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**Paper Presented at the ATE (Association of Teacher Educators) Summer
Conference, 2007**

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Encapsulating Moral Dilemma Through
Short Story;
Challenging Pre-Service Teachers to
Critically Think about the Student/Teacher
Personality and Leadership Dynamic**

“Was it Heaven? Or Hell?” was written by Mark Twain

(Samuel Taylor Clemens), in ‘*The 30,000 Bequest*’, a

compilation of short stories published in 1902.

Koan - a paradoxical anecdote or a riddle that has no solution; used in Zen Buddhism to show the inadequacy of logical reasoning

Author overview:

Mark Twain’s writing became darker, more pessimistic later in his life. Beset by a continuing, decade’s long financial trouble and the death of two children (his son died in infancy and Suzy, his eldest daughter, died while he was abroad) he pursued questions of morality, religion and ethics more openly. Always found in his writings, his later works were more profound in scope and utility for such controversial topics. “*Was it Heaven? Or Hell?*” was one of his latest pieces. Mark Twain would continue to experience trauma that influenced his writing; he later witnessed the death of both his wife and youngest daughter (Jean). Twain would perish just a few months after Jean, dieing in Bermuda in 1910.

Story:

The short story, “Was it heaven? Or Hell?” is an introspective look into the complexities and paradoxes of group dynamics, morality, ethics, and leadership. The story consists of just six characters; two who struggle with conflict, two that represent the burden and dilemma of the story, one epitomizing authority and the last who elicits the moral paradox that is this story. The tale encompasses the morality of lying with the burden of death and pain; is morality so staunch and rigid that it cannot be eased to help those suffering? Where is the line between right and wrong and when, or if, should it be crossed?

Taking place entirely in a small house, the tale surrounds the last dying days of Margaret Lester, her sixteen year old daughter Helen Lester and her two maiden, twin aunts Hannah and Hester Gray. Visiting occasionally is the doctor, no name given, who is characterized as a strong Christian; morally correct and assertive as a leader. The final character is an angel who does not appear until the end of the story. It is he who brings forth the quandary and moral riddle; do the Aunt’s go to Heaven or Hell for their indiscretions?

The atmosphere of the work is gloomy and dark. The mother, Margaret, is slowly dying from scarlet fever. Confined to her room she is taken care of by Hannah and Hester, who pass information to her from her daughter; also dying from scarlet fever, of which the mother is unaware. The dramatic irony is that Helen contracted the fever from her mother when her aunts insisted she 'go before her' to apologize for lying. In their hubris they were willing to risk her life and in the end actually took it, due to the perception (the aunts') she had done an inconceivable wrong; a blasphemy which must be amended immediately and at great personal risk.

The doctor emerges as the main antagonist of the story as he chastises the aunts. Mark Twain embellishes his moral stance (the doctor), giving him the presence to admonish the crusading ladies who dared not dismiss his remarks. When he intervenes on behalf of the daughter, whom he actually walked in on while apologizing, he lectures Hannah and Hester on the misperceptions of their crusade, their pride and intolerance. It is he who directs the aunts to the story's allegorical theme and conflict. Once the girl contracts scarlet fever, of which the aunts are responsible, she deteriorates faster than her mother. Yet Margaret yearns for information about her daughter whom she is not allowed to see, and asks for notes and correspondence from her. The doctor asks Hannah and Hester; is lying so bad as to spare a dying woman the grief that her daughter is also dying? Who contracted her fever because of her caregivers' rash decision and who will surely die before her? The conflict comes now before the two as they must struggle with their own morality (and souls) against the dying days of their loved ones.

Association to the Classroom Setting

This story, both in narrative and character association has multiple facets that can be correlated to potential situations and dilemmas facing new and experienced teachers alike. These issues are brought about, or brought into the classroom (story) from several venues and approaches; most, if not all being physical manifestations of character, thought, assumptions, values and norms of the individual student (Carter, 1993). These factors or variables form patterns of thought and behavior which are defined by the salient, or component parts underlying the personality and actions of the person (Funder, 1995). These parts, or components are numerous and analogous in strength and relation to the other(s) as well as external factors, such as other students, the classroom and the teacher.

