

Jane Eyre AP Literature Review Assignment
Period 4
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1. Structure (Tina Jing)

Jane Eyre is a flashback, with the events in the flashback written logically and chronologically, since the events happen in the order in which they occurred. This structure also corresponds with the development of Jane Eyre as a character and the revelations of her inner struggles and insecurities. The location and setting of each of the events in the novel also adds to the novel's structural unity because the action in the novel takes place in and around the various locations that Jane finds herself, such as Gateshead, where she was a mistreated child in Mrs. Reed's home, Lowood, where she learned various skills that allowed her to become a governess and was once again mistreated as a student, and Thornfield, where she worked as a governess and met Rochester.

2. Literary Devices (Ruchi Patel):

The motifs of ice and fire: Bronte uses these two contrasting ideas consistently throughout the novel, with descriptions and use of *imagery* that uses ideas of coolness and warmth. Fire represents Jane's passion and spirit, while ice symbolizes the forces that are trying to quell those ideas of brightness. and they have their respective 'character' representations with Mr. Rochester as passionate and fiery, and St. John as logical and cold (as Jane compares him to ice and cold rock.)

The symbol of Bertha Mason: Mr. Rochester's neglected and so-called insane wife is a complex and misunderstood character in Bronte's work. After reading the Yellow Wallpaper, it is easy to see that she is a symbol of patriarchal oppression and a result of her circumstances. Her circumstances are that of being a typical Victoria wife, condemned to a life of walking the same halls day in and day out which creates a sense of anxiety in Mr. Rochester's new wife. These negative feelings are looked up, further increasing their intensity. In a sense, Mason represents what might have happened to Jane had she married Mr. Rochester submissively instead of leaving to find her own integrity and independence first. Mason also holds as a symbol of the failed methods of treating mental illness and disorder during the time, because she was locked up, her condition worsened greatly.

Tone: The tone used in the novel is romantic and mysterious at times, with the occasional notes of horror. Such a tone helps portray Jane's nature, which is friendly and affectionate. It also help the reader trust the narrative more as it seems more personal and true to Jane's feelings, and removes some question over her actual heart.

Character Development: This device is central to the ideas that Bronte is trying to cultivate in her novel. At the beginning of the novel, Jane is a kindred spirit but the strength she gathers over the course of the novel is great. By leaving Mr. Rochester because she knew it was wrong to simply submit to this man who didn't yet treat her as an equal though he loved her, she grew marvelously as a individual. And, then

in a completely different way, she grew again as she chose to follow her heart and passion by leaving St. John and returning to where her heart was.

3. Rhetorical Devices (Kathryn Lovell)

The Porridge: The porridge in the book represents humility and Jane's poor social standing. She's forced to eat poorly for the first part of the book, both in Ms. Reed's household and in the Lowood School. During Jane's period of homelessness, she's given spoiled porridge, just like the burnt porridge at Lowood. This marks her return to humility.

The Foil Between Rochester and Rivers: While Rochester is a man who blindly follows passion, Rivers has very little passion at all, and instead is blinded by ambition. While Rochester asks Jane for marriage because of love, Rivers asks because he thinks she would be a proper missionary's wife. This foil serves to show the folly in completely disregarding passion if one is in the pursuit of a good life, after Jane runs away from passion.

The Way Jane Talks: Jane's sentences are lengthy, even in the beginning, as it opens on her childhood. This shows that, even before she goes to Lowood, that Jane is certainly not ignorant, and in fact well educated. The fact that she's reading a book also helps this idea along.

Mr. Brocklehurst and Helen Burns: These two serves as foils to each other as well. Mr. Brocklehurst gives lip service to the ideas of humility, but he has never had to endure eating burnt porridge himself, and steals from the school to line his own pockets. In contrast to him is Helen Burns, who actually embodies the Christian ideas of love and forgiveness. While Brocklehurst uses religion to gain power, Helen turns the other cheek to his practices. Helen's blind faith relies on the idea of God's punishment in the end. These two are set up to communicate to larger facets of religion. Some institutions use religion as a method of control, but at its core the ideas can be very pure.

