

Humanities Out There Lesson 4: Comparative Analysis

Key Similarities between *Quinceanera* and *The Scarlet Letter*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Key Differences between *Quinceanera* and *The Scarlet Letter*

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Thesis – The main idea of something, for instance the main idea of an essay you read or an essay you write. It comes from the same root as “theory” and “hypothesis.”

Formula For Constructing Thesis

- A. State Topic – Lakers
- B. Convert to Proposition – The Lakers suck.
- C. Add Rationale – The Lakers suck because Kobe is a ballhog & they have no perimeter defense.
- D. Polish and Qualify – Although the Lakers made the playoffs last year, they nonetheless suck because their perimeter defense is weak and their offense is stifled by Kobe’s selfishness.
- E. Reverse and Test – Although their perimeter defense is weak and their offense is at times stifled by Kobe’s selfishness, the Lakers are totally awesome, as evidenced last year during their playoff run.

7. On a separate sheet of paper, use the thesis formula to build an argument comparing *Quinceanera* to *The Scarlet Letter*.

You should argue that they are, all things considered, quite similar **or** that they are, in the end, significantly different.

You may want to refer to the back of this sheet for step C (rationale) and step D (qualification).

HESTER

Hast thou found peace?
She smiled drearily,
looking down on her
bosom. (187)

HESTER'S FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS

At the very least they
should have put the
brand of hot iron on
Hester Prynne's
forehead. Madame
Hester would have
wincd at that, I
warrant me. (49)

It were well... if we
stripped Madam
Hester's rich gown off
her dainty shoulders;
and as for the red
letter, which she hath
stitched so curiously,
I'll bestow a rag of
mine own rheumatic
flannel, to make a fitter
one. (50)

This woman has
brought shame upon us
all, and ought to die.
Is there not law for it?
(50)

It must gladden your
heart... to find
yourself, at length, in a
land where iniquity is
searched out, and
punished in the sight of
rulers and people; as
here in our godly New
England. (59)

MAGDALENA

I hate school. I hate
Herman. I hate this
baby.

MAGDALENA'S NEIGHBORS

Ay Maria, I hope that
I'm wrong. No one
could have brought
up a girl better than
you've brought up
Magdalena. No one.
Catorce anos! Ay,
dios mio.

*Look, you know this
could have happened
to any of us. I know
how close I've come
with Paco sometimes.*

Yeah, but at least
some of us are smart
enough to use
precautions. Hello!
Birth control!

*Well how far have
you gone with
Manuel, Jessica?*

At least I'm not going
around claiming to
be a virgin when I'm
carrying a baby.

*No! Is that what she's
saying?*

Yes. Hail Mary, full
of grace.

Fourteen and
pregnant. Face it,
your life is over.

HESTER'S HUSBAND

Dost thou remember
me, Hester, as I was
nine years ago? Even
then, I was in the
autumn of my days, nor
was it the early
autumn.... No life had
been more peaceful and
innocent than mine; few
lives so rich with
benefits conferred.
Dost thou remember
me? Was I not, though
you might deem me
cold, nevertheless a man
thoughtful for others...
kind, true, just, and of
constant if not warm
affections? Was I not
all this?

*"All this, and more,"
said Hester.*

"And what am I now?"
demanded he, looking
into her face, and
permitting the whole
evil within him to be
written on his features.
I have already told thee
what I am! A fiend! A
fiend! What made me
so?"

*"It was myself!" cried
Hester, shuddering. "It
was I, not less than he.
Why hast thou not
avenged thyself on
me?"*

"I have left thee to the
Scarlet Letter," replied
Chillingworth.. (169)

MAGDALENA'S FATHER

How do you think your
mother feels now? The
shame that you brought
on this house! And on
the church.

The test is wrong!

No, the test is not
wrong!

It is!

He that committeth
fornication sinneth
against his own body.
*I'm telling you papa, I
haven't been with the
boy.*

You liar! You are so full
of sin that you can't
admit the truth. Not
even when your
wickedness is there in
front of you, for the
world to see.

*Why aren't you listening
to me?*

Go! I don't want to look
at you.

When she's ready to
confess her sin, I'll talk.
Not until then.

*Magdalena is very
strong headed. You
know what she's like.*

I used to know her.

She's still the same.

The girl I knew read the
Bible at night and sang
in my church. She didn't
run around with boys
and fornicate. She
didn't lie to her father.

HESTER'S BABY DADDY

In the dark nighttime he
calls us to him, and
holds thy hand and
mine... In the deep
forest, where only the
old trees can hear and
the strip of sky see it, he
talks with thee, sitting
on a heap of moss! And
he kisses my
forehead... But here, in
the sunny day, and
among all the people, he
knows us not; nor must
we know him! A
strange, sad man is he,
with his hand always
over his heart.

*"Be quiet, Pearl! Thou
understandeth not these
things," said her
mother. (224-25)*

I charge thee to speak
out the name of thy
fellow-sinner and
fellow-sufferer! Be not
silent for any mistaken
pity or tenderness for
him... What can thy
silence do for him,
except tempt him – yea,
compel him, as it were –
to add hypocrisy to
sin?... Take heed how
thy deniest to him –
who perchance, hath not
the courage to grasp it
for himself – the bitter,
but wholesome, cup that
is now presented to thy
lips. (65)

MAGDALENA'S BABY DADDY

Did you get in a fight
with your dad? Was it
about the Hummer limo?
I'm gonna have a baby.
Yeah right.

I am.

You can't be.

*I did the test. I did it
twice.*

Who's the father?

You.

That's not possible.

Does she know?

Yeah.

Really?

Well sort of.

*What's that supposed to
mean?*

She knows about you.

That you're pregnant.

And?

What?

That it's yours?

Well that's stage two.

Herman is a straight A
student. He's going to
finish school and go to
college to study medicine.
He doesn't have time for
this. I'm sorry about the
state you're in, but he gave
me his word he didn't do
anything with you, so I
suggest you take the
problem to the person who
is responsible.

Herman is responsible.

I have my son's word and
I believe him.

*He's lying to you! He's
lying to you!*

Leave my son alone.