

Ms. Eckmann

Honors English

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The Color Purple: Character Analysis on Celie

While reading the book *The Color Purple*, it can be seen that Celie, the main character, is a very head strong young woman. Celie is an African American woman, who has been put through many hardships, she experiences every kind of pain out there, but she learns through each and every one of the experiences that come her way. But throughout the book, through the ups and downs and everything that she has gone through, isn't Celie a very strong person? In the book *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, Celie seems like a scared young woman. Though character analysis, it can be inferred that Celie is very strong at times, but very cowardly during others, these attributes lead to her being very insecure.

Celie knows that she is not the prettiest person. Through the whole book you hear people say how ugly she is and she starts to believe it. She won't take the chance to see the beauty in herself. "She about ten thousand times more prettier than me" (Walker 6). Celie is very insecure in the beginning of the book. Not just because everyone calls her ugly, but because everyone seems to beat on her and abuse her, she feels that everything is wrong with her. Celie always was one to keep her head down and hide. By the end of the book she is still insecure about who she is and what she looks like. But she begins to take a stand for herself and not care about what

everyone else thinks of her, she learns to keep her head held high when people watch her hang it low.

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“You got to fight them, Celie, she say. I can’t do it for you. You got to fight them for yourself.” (Walker 21). One of the reasons that Celie is insecure is because of how cowardly she is. From the time she was a little girl, she had always been afraid, she always does what she is told, even if it is wrong. She lets everyone beat down on her, she lets everyone around her abuse her. She is too scared of people, and what they might do to her that Celie will not fight back. As Shrug might call her, she is a coward, and will not stand up for herself. By the end of the book she is not very cowardly, she was greatly influenced by those around her. Shrug her new friend was probably the most influential. By not letting a man boss her around, and not letting anyone do things to her that she does not want. Sofia, Celie's step daughter in law has a big influence on her to. Sofia stands up to everything and anything, she will not let anyone abuse her, and if someone hits her, she will hit them back. Celie took her friends values and strength and applied it to her own life, to become a braver woman. “Sofia so surprise to hear me speak up she aint chewed for ten minutes” (Walker 200).

But even with all the cowardness that is in Celie, she is the strongest person in the book, not physically, but mentally, and in her heart. “Maybe you give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me” (Walker 1). Celie starts out in the book as a 14 year old girl who is writing letters to god to help her, and to know that he knows what she has had to go through. “He beat me for dressing trampy but he do it to me anyway.” (Walker 7). When she was about 16, she

tries to protect her sister even if she knows that it will hurt her, and break her heart. She lets her father hurt

her and abuse her, rape her, so she can protect her little sister from him. "He beat me like he beat the children. Cept he don't never hardly beat them. He say, Celie, git the belt....It all I can do not

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to cry. I make myself wood" (Walker 22). When she is older she is forced to marry a man that she doesn't love, and he beats her. She is very strong because she goes through trials in life that no one should have to go through. But she lets people hurt her, if it means that her little sister is safe. She says that she makes herself feel like wood, so maybe she can't feel anything, or show anyone that she is weak.

Celie isn't perfect, but who is. She is cowardly and insecure, but because of this, she is also very brave. Through character analysis I have found that she is different from other girls of her age, and growing up, because she was one to stand tall, and protect her family. Celie is a very strong person because she shows that even when the world is beating down on you, that doesn't mean that it wins. She has shown that maybe she wasn't as strong before, but now nothing can stop her.

Work Cited:

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple: by Alice Walker*. Y. Yanagisawa, 1986.