The Major And Minor Sacrifices In A Tale Of Two Cities By Charles Dickens And In Romeo And Juliet By William Shakespeare

For my essay, I explored the major and minor sacrifices that took place in A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens, and Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare. I compared how the sacrifices the characters make are similar to each other in both the novel and the play. They are similar in that someone sacrifices their life for another person and someone gives up being wealthy. I also compared and contrasted both of their themes. They both have themes relating to the reasons why characters would make major sacrifices in the book or play. Finally, I explain why one of the pieces of literature has a stronger theme, and what makes it better than the other.

The reason I chose this topic was because it interested me to see how Romeo and Juliet and A Tale of Two Cities were so similar, yet one of their themes interested and attracted me more than the other one. My first main goal in this essay is to have a richer analysis in my body paragraphs. In my previous essay, I mostly lost points on my analysis. This essay I am go to try to have a deeper analysis and explain the connection between things. My second goal is to improve the overall flow and phrasing of my essay. To do this, I am going to use smoother transitions between my body paragraphs. In most of my essays, the wording is choppy and I do not have great transitioning between ideas.

This time I am going to make sure every idea flows smoothly together. Something new that I am going to try in this essay is to get feedback from more than one person. Usually I just get one person to look over and edit my essay for me. This time I am going to ask multiple people to help and revise my essay. By doing this it will help me identify mistakes that I may have not seen before. It will also help me make sure my wording is correct and that I have no typos. Another new thing that I am going to try this essay is to have a more compelling hook. Usually I start my essay with a thought provoking question.

This time I am going to start by using a quote about sacrifices. Sincerely, Macy Bosworth Macy Bosworth Mrs. Ward English 9 H, G-period 25 February 2019 What Makes a Great Theme? Lailah Gifty Akita said, “Nothing great was ever achieved without a personal sacrifice. You have to pay the price to realize your goals.” By this she means that without making sacrifices, nobody would ever accomplish something great in life. Some great examples of people making sacrifices are found in the book A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens, and in the play Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare. Sydney Carton, a major character in A Tale of Two Cities, saves Lucie Manette’s husband, Charles Darnay, from death. During Shakespeare’s play, two lovers named Romeo and Juliet love each other but are from feuding families, so they eventually end up killing themselves for each other. In A Tale of Two Cities and Romeo and Juliet, sacrifice takes place through people giving their lives up and love interests for each other. Even though they have similar themes pertaining to sacrifice, Romeo and Juliet’s theme is more prevalent because it is more straightforward and illustrates a more personal journey which makes a better theme.

In the book and the play, similar major and minor sacrifices are made through the characters actions and choices. Romeo and Juliet sacrifice their lives for each other just like Sydney Carton sacrifices his life for Charles Darnay. The narrator of the novel says, “For a few seconds [Darnay] faintly struggled with the man who had come to lay down his life for him” (Dickens 366). When Charles Darnay is about to die in prison, Sydney Carton sacrifices himself to save not only Darnay, but ultimately his family. In the same way, Romeo and Juliet’s love for each other is so deep that they are willing to die for each other. When Romeo believes that Juliet is dead, he kills himself because he thinks it is better to be dead rather than live without Juliet.

The characters in both the play and the novel sacrifice their lives for another person for a greater cause than themselves. Carton’s major sacrifice of trading places with Darnay made it so that Darnay could live, but it also positively impacted Lucie Manette and her daughter by making it so that they still had a husband and father. Romeo and Juliet giving up their lives for each other resulted in the two feuding families coming together and ending their arguments. Their sacrifices brought reconciliation to their families and the people around them. A common minor sacrifice that is present in Romeo and Juliet and A Tale of Two Cities regards the characters’ love interests. Juliet does not want to marry Paris who is very wealthy, and Lucie Manette chooses Darnay over Stryver who is wealthier than Darnay. Juliet tells her parents, “I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear, It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate, Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!” (Shakespeare 3.5.121-123). By choosing Romeo over Paris, Juliet is sacrificing money that she could have inherited from Paris. However, She is also sacrificing her relationship with her parents as they resent her for choosing Romeo. Lucie Manette also makes a similar sacrifice to Juliet’s. She rejects Stryver and chooses Charles Darnay instead of him. Stryver is a very wealthy businessman and well put together compared to Darnay. On the other hand, Darnay had previously renounced his inheritance and does not have as much money as Stryver. Therefore, Lucie could have chosen to marry either one of them, but she chose Darnay over Stryver. Lucie Manette ends up sacrificing similar things that Juliet sacrifices. In both the play and the novel, major and minor sacrifices are made through the willingness of characters giving up their lives and inheritance. Although Romeo and Juliet and A Tale of Two Cities both have themes pertaining to sacrifices, their themes are slightly different from each other. Romeo and Juliet illuminates the theme that true love leads to foolish sacrifices.When Romeo is talking to Friar Lawrence he says, “O, let us hence. I stand on sudden haste” and Friar Lawrence responds with, “Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast” (2.3.100-101). This quote helps show the theme of how love for someone can result in making unwise decisions. Romeo’s love for Juliet ultimately leads to his death. He loves Juliet so much that he would rather lose his life instead of living without her. Even though his actions illuminate his pure love for Juliet, his choices remain foolish because it impacts his family and the people around him through his tragic death. Romeo’s love for a girl results in irresponsible choices and ending his life for her. On the other hand, A Tale of Two Cities depicts the theme that sacrifices must be made to be able to achieve happiness.

