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1. While each of her stories conclude identically in structure, Atwood constructs drastically different beginnings to each of them. This leads me to believe that her general thesis may be as follows: supposing that there are imperfectly- and perfectly-matched characters in a storyline, the imperfect matches introduced in the “reality” part of the plot that will eventually crumble to make way for the “fictional” portion of the story featuring perfect matches that are present at the end of the plot. The characters that are ‘fortunate’ will experience the final, ‘perfect’ life– the preceding pairs will have to suffer for them. There may be character overlap between the imperfect and perfect matches. It feels

For instance, in storyline C, John and Mary are introduced as an imperfect pair– while John is married to a woman named Madge, he loves Mary. On the other hand, Mary is infatuated with a different man (James), who is often absent. In the conclusion, an envious John commits suicide after murdering both Mary and James. Madge is the only surviving character of these imperfect pairs, and she is said to have found her perfect pair in a man called Fred– with whom she lives happily ever after (as outlined in Storyline A). Evidently, the imperfect matches (John and Madge, John and Mary, Mary and James) seem to have miraculously fallen apart to allow for a perfect match to occur (Madge and Fred).

2. From the doctor's perspective, it may seem like Louise passed away due to being overcome by joy at seeing her previously proclaimed-dead husband alive. This is evident in the doctor's statement that Louise died of "joy that kills". From the reader's perspective, this closure appears ironic, as her earlier thoughts suggested that she felt a freedom at his passing away rather than loss. The final line is, in a way, both ironic and an echo of the main character Louise's thoughts on men's habit of constantly imposing their beliefs on others. To elaborate, the Doctor does not consider the fact that a woman could feel anything but extreme delight at seeing her husband alive and well .

3. Fiction is a genre of literature that allows authors to create works with an unparalleled creative flexibility. Good fiction novels will beautifully take the reader on a journey with complex characters constructed by mere words in their experiences with unfathomable concepts (such as those found in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*). In a state of catharsis, we can feel emotions that the characters feel— and perhaps these emotions cannot be invoked by any other real-life encounter (or even the documentation of a real-life event, for that matter). For example, within the pages of *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini and *Kira Kira* by Cynthia Kadohata, I noticed feelings of sadness, isolation, grief, and triumph that I would not have appreciated otherwise. *Kira Kira* in particular stays with me, as it discusses the relationship between two Asian-American sisters (spoiler: one of them passes away due to cancer)— a story that ignited within me a newfound gratitude for the relationship I have with my sister. In reading fiction, our emotions can be stretched, like dough, to new lengths.

We can also take inspiration from concepts discussed only in fiction books and let our imagination think of mechanisms that would help us apply these ideas to the real world. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is one example of a novel with extreme concepts that could be brought to life (perhaps at a smaller scale) for entertainment. Reading fiction allows us to think outside the box and invigorate our vocabulary— both skills that can be applied interdisciplinarily. Reading fiction can help us expand our understanding of ourselves on an emotional level while enriching our capability to interact with our world.