

# TLP Essay

As the sun scorched the desert, sandstorms blew, footsteps faded, the Little Prince found himself confused until he came across a flower. In the fictional story, *The Little Prince* written and illustrated by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the little prince came across new and old findings throughout exploration in the story. In the story, a little child starts off with creativity in his heart, but that all went downhill when he showed his parents his drawing, which they said was not a good drawing and told him to focus more on academics. He took this negatively, focusing on his studies and becoming a pilot. One day, as he was flying his plane, he crashed and landed on an isolated island where he then found a small child. The child turned out to be a prince who has been traveling around the universe discovering what men are, landing on Earth in search of these men. Throughout chapter 18, the theme exploration may result in new findings or the confirmation of old findings is illustrated through the flower and personification, the desert setting, and unanswered questions which are known as men.

To begin with, the flower plays a crucial role in the confirmation of old findings with the help of personification. The little prince needed a question that he had to be resolved, and at his encounter with the flower, he asked the flower, “Where are the men,” (Chapter 18, No 74, YB) to which the flower gave a response. Normally, flowers are living entities, but with the inability to verbalize. But, because of the personification used in this chapter, the flower is given a voice to speak what it knows of to the little prince. To his inquiry, she responds, “I saw them, several

years ago. But one never knows where to find them. The wind blows them away. They have no roots, and that makes their life very difficult.”(Chapter 18, No 74, YB). The flowers response to the little prince’s question is a confirmation that there are indeed men on the planet which he came to in search of them, thus concluding his journey useful. This not only is the confirmation of old findings however, but new findings as well, since the flower gave information about the men to the little prince in her response that he most likely was not aware of. The flower, through the help of personification has helped the little prince in knowing and confirming that his journey to Earth was not in vain, and that in order to find what he yearns to discover, he must venture further, for where he is is not where he needs to be, but rather, he is at another obstacle that he must cross in order to find his reward. The desert is a harsh, unforgiving environment that only the brave travel across.

Secondly, the desert represents more than just sand and heat. It’s a barren, desolate land, devoid of life, with powerful sandstorms that sweep the land. Deserts, over time, will have become deserted, isolated, vacant and much more. In this case as the Little Prince explores the desert there is a more symbolic meaning than just sand dunes and heat. The story progressed with the setting of this desert. The desert represents the idea of the author’s thoughts and emotions. Isolation, death, and many other ideas originated this desert of unanswered questions. “The book’s desert setting derives from the aviator Saint-Exupéry’s 1935 experience of having been lost for almost a week in the arabian desert, with his memories of loneliness, hallucination, impending death, (and enveloping beauty) in the desert in the desert realized in this page”, stated journalist Adam Gopnik in, *The New Yorker*, *The Strange Triumph of “The Little Prince”*. Isolation causes thoughts and questions, which one man can not answer on his own, resulting in

the need for exploration in order to discover new findings. As the author was isolated, he came up with new questions which had yet to be answered. This caused many dull thoughts which led to similar thoughts that the Little Prince had in his travels. The Little Prince had come to Earth in search of men without having any knowledge from where they were or where he had to look. Because of this, he had to ask the flower about the men by asking, "Where are the men?" (Chapter 18, No 74, YB) The flower, in turn, responded that she had seen them, but was unsure of where they were at that moment. This is showing that the Little Prince had to keep searching the Earth, but first, had to get out of the isolation which can also be known as the desert. The desert resulted in telling the Little Prince that he was in the right place but yet at the same time in the wrong place. The question continued to linger in the Little Prince's mind about the men's whereabouts, and needed to get out of the barren desert since it became unimportant to him.

Finally, the men tie together to the chapter that signifies that sometimes, what you are looking for is not always where you think it is. As previously stated in the essay, the topic about the men came up when the Little Prince came across the flower, to which he asked his question, "Where are the men?." (Chapter 18, No 74, YB). This shows how the Little Prince is desperate to find the men to even asking a flower in the desert. But the Little Prince received an answer from the flower. It said, "'Men?' she echoed. 'I think there are six or seven of them in existence. I saw them, several years ago. But one never knows where to find them. The wind blows them away. They have no roots, and that makes their life very difficult.'" (Chapter 18, No 74, YB) This confirms to the Little Prince and the readers that there are men out there just not in the desert, which relates back to the theme of exploration as the flower has confirmed man's existence,

which was an old finding. So, the his question about the men and the answer the flower has provided him, had tied together the sense and theme of exploration. The men, along with the flower and desert, have been a mystery to the Little Prince. He might have received an answer to his question, but it didn't answer the question asked and, instead, posed even more questions to come across, although the Little Prince was already confused.

In conclusion, the Little Prince has explored and discovered new findings, as well as confirming ideas he had already known about in Chapter 18 with the help of the flower's personification, the desert setting, and the unanswered question of the men themselves. The Little Prince discovered throughout the flower that, verbalizing through personification, was what he was looking for, men, were indeed on the planet, but not in the vast land known as the desert. The Little Prince had to cross the entire barren desert, in which he only encountered an insignificant 3-petaled flower that turned out to have the answer to the question which the Little Prince had been searching for, but still got no concrete answer of where they were. Only that they were there, confirming that he had gone to the right place, and that they are easily blown away by the desert wind due to their lack of roots, thus making the unanswered question of the men even more challenging to answer. Nevertheless, the Little Prince travels in the desert were not completely and utterly useless, for it turned out to confirm that what he was searching for has always been there, but not where he was.

# Works Cited

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