The association of story to classroom is most compelling through character analysis; assignment of characters to possible classroom roles or models and the personality and thought process each brings into the dynamic (Carter, 1993). This interaction is not static, nor one-dimensional but rather a constant, flowing relationship from the inner personality and thought of the individual subject or person to their interaction to one or multiple partners in an ever changing scenario and environment (Northouse, 2004). The classroom paradigm is (extremely) complicated but the underlying tenants of the students can be singled out through observation and comparison; in this case to a story with characters demonstrating traits possibly seen in a classroom or other similar setting (Carter, 1993).

These traits can be associated with the broader constants of behavior norms; variables attributed to the workings of a class and students. These (effect) variables or

traits form a ‘personality paradigm’; a range or continuum of normal behaviors associated with an individual student (Northouse, 2004). This paradigm is fluid and dynamic, as to be expected, with inconsistent behavior present and/or a probable through varying degrees of dominant and recessive traits and their interaction with external environmental factors (Paunonen, 2003). The larger and more complex paradigm of overall personality dominates, or encompasses the classroom paradigm but is not separate or distinct; instead the classroom model is a narrow, more defined (classroom variants) restrained position or effect of the overall personality constant (Paunonen, 2003). The epistemological confluences that make this dynamic; broader for the overall personality and narrower for the classroom setting remain essentially the same, allowing for external comparisons and inquiry.

To understand the dynamic of the classroom is to understand the phenomenology that makes humans distinct and the subsequent effect this has on interaction and group dynamics; essential process to classroom settings and learning. Modern personality research looks at the personality of a subject towards this ‘distinction’ and tries to minimize the qualifying variables into a comprehensive, discernible and quantitative set of factors and traits (Paunonen, 2003). Three modern, utilized personality models including the “Big 5” model (Five Factor Model) of super traits; the Three Factor Model (PEN) and the Alternative Five Model are (arguably) similar in their dissemination of minimal variables to discern common human personality (Zuckerman, Kuhlman, Joireman, Teta and Kraft, 1993). These traits, either dominant or recessive, make up the person or individual and to define these will enable others (such as a teacher) to discern the variables influencing classroom processes and cognition (Howard & Howard, 2004). The challenge on the teacher educator is to develop processes and the means to allow pre-service teachers to see and understand these traits and the dynamic they influence.

The Five Factor Model (FFM) delineates an individual’s personality into five common descriptors or labels, with each further divided into sub or correlated traits. It is through this, and other models, that modern psychology research has tried to quantify into processes able to ascertain or describe a person through objective analysis (Paunonen, 2003). The first super trait, or descriptive lexicon under the Five Factor Model, is stability, defined in terms of emotion and consisting of four sub-traits; sensitivity, intensity, interpretation and rebound time (emotional cause and effect). The second is extraversion, construed by level, or lack of, social interaction (introversion) also consisting of four sub-traits; enthusiasm, sociability, energy mode, and taking charge. Originality, defined within this model as intelligence, culture and/or experience is further delineated by correlated traits of imagination, complexity, change (willingness of) and scope. The fourth, accommodation, is definable to agreeability and has five sub-traits; service, agreement, deference, reserve (personality qualifier), and reticence. Consolidation is the fifth and final of the super traits and is associated by the lexicon of conscientiousness, having five lesser traits or descriptors; perfectionism, organization, drive, concentration, and (being) methodical (Zuckerman, Kuhlman, Joireman, Teta and Kraft, 1993).

To use the Five Factor Model (FFM) as a character analysis the observer, or teacher, must determine the strengths or limits of the pertaining or related sub-traits within each of the five categories to discern the dominant and thus, recessive traits of the individual being scrutinized (as limited in this particular model). This can be done

through a subjective and relatively modest analysis technique using simple intuitive observations with the physical model or FFM chart listed below (Table 1). Objective attempts to quantify, or add a numerical component to the model do exist but would be out of the utilitarian range of a functioning classroom environment. It is more pertinent, due in part to time constraints and physical limitations found within an educational setting, to limit the traits and sub-traits as simple modifiers or adjectives such as ‘strong’, ‘weak’, and/or ‘not apparent’ (NA). Pre-service teachers are taught (or will be taught) to use the chart as an informal rubric or assessment tool, starting with the sub-traits to delimit key characteristics by their strength or weakness before deciding on the descriptor and if it is either a positive or negative designation of the super trait.

