Compare And Contrast Of Araby And Boys And Girls Essay, Research Paper

In the stories Araby by James Joyce, and Boys and Girls by Alice Munro, there is a common theme of growing up. In both of these stories the characters came to a realization of who they were and what they wanted to be. They both are of the age when reality strikes and priorities take on meaning. The characters in both stories evolve through rites of passage but the way in which these revolutions occur differ with each character.

These stories can be seen as different from each other in many ways. The young boy lives in a house in a suburban area without a mother or a father, but with guardians. He has a group of friends nearby he hangs out with. Though, he has no siblings. His revelation lets him realize the finer things in life, like women. He finds his friends are boring and no longer wants to play. Also, he obsesses over the young girl across the street in an unhealthy way. It almost seems as if he could grow to be a psychopath. He follows behind her on the way to school, waits for her before school, and watches her from his door.

The young girl on the other hand, lives in the outskirts of town, if not pure country. She does not play with anybody but a younger brother she has. She worships her father and neglects her mother. She also has no respect for her mother, although later in the story, she goes on about all the hard work she does. Unlike the boy, the young girl is kept occupied with lots of work.

In comparing these two stories, you will obviously notice the close ages of these two. Although, the stories never tell of an exact age, their behavior and thoughts put us at a close guess. Both kids seem lonely and in their own realm. They are both going through a time in their life where they are changing. Each character, in his or her own way, came to a realization. The boy in Araby , found the finer things in life. He no longer will be a little kid playing ball in the street, like his friends. He now frowns upon them for being such children . I think his revolution came when he went to Araby to buy a gift. He was so distraught by being late and having to wait upon somebody else that, he now wants to be his own man. He wants to be in charge of his own self, without having to wait around for permission from other people, especially when their not even his parents.

The young girl in Boys and Girls by Munro, follows her father around and does the job of a boy . She was learning to shoot a gun, gave the foxes water, raked the grass after her father cut it and made a canopy for the foxes with it, and anything else her father told her to do. She thought the work in the house by her mother was endless, dreary and peculiarly depressing. Yet, Work done out of doors, and in my father s service, was ritualistically important. Whenever her mother gave her female jobs to do indoors, she would run out of the house, trying to get out of earshot before (her) mother thought of what she wanted her to do next. She loathed the womanly work done inside. She did not trust her mother because of the several times she heard her trying to convince her father, it was the womanly chores inside she should be doing instead of outside. She also thought her mother was always plotting to get the young girl to stay in the house and to keep her from working with her father. It did not occur to me that she could be lonely, or jealous , she states some sentences later. After her grandmother came to stay awhile, the young girl would continue to slam doors and sit as awkwardly as possible, thinking it would keep her free.

Her revelation came when the shooting of the horses was to be done. She even feels it, There was a great feeling of opening-out, of release. Her and her brother sneaked into the barn to watch the shooting of Mack. After a week or two of the tormenting memory it was time for Flora s turn. After the girl let Flora out of the gate she felt remorse and new Flora really wouldn t get away. There was nowhere for the horse to run free and this only caused her father to work harder. Yet, she feels no regret. Lately, she had been trying to make her part of the room fancier, using lace curtains, and saving fabric for her own skirt. After, when the truth comes out and her father dismisses the incident by calling her a girl, she does not protest. Even in her heart, she new that it was true.

In both the stories, these kids go through their rites of passage. The young boy grows into a young man, and the girl finally realizes that she is a girl and accepts it. Freeing the horse was like freeing herself. She new that the horse could not get away, like she could not change her sex. So, she accepts it and Flora s death but does not let either happen without a final attempt to go down fighting. Letting Flora free was in fact freeing herself. She realized she is what she was born, but she wanted to make a point that she is still free and decided to change because she wanted to. The characters in both stories evolve through rites of passage, but the way in which these revelations occur differ with each character.