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## The Benefits And Limitations Of Friendship

A literary critic John Churton Collins once said, "In prosperity, our friends know us; in adversity, we know our friends." The theme I will be exploring in this essay is, "The benefits and limitations of friendship" This theme is important to talk about as sometimes friendship is underappreciated until it is needed, I will be conveying this theme in my essay using the novella 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck, Short story 'Big Brother, Little Sister' by Witi Ihimaera, Poem 'Friend' by Hone Tuwhare and the film 'Stand By Me' by Rob Reiner.

In the novella 'Of Mice and Men', written by John Steinbeck, the reader learns that in times of hardships, like the Great Depression, friendship was an important tool to help people cope and get through the difficulties society and the economy placed on them. The main characters were George and Lennie; They both traveled to a ranch where they got a job as labor workers, the setting was in the Great Depression years where everything was difficult. The two main characters worked on the ranch alongside other characters. However, everyone on the ranch did not have a close friendship like Lennie and George. An example of this is "Ain't many guys travel around together," this is a quote said by Slim which represents their friendship and how people on the ranch don't see this friendship often, as everyone sees friendship as not beneficial and is scared that one will use the other to leave their hard life and live the American dream. In addition, men were told, by being independent and showing no emotions would make them look tough and not weak. Yet the relationship for both Lennie and George defied the way men were taught during the midst of the depression. Lennie is big and strong. He can protect George and is a good help for labor work, but he is disadvantaged due to his speech and mental disability. George is small but smart with his words which helps Lennie not to be taken advantage of. Steinbeck's representation of friendship hopes for readers to understand the benefits of friendship and its importance. Friends are there to help you when you are trying to cope with unpleasant times because life for everyone is full of ups and downs.

Witi Ihimaera's short story, 'Big Brother Little Sister', conveys to the reader that siblings (Hema & Janey) can share friendship with no limitations as strong to the point that it can overcome adversity. The short story is about two siblings on their journey to leave the place they used to call 'home' due to all the neglect and abuse from their mother and Uncle Pera. The siblings pushed through the adversity by helping one another. An example of this was when Uncle Pera beat Hema. Hema was upset soon after Janey started to try to comfort them by crawling between his arms. Janey soon said "Don't you cry, Hema," she'd whispered. "Hema, don't you cry." This quote shows their support together during adversity as this situation made them have to mature quicker and learn and grow together. Janey being younger and still knowing what to do to comfort her older brother shows what sibling friendship is about as they are young children dealing with such a situation many kids their age may never face. Witi Ihimaera's representation of friendships shows sibling friendships do not have limitations compared to any other kind of friendship.

A sad weekend friendship is shown in the Poem, Friend, by Hone Tuwhare. This poem is about a narrator expressing the feelings of the friendship he used to have when he was a kid, and how he misses the friendship as now life is becoming a struggle. For example "Perhaps the tree will strike again: give soothing shade to a hurt troubled world". This quote portrays that perhaps the

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friendship he had as a kid would revive and help his situation and life out. "Hurt troubled world" refers to society and how being an adult is hard as there are so many worries and expectations. Hone Tuwhare's representation of friendship is similar to how Rob Reiner (director of Stand By Me) views friendship as teenagers/children; they are careless, simple, and memorable. In the poem Hone tried to convey the limitation of when friendships are left untouched, also conveying the benefit of how they are valuable and ease off the troubled word. As if Hone Tuwhare was warning the reader to appreciate and value friendships as one day they will come in useful to help cope with life's struggles.

In the film, Stand By Me, directed by Rob Reiner, the audience will experience friendship in the view of the boy. The movie is about four boys who are on a journey to find Ray's dead body. The four boys come from different backgrounds but all of them share something in common that all their parents do not show much support, all the boys want to do big things in life. But the friendship they have has made life so much easier. An example of this is when Chris says "Kids lose everything unless there's someone there to look out for them." This quote suggests that they may not have support from their parents, but they have this friendship that can be used to help them find confidence and express their feelings on any hardships they may encounter. Rob Reiner wants us to understand the importance of friendship and how beneficial it is to find positive friends that will support you through hardships. As nontoxic friends provide no limitations.

In conclusion, the four texts that were explored in this essay all shared an important message. By surrounding yourself in a good friendship will provide countless benefits and fewer limitations. It also has helped me understand that there will be hardships, and those hardships are going to reveal who your true friends are.