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10/12/16

Overtime There can be Satisfying or Rough Changes

Looking through the eyes of a man with a learning disability, you are writing your progress report and your motivation is to increase your learning capability. You succeed and then obstacles hit you and you have the same motivation again, to become “smarter”. “Flowers for Algernon,” by Daniel Keyes is a fictional short story based in New York about a 37-year-old man, Charlie Gordon, who has a learning disorder. This means he learns slower and his IQ is below average. During the story he and a mouse, Algernon's, take an operation that triples their IQ. At the end of the story Algernon behaves unusual and then a short while later he died. Charlie knew this would happen, so then at the end of the story his IQ decreases back to below average. Over time many things can change slightly or significantly, like for example the human brain, a person's perspectives, or even a personality during period of time. In the story Charlie changed significantly before the operation, after the operation, and after Algernon behaves unusual.

First of all, before Charlie's operation he changed because he does not pass the rorschach test and he has low IQ. Since Charlie does not pass the rorschach test and had a low IQ it is an example of change because in the middle of the story he passed the rorschach test and triples his IQ. On page 285 of Flowers for Algernon it says, “I dint see nothin in the ink but he said there was picturs there other pepul saw some picturs. I could not see any picturs. I reely tryed to see.” This means that Charlie is very literal because for the rorschach test he said he does not see

anything, as an object in the ink. He also does not get it when the man tells him to find pictures, so Charlie said he could not find any so he also is not creative. Charlie shows that he has a low IQ on page 285, "I felt proud when he said that not every body with an eye-q of 68 had that thing. I dont know what it is or where I got it but he said Algernon had it too." This quote proves that Charlie had a low IQ of 68 when the average IQ is 95-115. This also shows that he has a low IQ because he does not know what it means because he is proud that not many people have a low IQ. Also he has misspelled words and grammar mistakes like "every body," "eye-q," and "dont". Charlie does not pass the rorschach test and he had low IQ before the operation but overtime he changed and passed the rorschach and his IQ increased.

In the light of this idea, Charlie changed and the perspectives of him changed after the operation when he beat Algernon on the maze test and when people at his work saw him differently. Charlie changed because before he never beat Algernon and people saw him as not a bright person but friendly. After the operation Charlie says, " I beat Algernon! I dint even know I beat him until Burt the tester told me. Then the second time I lost because I got so excited I fell off the chair before I finished. But after that I beat him 8 more times. I must be getting smart to beat a smart mouse like Algernon" (290). Before the operation Charlie never beat Algernon, this quote means that Charlie's intelligence increased because he passed the maze test before Algernon. Also his emotions changed because he beat Algernon for the first time so he got so excited he fell off the chair. People at Charlie's work saw him differently because Fanny remarked on page 296 and 297, "I do not think there's something mighty strange about you, Charlie. Them changes. I do not know. You used to be a good, dependable, ordinary man-not too bright maybe, but honest. Who knows what you done to yourself to get so smart all of a sudden.

Like everybody around here's been saying, Charlie, it's not right." Fanny says this because people at his work signed a petition to fire Charlie because they were distracted because Charlie got so intelligent so fast. His co workers do not think it is right because they do not know he got the operation since Charlie was not allowed to tell anyone. They also thought he was weird because he changed his intelligence significantly in a couple of months, so he does not have any friends at work anymore. Before people at his work saw him as a being not so smart but with a kind personality. Overtime Charlie got smarter and people's perspectives about him changed.

Lastly, Charlie changed significantly after Algernon behaves unusual, his intelligence decreased liked in the beginning of the story. Also people that were making fun of him felt sorry for him. An example of when Charlie changed is stated on page 304, "I try to read a little bit every day, mostly stories, but sometimes I have to read the same thing over and over again because I dont know what it means. And its hard to write." Charlie's losing his intelligence because he does not get what he is reading in his books and he is having trouble with grammar and writing his progress reports. Charlie knew he is going to lose his intelligence after Algernon behaves strangely and after he died. Towards the end of the story Charlie says on page 305, "One of the new men who came to work there after I went away made a nasty crack he said hey Charlie I hear your a very smart fella a real quiz kid. Say something intelligent. I felt bad but Joe Carp came over and grabbed him by the shirt and said leave him alone you lousy cracker or Ill break your neck. I didnt expect Joe to take my part so I guess hes really my friend. Later Frank Reilly came over and said Charlie if anybody bothers you or trys to take advantage you call me or Joe and we will set em straight." Frank and Joe know felt sorry for Charlie because he lost his intelligence and they want to stand up for him. Before they used to make fun of him because he

was not smart and Charlie did not know they were making fun of him. Since Charlie knows he has friends after they stood up for him he left and cried. After Algernon behaves strangely Charlie's intelligence decreases and people had sorrow towards him.

In conclusion, Charlie's intelligence and personality changes overtime in the story before the operation, after the operation, and after Algernon's behaviors unusual. The theme of change and overtime are important because in literary works it shows how the character and or setting change during the story. A change can be benign or harmful to lives, humanity, society, or even the world overtime. Charlie Gordon does not have the capability to learn like many people can so wanted to change his intelligence which he does for a while but then he keeps on trying. He showed us that changes can be satisfying but they are not who you are and sometimes not changing yourself is the best, but if you try to improve a weakness you have to keep trying and never give up.