Table 1 – Five Factor Model (FFM)

Super traits – common descriptor	Super traits – research lexicon	Letter code/designation	Sub-traits – correlated traits
Stability	Emotional stability Emotional instability Negative emotionality	N	1. Sensitiveness 2. Intensity 3. Interpretation 4. Rebound time
Extraversion	Extroversion Introversion	E	1. Enthusiasm 2. Sociability 3. Energy mode 4. Taking charge
Originality	Intelligence Culture Openness to experience	O	1. Imagination 2. Complexity 3. Change 4. Scope
Accommodation	Agreeability	A	1. Service 2. Agreement 3. Deference 4. Reserve 5. Reticence
Consolidation	Conscientiousness	C	1. Perfectionism 2. Organization 3. Drive 4. Concentration 5. Methodical

Classification of the characters in the story can help students learn to utilize the trait model (FFM) or other means of understanding differences and associative issues with different personalities under different contexts and modalities. For the teacher or pre-service teacher quantifying these processes can be burdensome, time consuming and not at all practical but usage of casual descriptors by means of observation can be utilized effectively in a classroom environment. To do so effectively, the teacher or pre-service teacher must understand the model as well as languages and the terminologies utilized in labeling behaviors, then construct a workable dynamic of classroom behavior, roles, hierarchies and group relationships before inserting or accounting for his or her variable or interaction (Landau, 2004). It is an unfortunate situation but not uncommon for professional educators to deal with moral dilemmas from their students and it is necessary for them to be as prepared as possible (cognitively) for the contingency (Maslovaty, 2000).

Character analysis is not limited by the static personality models as they (in this case the FFM) do not encapsulate interaction, or the multiple modalities and processes involved in a non-linear, multi-person interactive. The human dynamic, especially the situation as described in this Koan or moral riddle, involves power hierarchies, an erratic and punctuated exchange of language and learning, dying and death, and an unanswerable conundrum; essentially developing as intervening or altering variables to the traits (or actions) of the storyline characters (Creswell, 2003). With the nuances or influences of setting and drama it is necessary to associate each of the persons by class role and hierarchy; also an essential skill for pre-service teachers to acquire and master (Carter, 1993).

The basic order or generalized formation of social standing and rank for students or young adults will develop through an emergent, informal power structure as all formal power is established through the adult network within the educational setting (Landau, 2004). Teachers and administrators have assigned roles and authority but the students will develop their own; usually through social standing as developed within peer groups and corresponding cultures (Eisner, 1992). From these 'groups' both leaders and followers will develop as well as the norms, habits and rituals associated with peer to peer structuring and development (Deal and Peterson, 1999). This (typically) happens in any extended group of individuals; the problem occurs in classrooms when different groups with their own systems and leaders come together in the same space and must determine the new status quo (Cornelius & Herrenkohl, 2004). It is at this point when friction can result, especially if the teacher, who actually controls the real or formal power, is unaware of the unofficial power struggle between divergent leaders and groups. To see and understand this process can be crucial as it can positively or negatively affect multiple modes and outliers of interaction; critical to student and teacher success.

As in the story, when people are forced to react within a closed setting, established peer structures and norms (groups and/or individuals) will vie in an attempt to determine hierarchy (Cornelius & Herrenkohl, 2004). The resulting, interpersonal discourse can be described by the interaction of the variants or samples involved; group to group, student to student and teacher to student, though not limited to these three formations or processes (see Table 2). This exchange is rarely symmetrical or fluid and can aggravate the flimsy (and sometimes non-existent) student model of acceptable behavior as pre-determined by societal rules and norms, of which few teenagers normally

ascribe. This can quickly degenerate to friction which may fester or spark, until conflict occurs or the disparate issues forming unsuccessful bonding becomes readily transparent. Depending on the personality traits of students will determine the duration, or length of time for this process to be completed (if it ever does). It is not uncommon for disparate groups or individuals to never reconcile; creating an uneasy ‘truce’ or acceptance of an unstated (and never accepted) redundancy in the power hierarchy or peer structuring (Amit & Fried, 2002). To the teacher, the class will seethe with tension and hostility, depending if the teacher has the awareness to decipher the visual cues.

