**The People Who Influence Charlotte’s Life**

The people who you interact within your life influence who you become. The main character, Charlotte is introduced in the story as a typical grade 7 student who extremely enjoys literature and writing. The flamboyant Miss Hancock is introduced as Charlotte’s overenthusiastic seventh-grade teacher who has taught her how to appreciate the beauty of literature. One October day, Miss Hancock introduces Charlotte and her class to the magic of the metaphor as “an unfamiliar way of looking at things” (Wilson, 67).

In the story, Miss Hancock and Charlotte’s mother have two different personalities. Miss Hancock has a courageous and unique lifestyle. Meanwhile, Charlotte’s mother has a judgemental, strict and uptight lifestyle. They have completely different ways of presenting themselves. Miss Hancock has an energetic and colourful appearance which means she likes to dress exuberantly. “She was fond of peasant blouses encrusted with embroidery, from which loose threads invariably dangled” (Wilson, 65). On the contrary, Charlotte’s mother has a stylish and orderly appearance. Her hair and makeup are conservative and put together. She likes not only maintaining herself tidy, but also keeping the house clean and spotless. In Charlotte’s metaphor for her mother, she describes her “flawless” (Wilson, 68), whereas Miss Hancock was described as a “cake frosted by someone unschooled in the art of cake decoration” (Wilson, 80).

Miss Hancock and Charlotte’s mother are completely different people. Charlotte’s mother does not care much for Charlotte’s enthusiasm for literature. Therefore, she never feels like she could express her imagination because if whatever she was doing makes a mess she will have to clean it up immediately. Her mother will not tolerate Charlotte expressing her imagination if it included making a mess. “A toy ceased to be a toy once it left the toy cupboard” (Wilson, 65). Meanwhile, Miss Hancock is an unmarried woman who encourages Charlotte to be expressive. For example, she allows all ideas to flow in her classroom and encourages the students to express themselves. She loves teaching children, therefore if she were Charlotte’s mother, she will tell her to make as much of mess as she wants and support her. With this, Charlotte loves Miss Hancock’s class and feels free, and is able to be herself and is expected in the class.

Even though Miss Hancock and Charlotte’s mother are extremely different, they both hold a big influence in Charlotte’s life and on her lifestyle. Miss Hancock is a huge factor of Charlotte’s growth, especially when introducing her to metaphors, “after today, she announced in a loud, confidential whisper, you will have a new weapon in your arsenal of writing skills. You will possess the metaphor!” (Wilson, 67). Once the metaphors were introduced into Charlotte’s life, she found love and appreciation for English and poetry. At home, Charlotte’s mother has a big influence on Charlotte’s life. Charlotte always spoke quietly, never complained, ate what put before [her], and obeyed all rules without question. She has learnt this from her mother. She also has learnt sufficiency from the independence her mother has given her to come back from school and be at home by herself.

From this short story, one can learn that they should not judge someone based on what other people think and make their own opinion on them. One can see Charlotte’s true character come out at the end of the story when she realizes that she has been wrong. She starts to cry and believes that she should have been more kind to Miss Hancock considering all that she has done for her.