The book says, “Sadly, sadly, the sun rose; it rose upon no sadder sight than the man of good abilities and good emotions, incapable of their directed exercise, incapable of his own help and his own happiness...” (95). At this point in the novel, Sydney Carton is not happy with himself and does not see value in his life. His inner conflict makes him unable to achieve happiness because of the way he views the world and his own life. By the end of the novel, Carton discovers that the only way he can be happy in life is through death. He decides to sacrifice his life in order to save Charles Darnay’s life. By sacrificing his life for Darnay, he thinks that he is finally able to achieve happiness. Both Romeo and Juliet and A Tale of Two Cities, have

themes pertaining to characters making sacrifices, but one theme results in foolish actions and the other leads to achieving happiness. Even though they have similar themes relating to sacrifices, Romeo and Juliet conveys a stronger theme than A Tale of Two Cities because it is more noticeable and personal throughout the play.

Romeo and Juliet's theme is more direct and present during the play, whereas in A Tale of Two Cities, there are multiple major themes which can take away from the theme of sacrifice. Romeo tells Juliet, "I take thee at thy word. Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized. Henceforth I never will be Romeo...My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself" (2.2.53-60). This quote represents the theme that love results in foolish sacrifices because Romeo is giving up his name. By forsaking his name, Romeo is leaving behind his wealth and family. Throughout the entire play Romeo makes unreasonable sacrifices because of his love for Juliet. During A Tale of Two Cities, the theme that sacrifices must be made to achieve happiness is mainly evident towards the end of the novel when Carton gives up his life. This makes Romeo and Juliet's theme stronger because it is more present throughout the play compared to A Tale of Two Cities. In addition, Shakespeare's theme is stronger because it has more of a personal journey throughout the entire play compared to A Tale of Two Cities. Carton tells Darnay, "I am a disappointed drudge, sir. I care for no man on earth, and no man on earth cares for me" (89). Throughout the majority of the novel, Carton remains self-deprecating. He perceives himself as a drunkard, worthless, and someone who nobody likes. When he finally gets out of this state of mind, it is at the end of the novel right before he sacrifices his own life for Charles Darnay. In Romeo and Juliet, the two lovers' relationship develops and transforms from the beginning to the end of the play. The entire time during the play, Romeo's idea about love is impacted and changes. This helps convey Romeo and Juliet's theme better than A Tale of Two Cities because his mindset completely changes throughout the play, instead of just at the end of the play. Despite the fact that the play and the novel both contain themes connecting to sacrifices, Romeo and Juliet's theme is more powerful because it is present during the entire play instead of just at the end, and Romeo has a more personal journey than Sydney Carton. Overall, in A Tale of Two Cities and Romeo and Juliet many characters make major and minor sacrifices like losing their lives for each other and giving up being wealthy.

The theme in Dickens' novel is that sacrifices need to be made to be content. In Shakespeare's play, the theme illustrated throughout is that love for someone results in foolish sacrifices. The play's theme is more common and personal during the play, so therefore it has a more compelling theme than A Tale of Two Cities, because the reader can identify and connect with it to a greater degree. Since the play that Shakespeare wrote has a stronger theme, the audience will probably enjoy it better than the novel by Dickens. If Dickens would have shown Sydney Carton's character development and sacrifices in more depth throughout the entire novel, then maybe it would have been way more interesting for the reader.