Table 2 - Interactive Peer Model

Variant/Sample	<i>(Interacting with)</i>	Variant/Sample
Student	→	Student(s) <i>And/or</i> Group(s) <i>And/or</i> Teacher
Group	→	Student(s) <i>And/or</i> Group(s) <i>And/or</i> Teacher
Teacher	→	Student(s) <i>And/or</i> Group(s)

Author – Trait and Leadership Dynamic of the Story

The dynamic interplay of character personality and circumstance, in this case the tragic death of two family members within the story, creates a social matrix unique to this situation. In the lesson, pre-service teachers are asked to define the events and characters (within their own perspective) by using the five factor model and notes from class as a means to develop critical cognitive skills. The intent is to analyze the situation through multiple instruments, devices and/or conceptualizations to best develop the skills necessary to perceive peer dynamics and the outliers that influence them. The lesson is simple; encourage pre-teaching students to look critically at situation, personality and events to help them think about situations (some probably unanswerable) that they may one day face in the classroom.

Table 3 - Personality Dynamic as Perceived by Author

	Stability	Extraversion	Originality	Accommodation	Consolidation
	N	E	O	A	C
Mom	Highly sensitive	No enthusiasm	Open to death	Reticent	
	Highly intense	No energy		Deferent to aunts	N/A
	<i>Mixed stability</i>	No taking charge <i>Weak extroversion</i>	<i>Weak originality</i>	<i>Mixed accommodation</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Daughter	Highly sensitive	No taking charge	N/A	Reticent	
				Deferent to aunts	N/A
	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Weak extroversion</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Strong accommodation</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Aunts(2)	Intense	Enthusiastic	No imagination	Deference to authority	Perfectionist
	Egotistical	No sociability	Limited complexity	Strong service	Driven
	Stubborn	High energy	Limited scope	Reticent	Methodical
	<i>Negative emotionality</i>	Take charge <i>Medium extroversion</i>	<i>Weak originality</i>	<i>Medium accommodation</i>	<i>Medium consolidation</i>
Doctor	Sensitive to charges	Strong enthusiasm	High imagination	High service	High perfectionist
	Strong intensity	Mixed sociability	High scope	Low agreement	Driven
	Strong interpretation	High energy	High complexity	Low deference	Concentration
	<i>Emotional stability</i>	<i>Strong extroversion</i>	<i>Strong originality</i>	Low reserve <i>Low reticence</i> <i>Low accommodation</i>	<i>Medium consolidation</i>

To gauge or assess the activity it was decided to create the peer dynamic from the authors' view; to develop the background or baseline for which to compare the students' opinions and level of participation (See Table 3). The activity is a causal and/or cognitive device with little subjective grading requirements; instead the idea is to encourage participation through the extension of rather simplistic and easy to receive points to elicit more of a true response from the students. Pre-service teachers, as are students in other fields, have been rigidly trained through rote memorization and other lower critical thinking modalities for most of their educational career. To achieve the type of objective thinking required in this activity means taking the students out of their familiar base or concept zone, a somewhat difficult and unnerving task for some. As a way to minimize incessant questioning or assistance, as the more help given undermines the amount of thinking involved, extra credit for the activity is lavishly given.

The two characters in the story that are in the lower hierarchy of leadership and role would be the mom and daughter, primarily due to illness (the daughter's young age is also a factor) which was delegated to secondary or subservient status in their own home. The aunts, invited guests into the domain, have been charged to take care of the Helen (mom) and have become the formal leaders of the surrounding environment despite their obvious lack of experience which, unfortunately, plays out to the tragic consequences in the conclusion. The doctor is an important leadership dynamic but is sporadic and brief, written as a foil or protagonist to the aunt's behavior and thinking. The last character, the angel, represents the ultimate of authority and design, delivering the transcendent question of either Heaven or Hell for the aunts, the choice to save souls for eternity but to do so at your own peril. To Samuel Clemens there is no more a pressing or harder decision than what is asked; a written representation of the pinnacle or highest objective of transformative leadership (Johnson, 2001).

The mom and daughter show personality traits towards a highly sensitive and dependent emotional state, primarily towards leadership characterizations within the story (See Table 3). This is not surprising due to the age of the daughter and the onslaught of scarlet fever for the both of them. The mom, it is assumed due to disease, lacks energy and enthusiasm and does not take charge; determined as a level of introversion of which the daughter also appears to be similar. Not much is described towards originality or consolidation but both are similar in accommodation; showing reticence and the nature of acquiescence towards the aunts, also assumed to be in part due to their disease. Both characters represent the follower or charges within a peer network, where leaders or dominant players assume roles over their parts, in this case written as submissive characters to establish the quandary which later befalls the aunts.