Birds: Jane is linked to birds throughout the novel. At the very beginning she is looking at a book about them. She's compared to both a dove and an owl by Rochester. Rochester says that he sees "at intervals, the glance of a curious sort of bird through the close-set bars of a cage: a vivid, restless, resolute captive is there; were it but free, it would soar cloud-high." The larger idea communicated by this is that Jane is caged. As a society, we typically see the symbol of the caged bird as one of injustice and sadness--lost potential. Jane has a great deal of potential, if only she were allowed to properly express it. The caged bird longs to be free. It longs to fly. The same is true of Jane.

4. The Better-than-Sparknotes Summary:

Jane Eyre is an orphan being raised by Mrs. Reed, her cruel aunt. A servant, Bessie, is the only person who's nice to her. One day, as punishment for fighting with her cousin John Reed, Jane's aunt imprisons

Jane in the red-room. While she's in there, Jane faints. The apothecary, Mr. Lloyd, recommends that she start school. Mrs. Reed, eager to be rid of Jane, agrees.

The school, Lowood, turns out not to be a better place than with Mrs. Reed. The school's headmaster is cruel, and he forces the school's residents to live in poverty so his family can live well. Jane befriends a girl named Helen Burns, who helps Jane deal with the living conditions. The school has a massive epidemic and Helen dies. It also attracts attention to the school and results in the headmaster leaving. Jane's life improves dramatically. She spends eight more years at Lowood, six as a student and two as a teacher. Jane leaves Lowood to find new experiences.

She becomes a governess at Thornfield, where she teaches a French girl named Adèle. The housekeeper, Mrs. Fairfax, runs the estate. Jane's employer at Thornfield is Rochester, with whom Jane secretly falls in love. She saves Rochester from a fire one night, which he claims was started by a drunken servant named Grace Poole. But because Grace Poole continues to work at Thornfield, Jane thinks he's hiding something from her. Rochester brings home a beautiful but vicious woman, to whom Jane thinks he will propose, and she expects Rochester to propose to her. This makes Jane get depressed. But Rochester proposes to Jane, who accepts.

As Rochester and Jane are getting ready to say their vows, Mr. Mason interrupts and says Rochester's already married to a woman named Bertha. Rochester explains that Bertha has gone mad. Rochester keeps Bertha hidden at Thornfield and pays Grace Poole to keep her under control. (Bertha was the real cause of the mysterious fire earlier in the story.) Jane, knowing she can't marry Rochester, flees Thornfield.

Jane is forced to sleep outdoors and beg for food. At last, three siblings take her in. Jane quickly becomes friends with them. St. John, one of the siblings, is a clergyman, and he finds Jane a job teaching at a charity school in Morton, which she enjoys. He surprises her one day by declaring that her uncle, John Eyre, has died and left her a large fortune. When Jane asks how he received this news, he reveals that Jane and the Riverses are cousins. Jane shares her inheritance equally with her three newfound relatives.

St. John decides to travel to India as a missionary, and he asks Jane to marry him and come with him. Jane agrees to go to India but refuses to marry her cousin because she does not love him. She nearly does, but she realizes that she still loves Rochester. Jane goes back to Thornfield and finds that it has been burned to the ground by Bertha, who died in the fire. Rochester saved the servants but lost his eyesight and one of his hands. Jane travels on to Rochester's new home. Rochester and Jane wind up falling in love, getting married, and having a son.

5. Quotations (Julia Caparaz)

- ★ "Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags" -*Jane Eyre, Chapter 12*

Explanation: Jane says this quote as she looks out from her room in Thornfield.

At Thornfield, Jane Eyre is the governess and she falls in love with Rochester

She feels imprisoned and restrained by her social standing, as if confined in a cage.

She wants to be able to go out into the world and interact with other people. She longs for freedom and equality. Jane also criticizes the role of women in the Victorian society. She believes that women are confined in their homes and workplaces to do tasks such as make food and knit clothing.

