at the temple, and he hates deeply the fact that there are no bricks and no temples. Any visible expression of nature would surely be pelleted with his jeers.

 Then, if there be no tangible thing to hoot he feels, perhaps, the desire to confront a personification and indulge in pleas, bowed to one knee, and with hands supplicant, saying: “Yes, but I love myself.”

* What is Crane saying in this passage? How can this passage be understood as an expression of some of the primary tenets of naturalism?

Answer:

In this passage, Crane expresses the desperation that the men felt as they felt like their chances for survival were diminishing. In this passage, he expresses the reflection of life through a person nearing death where they feel that nature does not regard them as important hence the decision to be rid of them in this world. This passage also explains the plea of a desperate person for his life to be spared even when he feels that his chances of survival are minimal. This passage follows naturalism due to the fact that it does not involve any supernatural or religious beliefs in matters of life and death. It seeks to explain everything through the laws of nature. The Possibility of death is seen as a way of nature getting rid of something that is no longer important and that would make no significant difference if it were absent — the fact that the passage involves the phrase of throwing bricks at the temple evidence the element of naturalism as the desperate person realizes that religious beliefs are somewhat misleading and that nature controls everything.

References

Crane, Stephen. *The Open Boat*. Vol. 46. Lulu. com, 2016.

Jewett, Sarah Orne. *A White Heron*. David R. Godine Publisher, 2005.