The aunts were more extensively described by Twain consequently allowing for more introspection and scrutiny. They acted as a team in the story and for the benefit of the students and the lesson it was decided to interpret them as a team or together as one. Hannah and Lester illustrated a negative level of emotionality in the stability super trait, described through the utilization of key adjectives such as intensity, egotistical and stubborn. Of the four sub-traits listed in this category the aunts showed a negative correlation to two, with a third considered neutral, allowing for the subjective labeling of a weak stability modifier or negative emotionality (See Table 3). By adding the simple moniker of positive, negative, or neutral to each of the sub-traits it became apparent that the two conducted themselves with a negative emotionality in this personality concept,

possibly accounting for the destructive behaviors as illustrated in the beginning of the story.

The two showed a medium to moderate strength towards the super trait of extraversion illustrated by the strong or positive labels of enthusiasm, high energy and taking charge. The negative descriptor of limited to no sociability or social skills was the lone negative qualifier in this trait domain, outweighed by the three positives to give Hannah and Lester a medium, if positive extraversion trait. The ladies illustrated a negative or weak amount of originality highlighted by the negative modifiers or sub-traits of no imagination, limited or weak amount of complexity, and a limited scope or range of free or critical thought. They did show the willingness to change, described as a neutral or slightly positive sub-trait, due to the rather late period of time in which they accepted the doctor's advice and affected variation or difference, albeit rather late to save the daughter. This domain only offers four qualifiers with the aunts showing negative integers for three and a weak neutral or positive for one, allowing for the labeling of a negative originality or openness super trait; the only other domain which the two showed a negative or destructive level.

Hannah and Hester were stronger in accommodation, consisting of five domains or sub-traits. The aunts showed a strong or positive showing for three of these qualifiers; deference, service and reticence. The other two were not illustrated allowing for three positive domains to zero negative, showing Hannah and Lester to be positive, albeit somewhat weak, towards the super trait of accommodation or agreeability. This appears counter intuitive for the storyline or plot but under further scrutiny seems plausible as the two did change, illustrating the positive integers of this trait further in the tale; it just seems lost to the negative behaviors seen earlier in the story. The last super trait, consolidation, had the aunts illustrating two positive sub-traits or monikers and one neutral; three out of a possible five, with the remaining two not illustrated or described by Twain. Hannah and Lester showed drive and a methodic outlook or personality and seemed to illustrate a neutral or benign perfectionist stance; giving the two a positive label of consolidation or conscientiousness. Out of the five super traits Hannah and Lester Gray showed positive or strength in three and a weakness or negative accountability towards two; stability and accommodation.

The doctor, though lesser detailed, becomes the counter weight or influence to the aunts' destructive behavior, the consummate antagonist of literary works (Lynch, 1999). He projects a type of desire seemingly unique and different to Hannah and Lester, though after closer introspection this distinction begins to fade. The aunts were assessed as being favorable or having strength in three of the five categorical traits of personality; the doctor was judged to have four. Accommodation, or agreeability, saw a negative determination for all five of the listed sub-traits. The aunts, interestingly enough, did well in this category, allowing for the conceptualization of two paradigms of leadership; years before the Five Factor personality profile was developed.

The doctor illustrated strength or a positive outcome for stability, determined through the outliers of strong sensitivity and interpretation with a neutral level of intensity, meeting a positive or benign status with three out of the four sub-traits. He scored strong with extroversion, with the positive monikers of enthusiasm, energy and taking charge. Only the sub-trait of sociability was determined to be neutral allowing for three of the four sub-traits associated with strength or positive outcomes for the super

trait. The doctor was also strong in originality, determined through three of the four integers or sub-traits; imagination scope and complexity as strong or positive. The last sub-trait, change, was not developed or introduced in the story so it was left blank (or NA) giving three of the possible four outliers as a strength and allowing for the positive label to be determined to the super trait. The final, consolidation, was judged to be of medium strength or somewhat positive with two descriptors; driven and methodical labeled as strong and the third, perfectionist as neutral. The moniker was designated as medium strong though this could just as easily be determined as a neutral description.