- ★ "As his curate, his comrade, all would be right: I would cross oceans with him in that capacity; toil under Eastern suns, in Asian deserts with him in that office; admire and emulate his courage and devotion and vigour: accommodate quietly to his masterhood; smile undisturbed at his ineradicable ambition. . . . I should suffer often, no doubt, attached to him only in this capacity: my body would be under a rather stringent yoke, but my heart and mind would be free. I should still have my unblighted self to turn to: my natural unenslaved feelings with which to communicate in moments of loneliness. There would be recesses in my mind which would be only mine, to which he never came; and sentiments growing there, fresh and sheltered, which his austerity could never blight, nor his measured warrior-march trample down: but as his wife—at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked—forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital—this would be unendurable." -*Jane Eyre, Chapter 34*

Explanation: Jane says this quote when St. John Rivers asks her to come with him to India. She believes that this gives her an opportunity to become more than what a typical woman in the Victorian society is. She is tempted to join him, leave her current life and not feel trapped anymore. She would rather endure hardships in India, while doing what she loves.

- ★ "Do you think I am an automaton? — a machine without feelings? and can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! — I have as much soul as you — and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh: it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal — as we are!" -*Jane Eyre*

Explanation: Jane says this to Rochester to explain that she is human, Although she does not have much money and her social rank is not high, this does not mean she is unhuman, "soulless, and heartless." She believes that Rochester thinks that she is a poor woman who has the need to marry a wealthy woman to feel fulfilled.

6. Themes (Krystal Au)

Gender and Social Relations

Throughout *Jane Eyre*, Jane had to overcome difficulties that resulted from the fact that she was a poor woman in the 19th century. Even though Jane has an education and is a governess who teaches children manners and academics, she is still treated like a servant by her employer. She also has to compete with Blanche Ingram for Edward Rochester. Jane and Miss. Ingram both believed that Miss. Ingram better suited Mr. Rochester due to her social position. When Jane started to be with Mr. Rochester, she didn't like when he bought her very expensive gifts or when he was planning to throw her an extravagant wedding. It made her feel inferior and indebted to him. She agreed to marry Mr. Rochester only if he agreed that she would be treated as an equal compare to him. Also, Jane calls Edward Rochester Mr. Rochester throughout the novel even when they began to date. This shows that Jane still treats Mr. Rochester like a master or someone who is higher than her. Mr. Brocklehurst and St. John Rivers are two other characters that made Jane feel unequal. Mr. Brocklehurst suppressed Jane at Lowood School and mistreated all of the girls or women at his school. St. John Rivers was a very controlling man towards Jane like when he forced her to learn a language with him and pressuring her to marry him. However, he always had good intentions.

Religion

After meeting many religious figures and coming across situations where Jane depended on religion, she ended up discovering her own belief and ideas of faith. The first two religious figures Jane met were Mr. Brocklehurst and Helen Burns at Lowood School. One of the first things that Mr. Brocklehurst ask Jane when they first met was about religion. Mr. Brocklehurst believed in Evangelism and forced it upon the whole school. Helen Burns, Jane's first friend practiced Christian endurance where she loves her enemies and accepts her privation. However, even though Jane admires Helen, she disagrees with Helen and her passivity. St. John was also a Christian and he believed that people should give up everything for moral duty. Jane Eyre did not take on any of these other characters' beliefs, but she still believed in God and morality. Some examples are when she refused to marry Rochester because he still had a wife and that would go against her morals, and she prayed to God when she left Rochester and was starving and lost and when her wedding was interrupted.

Independence against Emotions

Jane is a very strong woman who wants and loves freedom. One of the main reasons that she refused to marry Rochester besides the fact he was still married to Bertha, was that she knew if she married him, she would lose her autonomy and integrity. She would have to be completely depended on him, financially and emotionally. When she moved into the Moor House and charity school, Jane had complete freedom and became an independent working woman. Jane again had the opportunity to get marry but this time to St. John, she knew there would be no love in their marriage so she rejected him. After her whole journey of finding herself, she decided she is self-sufficient enough to marry Rochester

and still be independent and equals with him. Rochester became blind at the end of the novel, and this time he had to depend on his wife, Jane.