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Common Differences

Bharati Mukherjee uses many rhetorical techniques in her piece, “Two Ways to Belong in America” in order to convey a poignant response from the audience. By including the techniques of development and personification, the author is able to portray the struggles and challenges that immigrants face when arriving in America. Mukherjee’s use of arrangement strengthens the validity of her experiences through development, by comparing and contrasting herself and her sister, Mira. This can be seen by Mukherjee’s comparison of Mira’s own life experiences to her own. Mukherjee writes, “In one family, from two sisters alike as peas in a pod, there could not be a wider divergence of immigrant experience” (Mukherjee 274). The author states how she not only married an American, but also the country itself. Her sister, however, married an Indian and did not sway from her roots. This provokes an understanding within the audience. The impact of the author’s comparisons and contrasts take the reader on a journey of the struggles of two different, yet very alike women.

Another literary technique Mukherjee uses in order to display a message to the audience is personification. Mukherjee writes, “America spoke to me-I married it-I embraced the demotion from expatriate aristocrat to immigrant nobody...” (274). She allows personification to speak to the audience by declaring that she married the country. Mukherjee elicits an emotional response from the audience by the use of human appeal. This allows the reader to feel the intensity of the emotional connection which Bharati had with America. By connecting her status in India to her immigrant self, she progresses to instill human emotional ties with the audience and her newfound identity. As she adapts, her tone from the beginning drastically changes. She

wants to separate herself from her past and dedicate herself to her country. Throughout the entirety of the text, the reader was able to clearly see the change in which the characters developed and grew; portraying the central argument upon the audience.