It is interesting to see the two types of leaders, the aunts and the doctor, who engaged in different types of behaviors illustrated similar traits. It was judged by the author that both were deemed as leaders and both have characteristics that could be counter-productive or destructive. It is noted that the doctor, though described by Twain as the catalyst for change with the aunts and as the primary alpha figure also shows negative capacity towards accommodation or agreeability, a trait the aunts showed strength and the same trait that described the epoch and morality of the tale. It was the ability to change that made the aunts the pivotal characters and the true leaders in the story. It is hoped the student teachers will see the same thing as their understanding of the variances of human personality, leadership, and behavior will be crucial to their understanding of classroom and peer dynamics; important towards classroom management success.

Pre-Service Teachers – Anecdotal Observation and Data Synthesis

Pre-service educational students (N = 53) from three different classes, taught by the author during the 2006-2007 school year, were asked to read the short story, 'Heaven or Hell' then break down each of the characters by personality traits as defined by the Five Factor Model. Students were also asked to answer, in their opinion, which character in the story could be classified as the leader, with responses limited to the doctor, the aunts or both, and if this relationship was a negative or positive outlier, or possibly a combination of the two. Students were also asked if they believe any of the situations, contexts and traits of the characters and story could possibly relate or be found within a classroom setting. The final question asked if the pre-service teachers believed any of the characters, as defined by their actions and personality traits, would make a good teacher (in their view). Responses were tabulated using simple descriptive statistics, formulated to percentages and rounded to the nearest whole number (See Table 4).

The students looked at this exercise with varying degrees of trepidation, due in some part to the lack of specific instruction and objectives as well as varying difficulties in answering a cognitive, open ended assignment. Adult and student learners like to know the direction or outcomes formulated or desired by the teacher to answer in a way conducive to what they believe their professors want to hear. This exercise relieved students of this burden, though the framework assumes a dual role of a support system for young adults not accustomed to presenting their own thoughts and ideas, especially within a public forum. It is also significant that much of the (formal) educational process relies on rote memorization and simple, pragmatic cognitive skills; applications not conducive for critical thinking and development. This exercise took the pre-service teachers into (somewhat) unfamiliar territory of open interpretation, critique, and

inferential analysis; a relatively original task that the students completed with varying degrees of effectiveness and enthusiasm.

Table 4 – Student Selected Traits (top four)

Student Response					
Followers			Leaders		
Mom	Sensitive	38%	Aunts	<i>Taking Charge</i>	32%
	<i>Accommodating</i>	31%		<i>Service</i>	26%
	Stability	30%		Perfectionist	25%
	N/A	25%		Enthusiasm	25%
Daughter	Introvert	26%	Doctor	Extroverted	26%
	<i>Accommodating</i>	25%		<i>Service</i>	19%
	Consolidation	19%		N/A	19%
	N/A	19%		*Originality	18%
				* <i>Taking Charge</i>	18%

Note: Traits and sub-traits italicized are matched responses to the two subjects in each leadership category

* Tied for fourth place selection

Student responses for the characters' personality traits were somewhat different than the instructor's, especially towards the mother and daughter. This variability may have two causes; one being the lack of description as written by Mark Twain, and the other the role and purpose of the two which may be somewhat ambiguous to the trait model. It is assumed that Twain, utilizing literary devices within his writing, deliberately left out descriptors for the two as their primary role was to establish conflict within the story, both internal and external, as well as setting the tone (Lynch, 1999). The top four responses for Margaret were the sub-trait of sensitivity, cited by 38% of the students, the super trait of accommodating by 31%, the sub-trait of stability at 30%, and N/A, cited by 25% of the students. Not applicable was cited frequently for both the mom and daughter by students, both in their writing and during post activity discussions for the same reasons listed above. The apparent confusion may stem from the lack of precise descriptors associated with the two characters. Two descriptors; sensitive and N/A were also cited by the author when describing the mom, concurring with the students in that she was difficult to precisely define using the FFM model.

The daughter, also minimally described in the story, saw different responses from the students. Helen was labeled by 26% of students with the super trait of extraversion and 25% with the super trait of accommodation. Reasons for this, as culled from classroom discussion, may be attributable to the daughter's age and sickness, more than personality as, like her mom; she was never fully described or defined as a character. She

was listed by 19% of the students with the super trait of consolidation while an equal percentage (19%) citing N/A or confusion in listing any personality traits to this character. Helen stirred the most emotion from the participants in this activity, cited through the activity and later discussions, as some saw her as the classic tragic character while others saw her as weak and responsible for her fate. It appeared that students through their own personality and leadership 'lenses' deciphered Helen through didactic extremes, assessing her by their own interpretation of leadership, empathy, responsibility and morals. More research is needed to further analyze any relationship between students' traits and their interpretation to this and other characters. The only response from the students matching the instructor was N/A, further augmenting the conclusion that Helen was not detailed enough for complete analysis through the Five Factor Model.

