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ENG 2D1

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# ENG 2D1 SAMPLE STUDENT ISP ESSAY

## The Eye That Jane Breathes

In Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, the protagonist's development is influenced by her learnings throughout the course of her life. This autobiography is about the life of an independent, strong, and smart woman by the name of Jane Eyre who goes through overwhelming experiences which teach her about the essentials of love. As a poor orphan, her wealthy aunt, Mrs. Reed, despises her because of jealousy and difference in social class. When Jane ages and becomes a mistress, she meets a man named Mr. Rochester, the owner of Thornfield Hall. Their relationship consists of many complications mostly because of the influence of society. Jane's struggle to love Mr. Rochester demonstrates that "love is patient [and] love is kind" (Corinthians 13:4), which shows the power of love and its requirements. Her exposure to meeting different types of people enlightens her about the most important facets of life: acceptance, faith, and love. Jane's earliest memories of prejudice start in her childhood when she encounters certain characters who discriminate her because of her low social class. When prejudice towards Jane is exhibited through the attitudes of these characters, she progressively learns to ignore their judgements and accept others despite their class in society. Jane also develops her own faith through the variety of characters who serve as religious models to her. Her exposure to these people allows her to learn about the importance of balancing love and faith and trusting only those who treat her fairly. Love appears to be the foundation of the novel as all through Jane's life she struggles to determine the true meaning of love. However, as

she develops she learns about its importance and how to distinguish different types of love. She recognizes that having faith and showing acceptance is necessary in order to fully love someone. In the novel by Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre is exposed to many characters throughout her journey who teach her that faith and acceptance are necessary aspects for love to be present.

Several of the characters Jane encounters in her lifetime show some form of prejudice towards her. The influence these characters have on Jane is very critical because it alters her understanding of acceptance as she develops her character. Early in Jane's childhood, she lives with her relatives because she has no family to take care of her anymore. The Reed family, primarily her aunt, Mrs. Reed, treat her unfairly because she was once an orphan. Instead of Mrs. Reed treating her with respect the same way she does with her own children, Jane's aunt and cousins treat her more like a servant instead. A clear example of this is when Jane is locked up in the red room, where her uncle had died, because she is accused of taking out a book. Mrs. Reed's son, John Reed, is influenced by his mother's prejudicial manner and says to Jane that she has "no business to take [the Reeds'] books [because she is] a dependent" (Brontë 5). By treating her like a servant, John discriminates Jane because she belongs to a lower social class, in comparison to the high class of his family. As a young girl, Jane demonstrates her lack of education and intelligence by responding furiously and yelling at John and Mrs. Reed. Later on in Jane's life, she experiences another individual who bases Jane on her looks and class. When Jane leaves Mr. Rochester, after deciding she will not marry him, she journeys to Millcote to try to find a place to stay and a place to work. When she knocks on one door, she meets a maid named Hannah who judges her immediately and calls her a "beggar-woman" (404). By categorizing Jane as a homeless, low-class woman, Jane tries to ignore the prejudice and to teach Hannah to be more respectful. Jane informs her not to "consider poverty as a crime" (413). Hannah learns from Jane

and admits that she “was quite mistaken” (412) and that Jane must forgive her. Not only does Hannah learn from Jane, but Jane also learns from Hannah that the reason for her judgements is because of her lack of education. When humans do not understand what is right and wrong, there is a greater chance of them to discriminate others.

**End of Student Sample.**