**Two Sample ESL Essays**

Adapted from http://www.auburn.edu/~nunnath/engl6240/smplessy.html

The following are two samples essays written by two Chinese undergraduate students studying in an American institution, one from Taiwan and the other from mainland China. The essays were written as the final exam of a freshman composition course in which they were enrolled. The students were given three questions to choose from. Both of they decided to write a rhetorical analysis of the story "The Necklace." The essays are shown here exactly as they were written in the bluebooks, including spelling and punctuation errors.

Read through each essay and attempt to identify the common types of errors. Attempt to find any patterns in the errors. Write down the types of errors you found. We will discuss what you’ve written as a class.

**Essay 1**

**The characterization of "The Necklace"**

"The Necklace", by Gue de Maupassant, is a story about a woman named Ms. Loisel. she was petty and charming. She married a common little clark. Her life was in poverty and depression. One day, She and her husband received an invitation to attend a ball. To conceal her impoverished family situations and show off her charm and beauty, she borrowed a necklace from her friend. Then, at the ball she did have a wonderful time. However, she lost the necklace after the ball. The poor woman and her husband had to spend up all their saving and borrowed a lot money to buy a real diamond necklace for returning. In the following ten years, this couple suffered more hard works and more stingy life to pay off the debt. At last, M.s Loisel ran into her friend again and knew that the necklace she borrowed was paste in stead of diamond.

This is a very interesting story of great plotting. Also the characterization in this tory is very successful. Readers seemed not only can watch the whole story proceeding but also can see and listen the characters, even clearly sense their mind and thoughts. As the heroine in the story, Ms. Loisel was a pretty woman and miserably lived in poverty. She always dreamed to be a moble and rich woman that lived an exalted life. She was a little snobbish and was inferior of showing others her impoverished family economic situation. Maupassant elaborately portrayed this character through the description of the changing of Ms. Loisel's expression, from when she was unhappy because of without dress and jewel for the ball to when she was finally pleased after she borrowed a necklace form her friend.

In the section describing the reaction of Ms. Loisel after receiving the invitation Maupassant used a contrast to describe how Mr. and Mrs. Loisel treated the invitation differently. "The husband returned home with a triumphant air." However, after Ms. Loisel read the invitation she "instead of being delighted, as her husband hoped, she threw the invitation on the table with distain." Maupassant didn't explain why Ms. Loisel was so unhappy. He continued describing the dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. Loisel. She became irretating and impatient while her husband was trying to understand her. At last, she cried and after she "conquered her grief...with a calm voice...wipe her wet cheeks,: she said: "Nothing. Only I have no dress and therefore, I can't go to this ball. Give your card to some colleague whose wife is better equipped than I." This is what a wonderful and vivid depicting by Maupassant. He descripted every change of Mr. Loisel"s expression, from being unhappy and disgruntled to being agitated and irritated by herself. By this description, Maupassant raised the sympathy from every reader to this poor woman. At the same time, he revealed Mr. Loisel's grief was that she had no dress to go to the ball. Therefore, if Maupassant did not portray Ms. Loisel's expressions so detailedly and vividly, could the image of Mr. Loisel be so impressive.

Another example reflecting that Maupassant is an expert to portraying characters is at the section that was about Mr. Loisel was at her friend's home and was selecting jewels. At the moment that she discovered the necklace, "her heart began to beat with an immoderate desire...her hands trembled...she fastened it around her throat...lost in ecstasy at the sight of herself." This is an wonderful portrait of a woman in ecstasy. The more exquisite describing of Ms. Loisel's overjoy is at the following sentences. "She sprant upon the neck of her friend, kissed her passionately, then fled with her treasure." There is no another word as "flee" that can more accurately describe that kind of overjoying within Ms. Loisel.

There are many other examples, which Maupassant portray the character by describing their expressions and motions.

"The Necklace" is one of those excellent novels that are exquisitely characterized. Guy de Maupassant is one of those great writers that most proficiently possessed the skill of characterization. After we had read this novel, we can learn a lot only only from the experiences of the heroin, but a lot about how to write, to plot and to characterized as well.

**Essay 2**

**Symbolism in "The Necklace"**

Maupassant is one of the most influential writers in short fictions. He believes that "The writer's goal is to reproduce this illusion of life faithfully, using all the literary techniques at his disposal". In "The Necklace" Maupassant uses primarily symbolism to reveal his moral scheme that a person's preoccupation with appearance, materialistic existence, or idle pleasure is worthless and vain. By using the symbol of a Necklace, Maupassant is able to represent the vanity of Mathilde Loise, the main character, in a more visible way. Mme. Loisel's desire for an unaffordable piece of jewelry, the necklace which is her vanity, is clearly shown to suggest the main theme of the story that Mme. Loisel's vanity is worthless and futile, Maupassant simply reduces the actual worth of the necklace from how much Mme. Loisel values it. This indirect way of suggesting an idea through a symbol makes Maupassant's idea about vanity very convincing that vanity can ruin a person's life.

Before the symbol of the necklace is used, Maupassant only shows the vanity of Mme. Loisel through abstract ideas, Maupasant's description of Mme. Loisel's mind and desire. For instance, the story begins with the description of Mme. Loisel's misery that "she suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born for all the delicacies and all the luxuries". In the previous lines, Mme. Loisel's vanity is only shown abstractly through her desire for expensive goods to make her beauty more noticeable. Maupassant indirectly exposes the idea that Mme. Loisel's excessive desire for goods and preoccupation with appearance is vain.

Because Mme. Loisel's vanity is only shown in her abstract desire, the cost of her vanity can only be shown in an invisible way. For instance, her desire, here vanity, makes her unhappy and never satisfied with the life that her husband provides her. The vanity costs her all the happiness in her life and in her marriage. She's never enjoyed her husband's love for her. Even when her husband tries to please her showing her the invitation to the part of the Minister of Public Instruction, she complains, "...I have no dress and therefore I can't go to this ball. Give your card to some colleague whose wife is better equipped than I". Abstractly, we see the cost of vanity is Mme. Loisel's happing in her marriage. The cost is shown in a very invisible way.

By using the symbol of the necklace, Maupassant is able to directly exemplifies Mme. Loisel"s vanity through her behavior with the borrow necklace. Falling all over herself to show off how pretty both she and the necklace are, she loses herself in the fleeting moment at the minister's party. Only after losing the necklace, she comes back down to earth. Facing the cost of buying another similar necklace, she realize the cost of her preoccupation with appearance, her vanity.

Through the necklace, Maupasasnt successfully reveals the cost of Mme. Loisel"s vanity and convincing proposels his idea that vanity is worthless. The cost of the vanity is obviously. Mme. Loisel and her husband's ten years slavery life and Loisel's beauty. However, ironically, Mme. Loisel finds out the necklace that she borrows ten years ago is actually paste, which is worthless comparing to the ten years of slavery life. This cruel irony effectively earn readers sympathy to Loisel. Therefore, readers would agree that Mme. Loisel should have not slaved herself for ten years, and she should not have lost the necklace and she should not ever borrowed the necklace, and she should never wanted the necklace at the first place. Finally, readers have to agress that it is Mme. Loisel's vanity cost all the troubles and the cruel irony. Certainly, readers will agree that vanity of mankind can ruin one's life, and people should never base their life existance on vanity.

In "The Necklace," Maupassant effectively practices symbolism to its maximum. He exemplifies vanity of mankind through the behavior of Mme. Loisel with the borrow necklace. He also convinces reader that vanity is worthless through the irony he creats about the symbol of the necklace.