Hannah and Lester, the two protagonists of the story, were the literary characters of conflict and the focus of Twain's allegorical message of the risk of power combined with zealous dogma and limited originality; the dangers of closed minds coupled with power. Not surprisingly, the two aunts were the primary focus in classroom discussion and dialogue as students interpreted between the two's diverse personality and leadership traits. The sub-trait of taking charge was the most cited (31%) label or descriptor by students, followed by the sub-trait of service with 26%, and a tie between correlated traits of perfectionism and enthusiasm, both at 25% of responses totaled. All four of the primary responses from the students matched that of the instructor and marked the first time that students primarily utilized sub-traits in description rather than the super traits. It is also assumed that this is a result of the levels, or amount of description allocated to these characters by Twain, making it easier for students to associate sub-traits to the aunts rather than the primary or super traits. Taking charge and enthusiasm are labels for the super trait of extraversion which was categorized as a positive trait for the aunts by the instructor. Service, also a sub-trait, is correlated to accommodation while the sub-trait of perfectionism is a descriptor for the super trait of consolidation. The three super traits or common descriptors affiliated with the listed sub-traits are the same three described by the instructor as positive or strong traits for the aunts. The two negative super traits, stability and originality, were not strongly represented as only 19% of students listed intensity, a sub-trait of stability (also listed by the instructor) and just 6% allocating the super-trait of originality which was considered a weakness, or negative integer by the instructor.

The doctor, illustrated through trait characterization by Mark Twain himself, though never given a name, also elicited varied responses from the pre-service teachers. The super trait of extroversion was cited by 25% of students, followed by the sub-trait of service and the label of N/A, both listed by students at 19%. The super trait of originality tied in student response to the sub-trait of taking charge with 18% of student voting. The only similarity in response between the instructor and students was the sub-trait of service, a descriptor for the super trait of accommodation and the only negative label allocated to the doctor in the trait analysis. Surprising was the number of responses in the N/A category as the doctor was well described by Twain, indicating some discrepancy or confusion towards student analysis of this character. As the antagonist and causal integer for Hannah and Lester in order to enact change, the doctor took a role that many pre-service teachers probably found confusing (Lynch, 1999). His role is not easily defined in the fluid classroom personality dynamic, due in part to his leaving or

sporadic position to the story relationship. The student's, in classroom discussion, found him fascinating and important, but some were confused about his role and place.

The second or other component to this exercise focused on the leadership dynamic, delineated by three (primary) questions asked of the students. The first, do you believe that the traits and situations as described in the story could correlate to the classroom environment, asked the recipients to answer with the simple response of either yes, no, or N/A or blank (no response given). Students answered this question with a surprising 81% choosing yes with the remaining 19% responding with either N/A or no response at all. If rejecting the no response or blanks the percentages rise in favor of yes with 93% choosing this answer and only 7% determining N/A. Students, surprisingly enough, responded almost categorically yes to this analogy with just a few unable to answer the question. This matches the instructor's claim of correlation to classroom settings though it is surprising that such a large number of students concurred, especially from the idealistic view commonly associated with pre-service teachers.

The second question, who of the characters would make a good teacher, elicited more of a varied response from the students. The highest total; 56% voted for the doctor, followed by 19% for the angel, 13% for the mom, 13% N/A or blank, and unbelievably 6% for Helen, the daughter. If the N/A or blank response is taken out of the equation the total for the doctor moves to 75% of student response. The finality or strength in numbered totaled for the doctor seemingly conflicts with the (minor) difficulty in trait analysis for the same figure. It is assumed that the students can delineate leadership from the doctor easier than personality traits, possibly indicative of the literary writing of Mark Twain to this character and his role in the short story. Another assumption is the primary trait of extraversion which may look similar to authoritarian and directive teaching styles of which many students may be familiar and able to assimilate to a classroom leadership dynamic. More research is needed to make any firm or positive correlation.

