

Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/color-purple-hope-for-the-oppressed/>

Color Purple Hope for the Oppressed Example

They send me to eat in the kitchen / When company comes, / But I laugh, / And eat well, / And grow strong. / Tomorrow, / I'll be at the table / When company comes. / Nobody'll dare / Say to me, / 'Eat in the kitchen,' / Then (Hughes). The Upper West Side of Manhattan Island posed as a place of rebirth for the minorly present African American culture in the 1920s. Langston Hughes reflects the urban black community's structural subversion in his poem entitled I, Too. The alien: a people that are systematically preyed upon, are confined to the domestic roles of managing the kitchen and simply laboring on behalf of their oppressors. Likewise, The Color Purple by author Alice Walker addresses the toll of metaphysical confinement on Celie. The protagonist's response to prejudicial treatment, much like consuming food to gain strength and uppity, involves her fulfilling the void with knowledge. The epistolary novel follows Celie's direct connection with God alone, for fearing retribution, she will not tell of her horrific sufferings. Within The Color Purple, Walker utilizes character analysis and various syntactical strategies to enumerate that marginalization of both colored and female sectors instigates self-exploration and development. What initially is a nonexistent and quite polarizing relationship with sister-in-law, Sofia, eventually morphs Celie into a more organic being that parallels her warrior-like companion. Addressing an ornately clothed female who has a distinctive social hierarchy as both a light-skinned individual and the mayor's wife, Sofia holds to no resistance in speech: would you like to work for me, be my maid? Sofia say, Hell no. (84). Although the painful

bruises on Sofia's face and years of service to the family pose as a brutal reminder of the contextual unacceptability of such a response given the time-period, her public proclamation reiterates her distinctive identity. In mere contrast, Celie's ignorant notions fall desperately in line with a traditional Western culture's perception of servicing black folks. Thus, she subsequently subjects herself to subjugation and degradation. Unwilling to utter a note of dissonance against the husband she is forced to marry, her vociferous tone enlightens the readers on the steady influence Sofia is having on her. Her sudden temperamentally possesses her to spit words in utter defiance, I say Until you do right by me and threatens him in retribution of Mr. ____'s severely misguided actions: everything you touch will crumble (206). Celie testifies as a human potential for self-transformation, for the sources of pain and utter destruction of her past- incest, beatings, separation from her children, and loss of communication with her sister- now catalyze her rebellion. The snide remarks delivered by Sofia as she begrudgingly heard insults spewed from her husband's mouth mirrors Celie's unrelenting strength. From frailty to potential power, she no longer casts away respect. Rightfully, feeling deprived of her connection with her precious younger sister, Celie not only manifests her deep-seated anger but also imitates the contorted irritability strewn across Sofia's face: Sofia wants to kill white people after she is beaten and jailed, when she experiences the extreme of the abuse she hates most, being beaten, so does Celie express a desire to kill when she experiences the final hateful blow dealt with her by Albert [Mr. ____] -willful and spiteful separation from Nettie's letters for year! ?All day long I act just like Sofia. I stutter. I mutter to myself. I stumble bout the house crazy for Mr. ____ blood' (115) (Bloom). While Celie is initially a downtrodden soul that is ignorant of inhumanity, she becomes familiar with such injustice through Sofia. Sofia has not the toleration for her husband's violent outbursts, learning to Celie the notion of subjugation as intolerable. Anger and spite are defiant emotions that enumerate Celie's renewal of dignification. The physical structure of the text as epistolary and the resulting tendencies of Celie's style reiterates how she is intellectually oppressed, but still manages to advance her education. Walker's text is quite raw and bare, for it is structured in Black folk English, thus developing a familiarity of the quality and rhythms of life that her character's experience (The Color Purple). The entries have a paralleled structure of subsequent titling that begin often with the words Dear God; Walker engages the readers with its rich historical accuracy and almost lyrical poetic nature. Celie's form of communication offers commentary on the lack of formal education for colored people; indeed, society feared that with proper knowledge of the

English language colored people could assert themselves as equivalently active students. Grammatical imperfection, a simple luxury that was bettered than the freeing confines of a classroom, never was familiarized to the clueless Celie: Nettie done pass me in learning... She try to tell me something bout the ground not being flat. I just say, Yeah, like I know it. I never tell her how flat it look to me (10). Her rather short and telegraphic sentence structure is delineated within the first few sentences of the novel. Essentially these elemental forms of language emphasize her lack of education as a black woman inhabiting the rural Georgia areas in the eighteenth century. To maintain the social status that was obtained for hundreds of year, the oppressive powers of the American society, deem that it is impropriety to leave the steamy kitchen or the heat-ridden plantations. Celie's revelation about her sister's existence propels her into a state of jubilation. The more presentable, and highly distinguishable letters authored by Nettie, encourage Celie to deeply connect with the words she writes. Breaking up the generally monotonous and comforting address of simply the two words Dear God, she lists a series of natural sources that she too believes poses divinity Dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear peoples. Dear everything. Dear God (285). Enduring so much traumatic hardship has stirred a religious cacophony. No longer does she praise the literal God that she has suffered while through many letters writing to, but she also formulates a more liberating form of spirituality by referencing what she feels has some form of power enables her to assert her individual assessment of higher powers without the shackles of the man looming over her. The use of anaphora reiterates whom the spiritual entities are in Celie's life with numerous entities possessing the beauty and benevolence of the Western World's traditional Father Above. Restrained not by a language that she is unfamiliar to her; she embraces a variety of eloquent terms and asserts her beliefs in a manner straying from the masses; a beautiful thing considering her struggles. Epitomizing female empowerment, Sofia demands- regardless of the normalcy of belittling traditionally inferior subjects of race or gender- that she is worthy. In turn, Celie's familial relationship with Sofia evokes respect from others as well as herself. What is more, Walker employs structural tactics such as the formatting of letters as well as Celie's individual syntactical tendencies to comment on her lack of education and, by contrast, her development to a more eloquent and correct writer. Withering from the painful weight of oppression or rebuilding oneself from the fragments that still exist: this is a decision that one must carefully make.