

Final Outline

Preliminary title of work: **something TREE**

I. Intro

- a. TAG
- b. Coming of Age = maturing into a self-assured, independent individual who is confident in oneself and one's beliefs
- c. Francie's life struggles have forced her to embrace difficulties, think independently and make her own decisions, whereas the support Taylor has received results in her being codependent and reliant on others.
- d. THESIS: While both girls undoubtedly grow and mature, it is independent, confident, increasingly driven Francie, who serves as the quintessential example of what it means to come of age.

II. Topic: Francie (struggles -> growth and independence)

a. Struggles she faces

Francie is immediately placed under circumstances that are less than perfect. These challenges however, are the reasons for Francie's independence.

- Becoming educated/going to school when coming from an uneducated family
 1. "I can't teach her anymore than I, myself, know and I know so little" (81). *Katie is thinking about how little education and knowledge she has to offer Francie (Francie still manages to succeed)*
- Living in the slums of Brooklyn and being looked at as being poor and dirty
 2. doctor (146) *When Francie is ridiculed for her filth, she defiantly stands up to the doctor, showing him that though she may be dirty, she is still strong.*
 3. "Of course, Francie noted, the favored children, the clean, the dainty, the cared-for in the front seats, were allowed to leave at any time" (154). *A teachers a decision on whether or not to allow a child go to the bathroom depends largely on their social rank. Due to the fact that the "teacher never looks at us when we raise our hands"(155), Francie wet her pants one day in class.*
 4. "'Why can't they,' she thought bitterly, 'just give the doll away without saying I am poor and she is rich?'"(213)...*"It was beggar, beggar, beggar, all the way down the aisle"(213). After claiming the Mary doll, Francie is teased as being a "beggar," accepting a charitable gift because she couldn't afford anything like it.*
- Father
 1. The one Francie admires the most-plagued by alcoholism which ultimately results in his death.
 2. "Drunkenness is neither truth nor beauty" (321). *When talking with Miss. Gardner about her compositions, Francie is told that what she is writing about-- what she experiences at home-- is neither the truth nor beauty. Does this mean that her life is all a lie?*
- Forced to leave school to work and earn money for family

1. "Fright grew in Francie. Maybe it would be so that she'd never get into high school; maybe she'd never have more education than she had at that moment" (364). *Though this a possibility, Francie doesn't let the fear stop her.*
- Lonely
 1. "Truth and fancy were so mixed up in mind - as they are in the mind of every lonely child" (199). *Being lonely, Francie has difficulty understanding certain things about the world-she is forced to figure things out on her own.*
 2. "She yearned for playmates but did not know how to make friends with the other girls"(109). *Francie really didn't have anyone that she could play or learn or grow with.*

b. Support she receives/(doesn't receive)

The little help provided to Francie forces her to be self-sustaining and makes her extremely independent.

****find evidence****

- Papa was the one Francie admired the most. When he died, she no longer had someone there for her.
- Francie never had a connection with her mother. Mama wasn't affectionate towards Francie and she favored Neeley. Francie never had someone to encourage and support her 100% of the way.

c. Grows and matures

Francie's ability to overcome her struggles makes her all the more mature and knowledgeable.

- Rises above
 1. "She has become worldly-wise as a result of her exposure to this tough environment, yet she has managed to escape its limitations and can look forward to a life of achievement and prosperity"(Delany 3). *Being poor doesn't prevent Francie from going to college, etc.*
 2. "Having risen above his environment, he can forget it; or he can rise above it and never forget it and keep compassion and understanding in his heart..."(147). --(buys a prize for another kid to win(484))-- *Though at this point she can finally afford to go off to college, Francie won't forget what it was like to be a poor child.*
- Develops a concept of reality and becomes aware of the worlds beyond her
 1. BEFORE:"Francie thought that all the books in the world were in the library and she had a plan about reading all the books in the world"(22). *Francie doesn't have a clear concept of the world, but she is still up for the challenge.*
 1. AFTER:"It was good that she got herself into this other school. It showed her that there were other worlds beside the world she had been born into and that these worlds were not unattainable" (176). *On her own, Francie grows*
 2. AFTER:"The something which had been a future was now a present and would become a past....Everything was changing.....She was the one that was changing....Growing up spoiled a lot of things" (217). *Francie realizes that her childhood is ways behind her and that she is truly growing into an adult with responsibilities. Things were moving quickly and there was nothing stopping her.*
- Understands the need to support her family (gets a job, etc)

d. Independence

Having had to learn and grow on her own, Francie becomes independent and capable of making decisions without regard to others.

- Makes the decision that she will go to college no matter what-- really, she makes decisions about everything without regard to what others think

****find evidence****

III. Topic: Taylor (support -> growth but also codependence)

a. Struggles she faces/(doesn't face)

Unlike Francie, Taylor had not faced any monstrous challenges that required making difficult decisions and sacrifices that is, until she was given Turtle.

- Not getting pregnant during high school was the biggest of her worries
- Attempting to break free and start over
 1. "...I Intended to drive out of Pittman County one day and never look back"(11). *This feeling of independence is, in part, due to her naive and I-know-everything attitude*
- Turtle
- Comes to the realization that she really never had to struggle (like Francie)
 1. "When I was Turtle's age I had never had anyone or anything important taken from me. I still hadn't. Maybe I hadn't started with a whole lot, but pretty nearly all of it was still with me" (222).

b. Support she receives

Taylor's support system early on is why she starts off so confident, but then becomes extremely reliant.

- Has always been reassured by her mother -- *the following quotes demonstrate how Mama's endless encouragement leads to Taylor feeling confident in her decision to leave Pittman. When she is faced with the challenge of raising a daughter, however, Taylor feels lost without her mother's support.*
 1. "The support from her mother probably contributes to Taylor's determination" (Kelly 102).
 2. "Nevertheless, Mama's important influence on making Taylor a strong, independent woman is clear. Mama always encouraged her and acted as if her every accomplishment were wonderful" (DeMarr 3)
 3. "...no matter what I did, whatever I came home with, she acted like it was the moon I had just hung in up in the sky and plugged in all the stars" (10).
- People in her life (Mattie, Lou Ann, Estevan, Turtle) give her strength and confidence when making decisions
 1. "You fight back, Taylor. Nobody picks on you and lives to tell the tale" (179). (Lou Ann to Taylor) *Before Taylor moved to AZ she was strong-willed and defiant, whereas she is now feeling helpless. Lou Ann helps to remind her who she is and what strength she has.*
 2. "The give-and-take, the love and affection and support, allows, encourages, [Taylor] to flourish" (Fitzgerald 65). *Just as her mother gave her the confidence she needed before, Taylor is now aided by the support she receives in Tucson.*

c. Grows and matures

Through making decisions regarding Turtle, Taylor's ignorance wanes as she realizes she is incapable of resolving such a large conflict on her own.

- Loses her naïve and know-it-all attitude
 1. "I don't know. I hate to say it, but I really don't know. I can't even begin to think about a world where people have to make choices like that"(143). *She is overwhelmed by the enormity of her situation and simply does not have a solution. Before, she handled things by taking them day to day and didn't have a care in the world.*
- Accepts the responsibility of being a mother
 1. "I could see a whole new era arriving in Turtle's and my life" (102).—*No longer living a life independent from others (like she had set out to do). Her life = Turtle's life*

d. Codependence

The large support system Taylor has causes her to remain dependent on others in order to achieve a sense of assurance.

- At one point she feels lost/gives up in a world which seems to her as being messed up – she requires pep talks to give her the strength she needs
 1. "I just kept saying how this world was a terrible place to try and bring up a child in. And Lou Ann kept saying, 'For God's sake, what other world have we got?'"(185). *Taylor gets caught up over what the situation prevents her from doing and needs Lou Ann to remind her that things aren't always easy.*
 2. "Sometimes I feel like I'm a foreigner, too" (141).—*Taylor feels like a foreigner because she doesn't know many people (in AZ) and therefore doesn't have those relationships that she needs.*
- She did not make her final decision regarding Turtle on her own - advice from Mattie and Lou Ann affected the outcome very much so
 1. Taylor: "So what's the right thing to ask?" Mattie: "Do I want to try?"(187). – *referring to whether or not Taylor should attempt to protect Turtle in a messed up world, Mattie informs Taylor that she's never going to get closed to succeeding if she doesn't try.*

IV. Topic: Francie = better example of C of A

a. Taylor remains dependent on her relationships

Though she grows, Taylor fails to do so without the support and encouragement from others.

- Doesn't embrace the struggle
 1. "All this time I've been moping around because of having the responsibility of Turtle" (145).
- Becomes part of a family (Lou Ann, Turtle)
 2. "It is a community of mutual support and interdependence..." (Kelly 102).
 3. Rhizobia: "The wisteria vines on their own would just barely get by, but put them together with rhizobia and they make miracles" (241).—*support leads to growth and survival (Taylor's support from her friends enable her to make a decision about whether or not to keep Turtle and, also, help her to grow as an individual.)*

b. Francie has matured into an independent and confident individual

Unlike Taylor, Francie's growth is a result of her being forced to overcome her struggles on her own.

- Embraces the struggle-- *the following quotes show that being poor cause her to give up stop her from dreaming big.*
 1. To her, the stupendous stench suggested far-sailing ships and adventure and she was pleased with the smell”(20).
 2. “[Francie] consoled herself with the vow that when she grew up she would work hard and save money...”(26).
- Able to make decisions on her own
 1. “The Nolans were individualists. They conformed to nothing except what was essential to their being able to live”(163). --*Francie worked to survive*
 2. switches schools
 3. goes to work in the city
 4. gets into college
- Becomes strong and courageous
 1. “And I’m pleased that you can and will fight for what you should have” (387). (Katie to Francie about going to school) *Francie won’t let anyone tell her that she’s not capable*
 2. “Everything struggles to live. Look at that tree growing up there out of that grating...Its strong because it’s hard struggle to live is making it stronger” (95). *Just like the tree, Francie grows stronger as a result of her struggles.*
- Has faith that she can achieve her dreams
 1. “My grandparents never knew how to read or write.....But I, M. Frances K. Nolan, am now in college” (430). *Even though Francie’s circumstances were not beneficial, she managed to persevere.*

V. Conclusion

- a. Francie becomes independent, Taylor remains codependent, Francie is the better example of coming of age
- b. Willingly overcoming struggles without significant support from others results in growth, independence, and confidence.