Pre-service teachers saw the angel (19%) as a teacher though the role of this character is punctuated by just two, brief appearances. In later classroom discussions the students saw the angel as a personification of power and judgment, roles that a small percentage of students seemingly delineate towards the teaching profession. The associated traits that students saw in Margaret and Helen, mother and daughter, were not associated with the same autocratic leadership traits of the doctor but of a more transformative technique; a leadership style based on culture, empathy and change which a few students saw as strengths for classroom leaders (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Due to the limited scope of the exercise it is not possible to delineate these responses with student backgrounds and demographics but it would be interesting for further research to see if any correlation exists.

The third and final question involved dual components or parts, defined succinctly as a question with a primary and secondary focus. The first part or component asks students who they believe is actually the leader or is in charge. The second asks if this is a negative or positive issue or factor towards the illustrated situation; is the person or people in charge a good or bad thing. Students responded 63% that the aunts were in charge, 19% that both the aunts and doctor shared some leadership with 18% unsure or not answering the question. It is interesting that not one student answered that the doctor was solely in charge. The angel was deliberately left out of the answered response as the type of leadership defined by this character is existential and supernatural; not necessarily

relevant to classroom leadership dynamics. Of the second component or question 50% answered that the leadership dynamic, despite who they considered in charge, was both good and bad, with 19% voting for solely a negative or bad context and only 13% stating it was solely positive. From the discussions many students felt that change, precipitated by the doctor, but carried out by the aunts solicited the dominant or primary choice. A sizeable but small percentage cited the negative aspect of the Aunts' decision to bring Helen to her mother while a smaller group saw the outcome of the aunts' changed behavior and personality as the positive, deciding factor. The majority of students agreed with both; the negativity of their early actions coupled with the positive of the aunts' later determination despite the risk they were taking with their souls and salvation.

Conclusion

In closing, or wrapping up the class discussions the final question asked by the instructor was if the students believed that Hannah and Lester were going to heaven or Hell. The majority of responses, though this was never measured, elicited Heaven as their reward rather the punishment of Hell for their indiscretion or later behaviors (lying). The reason, usually cited by the pre-service teachers, was the aunts' capacity to change and their willingness to do whatever it took to help those they were charged with helping. The Koan or moral riddle involved or associated with this tale incorporates closely with the response given by the students, though little to no evidence exists (so far) that any have determined or come to a similar conclusion.

It was the dismay of the aunts towards Helen's lie that started the conundrum but it was the doctor who described the ironic twist; did Hannah and Hester do what they did for the daughter's soul or for theirs? When they enacted change were they doing it for themselves to make peace (find Heaven) or to truly help the dying women? The angel forced an existential and honest answer when he simply asked whether it be Heaven or Hell. If the aunts enacted change solely for their benefit then by stating 'Heaven' they were lying and risked everything. If they said 'Hell', they lost everything as well (Unless the angel ignored their answer). Hannah and Hester faced an unanswerable riddle; they were responsible for the death of Helen because of a lie but they lied as well. They showed no compassion when it was the daughter, how could they expect anything different for themselves? If they did, then the aunts changed for themselves, not for Helen or Margaret.

Students who saw this change as a positive action felt it deserved leniency or mercy as (in their view) later behavior superseded earlier ones. Within the duality of this tale, the actions of Hester and Hannah can be defined as two variables; the negative impact of their first actions (X) compared to the positive impact of their change(y). Accurately described as two variables, x would be a negative or destructive integer while y would be positive and beneficial. The Koan, or moral riddle then asks if the aunts are to be judged, which event merits the most consideration (x or y)? If y is positive and is the second or later event can x be forgiven? Added to this quandary would be the rational for y; was the action leading to the positive event genuine and for others, or was it all for intrinsic benefit? For emerging class room teachers the reasons for empathetic leadership may not be as stringent as that for the aunts but it may be as important, especially in considering the number of students over the time of an educator's career.

The development or capacity to invoke change or growth, especially towards compassionate or morale responsibility is a trait enviable of most individuals. It is a sub-trait incorporated within the super trait of originality (FFM) though its importance to impressionable children within a classroom is surely elevated. To allow compassion towards mistakes, despite potential severity, allows for the utilization and/or incorporation of a growth model in determining success and achievement; a lifelong skill that will benefit scores of children.

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