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Eng.102

Final Journal Entry

(I listen to My Parents and I wonder What They Believe by Robert Coles)

This excerpt begins explaining how children face moral dilemmas every day. Parents for years have obtained the idea of “childhood innocence”. Parents fail to realize the ethical dilemmas their child may face at such young ages. One of the stories in the excerpt explains a young girl who lives a stable life. Her father has many businesses in which he owns. She struggles as she does not know if to follow her parent’s values or her own. Her father believes he has worked hard to establish himself and a solid home for his family. He believes that since he has worked hard for his; he feels as if he does not owe anyone anything. Her father preaches that there are only two kinds of people on this earth. Those who work hard and they live good lives, and those who are lazy and always try to sponge off others. His daughter realizes though there are circumstances in which people can struggle from other factors. She is conflicted in whether to feel bad for those people or become like her father and feel no sympathy for those who are not living as blessed as her. The excerpt continues to explain how more and children, are asking themselves about issues of fair play, justice, liberty, and equality. People are realizing the young mind is thinking of more than what food to eat or what toys to play with. Rather they think of deeper more serious issues. When studying desegregation of schools in the South in 1963, the author interviewed a young white boy. The boy explains that his father constantly said, “Schools would never be integrated”. The father had instilled a the idea of going to school with colored people was a bad idea in this boy. When encountering colored students, he would realize that there are different types of colored students as there were different types of white students. After this realization the child would be conflicted with whether it was a good thing to go to school with colored people or if it was a bad thing. After reading this excerpt I believe it is parents who cause children to end up in these ethical dilemmas. Parents passing their beliefs down to children, before a child is even able to make their own beliefs on a topic, leaves children confused. Situations like these make it hard for them to decipher between right and wrong.