

Student Essay on "Everyday Use," an Analysis

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Essay

"Everyday Use," by Alice Walker is a short story about an unlucky family who struggles to make it. Maggie and Dee's mother goes out of her way to give them the life they deserve. In Alice Walker's short story "Everyday Use," Dee is an unlikable person because she is arrogant, selfish, and ungrateful.

Dee is a very arrogant person. Dee is under the impression that she appreciates her heritage more than Maggie ever could. She expresses these feelings on page 94 when she says, "Maggie can't appreciate these quilts!" she said. "She'd probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use" (94). Dee's mother adds that when Dee went off to college she had offered a quilt to her and then she thought they were old-fashioned (94). "You just will not understand. The point in these quilts!" Dee says (94). Dee thinks she deserves more than her family and appreciates her heritage more than her family.

Dee is a very selfish individual. When Dee finds out that the quilts were already given to her sister, Dee gets furious and believes that she deserves the quilts more than Maggie and that Maggie would not take care of them as well as she would (94). Poor Maggie says to her mother "She can have them Mama...I can 'member Grandma Dee without the quilts"(94). Maggie is used to never getting anything. Throughout the entire story, it says that Maggie gives up many things so Dee can have what she needs or wants.

Dee is quite ungrateful. Towards the beginning of the story, Dee is taking a picture of Maggie and their mother in front of the house (91). Dee was always ashamed of her family, where she grew up, and the house they lived in. Now, Dee seems to have a newfound appreciation for her heritage, which may just be for show. On page 90, the narrator describes the scene in which the old house burns down. It is implied that Dee may have even burnt the old house down. Maggie is unfortunate enough that she burns fairly badly in the fire.

Dee is a very unlikable person in many ways. The story "Everyday Use" expresses many of the ways she is unlikable including her selfishness, arrogance, and ungratefulness. In "Everyday Use" by Alice Walker, Dee is considered an unlikable person because she is arrogant, selfish, and ungrateful.