

English 10
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October 15, 2017

“The Metaphor”

One can appreciate and one can stipulate yet we are all able to impact one so greatly. In the short story “The Metaphor” by Budge Wilson, the main character Charlotte is influenced greatly by her mother and her seventh grade teacher Ms. Hancock. Charlotte’s mother has a feeling of animosity towards Ms. Hancock, she thinks Ms. Hancock is overly flamboyant and childish. Charlotte’s mother does not have an interest for the art of the English language, she has almost nothing in common with Ms. Hancock. Two opposite personalities can share the same interest even though they have nothing else in common. People build each other into the people they become, so two opposite people can have the same impact on one person.

Ms. Hancock and Charlotte have a very special relationship; Charlotte too has a special relationship with her mother. Charlotte’s teacher and mother influence Charlotte greatly. Ms. Hancock is described as plump, unmarried and overenthusiastic. She has a passion for writing and shares her literary skills with Charlotte. In class Charlotte feels comfortable and right at home. Charlotte has always loved having Ms. Hancock as her English teacher but Charlotte’s mother does not understand why. Charlotte said “She had a gift of making most of us want to write, to communicate, to make a blank sheet of paper into a beautiful or at least an interesting thing.” Ms. Hancock was special because she allowed kids to explore their creative writing skills. Ms. Hancock did not want her students to feel like they were forced to do an assignment, but rather she wanted them to write with faith and integrity. Through Charlotte’s English class she discovered her interests and passion. As we know, Charlotte’s mother did not have any interest in creative writing and she did not like Charlotte’s English teacher. Charlotte’s mother dresses with no excitement and lives a proper and uptight lifestyle. Charlotte’s mother gives tough love, Charlotte knows she loves her, but her mother is not one to show affection. Charlotte’s mother is tough on Charlotte because she wants her to succeed. Charlotte said “But what is it about my mother’s methods, that left me feeling so deprived, so unsalvageable.” Charlotte’s mother tries to be perfect but ends up being the opposite because she is so strict.

Even though two people may have almost nothing in common, they can still find a common goal. Ms. Hancock and Charlotte's mother only want the best for Charlotte. Ms. Hancock made a connection with Charlotte more than she had with any of her other students. Charlotte was always so intrigued by Ms. Hancock's lesson, it was her favourite class of the day. When Ms. Hancock introduced metaphors to her class, she had impacted Charlotte by helping her find her passion. "If you ever need any help—with your writing, or, well, with any other kind of problem, just let me know." Said Ms. Hancock. Ms. Hancock was a very generous person and truly wanted to help Charlotte as much as possible. Charlotte and her mother are not very close. Charlotte's mother wants the best for her daughter but does not know how to help her. Charlotte's mother is a strong independent woman, who can be very stern and opinionated. Throughout the story we get to learn more about the mother by reading Charlotte's metaphors: "My mother is a white picket fence—straight, level. The fence stands in a field full of weeds. The field is bounded on its other sides by thorny bushes and barbed wire." Charlotte's mother is shown as a perfectionist. She is very responsible and always tries to do the right thing. "If my mother, who sat so correctly on the needlepoint chair with her nylon knees pressed so firmly together, could actually sit on *boards*, there might be a rugged and reckless side to her that I have not yet met." Charlotte does not want to be like her mother. In order for Charlotte to have a more beneficial life, she should take her learned English skills and her mother's organization skills to live a balanced lifestyle.

When you meet someone you can learn from, it is important to stay in contact with them. When Charlotte went to high school and found out her peers did not like Ms. Hancock, Charlotte wanted to fit in, so she decided to stop talking to Ms. Hancock and pretended she was a stranger. Ms. Hancock was saddened by this action and consequently acted as if Charlotte was not in her class. When Ms. Hancock passed away, Charlotte felt that it was all her fault. Charlotte never stood up for Ms. Hancock when kids would say rude thing about her; until she passed away. "He was no more surprised than I was when I slapped him full across his handsome face." Charlotte thought as she slapped the boy after he had called Ms. Hancock "Whocock Hancock". Charlotte found the boy's comment offensive so she took action and slapped him. Ms. Hancock and Charlotte's mother were so different. Despite the fact that Charlotte's teacher had just passed, Charlotte's mother did not feel any sorrow from Ms. Hancock's death nor did she feel anything for her daughter's loss. Charlotte's mother did not get to know Ms. Hancock well, therefore does not care about her. When it came to Ms. Hancock's death Charlotte's mother felt no sympathy for her. She did not understand why Charlotte was so upset by the death of Ms. Hancock. Charlotte's mother said "She's 16 years old. It's time she learned how to cope. She's acting like a hysterical child." Charlotte's mother does not understand the emotions Charlotte is going through and assumes that Charlotte should feel the same way she does about Ms. Hancock's death. Charlotte's mother should be comforting her daughter rather than getting exasperated at Charlotte for feeling sad.

Through Charlotte's mother strict ways, she has impacted Charlotte by giving her advise and making her the person she has become. Ms. Hancock being an opposite of Charlotte's mother had also impacted Charlotte through her teachings in English class. Ms. Hancock helped Charlotte find her passion, she gave her a fun perspective on life and made Charlotte feel like her classroom was home. Ms. Hancock and Charlotte's mother are both able to connect with Charlotte because of the influence they have given her. Everyone needs balance in their life and Charlotte receives her balance by having a creative and inspiring teacher and a mother who has taught her to stay tidy and organized. Charlotte's mother wants her daughter to be like herself, but Charlotte needs a balance of creativity and organization. The impact from one person can be colossal, a person can change your life and your perspective on other people and problems. People can impact you for the better or worse. Ms. Hancock put a positive impact on Charlotte by showing her how to be herself in the form of writing metaphors. Charlotte's mother gives Charlotte positive and negative impacts on her life. Charlotte's mother teaches her important artifacts of life such as, organization, neatness, and strength. Charlotte's mother needs to connect with Charlotte and allow her to have emotions and feel sympathy for others.

Overall Ms. Hancock and Charlotte's mother have created Charlotte to be the best person she can be. Though the two woman may not like the company of each other, the two of them together have impacted Charlotte to an equal amount. People build each other into the people we become, both woman have allowed Charlotte to have a bright future, making her a unique individual.