

“The Monkey's Paw”

Character and Theme Analysis

Directions: Using the entire play (all three scenes), **write** 2 to 3 adjectives per character that describe that character. For each word, **write** a quote from the play that gives proof of that description, being sure to quote the play word for word and cite them appropriately. Your quotes can come from either the dialogue or the stage directions (what we called narration). Then briefly **explain** how each quote you've pulled shows the quality you say it proves. An example has been done for you to see what it should look like when you're done.

Example:

Stranger nervous, sensitive, uncomfortable

- quote to prove first description: *“(clearing his throat) The company wants me to convey their sincere sympathy with you in your great loss. I hope you understand that I'm just doing my job.” (Rockliff 192). This shows he's nervous because he has to clear his throat to speak and then he tries to reassure them that he's only doing his job and not to get mad at him.*
- quote to prove second description: *“I'm sorry...” (Rockliff 192). This shows he's sensitive because he is trying to very gently break the news to Mr. and Mrs. White that Herbert has died. He knows how difficult this will be to hear.*
- quote to prove third description: *“(in a low voice) He was caught in the machinery.” (Rockliff 192). This shows he's uncomfortable because he talks in a low voice, like he doesn't want to have to tell the Whites how Herbert died.*

Mr. White _____, _____, _____

- quote to prove first description:
- quote to prove second description:
- quote to prove third description:

Mrs. White _____, _____, _____

- quote to prove first description:
- quote to prove second description:
- quote to prove third description:

Herbert _____, _____, _____

- quote to prove first description:
- quote to prove second description:
- quote to prove third description:

Sergeant Morris: _____, _____, _____

- quote to prove first description:
- quote to prove second description:
- quote to prove third description:

Based firmly on your character descriptions above, state what you think the theme of “The Monkey's Paw” could be. Then describe how your knowledge and descriptions of the characters lead you to believe that is the theme of the story. An example that isn't about this story follows in order to illustrate.

Example:

- Theme: *People should take their time to do things the right way.*
- Reason: *Because Character A was a procrastinator and was always rushing, the work that he did was never very good. Because Character B was a planner and took her time, her work was usually very good. Character A rushed for the contest because he procrastinated, and he lost the prize to Character B, who took her time to do things the right way. So taking one's time is what earned her the prize.*
- Theme:
- Reason: