

Name:

Class:

Literary Comparison

**Directions:** Compare the two stories "The Story of An Hour" (1894) by Kate Chopin and "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman using the following charts.

Plot (Setting, Characters, Major Conflict)

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Point of View

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Author's Background

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Themes & Topics

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Text Structure

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Mood and Tone

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

Symbols

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper

## Response To Literature (RTL) Essay

**TASK:** Write a five paragraph essay comparing your literary analyses of both short stories "The Story of an Hour" and "The Yellow Wallpaper." Pick three literary elements from the literary comparison chart to include in your RTL essay. Use evidence from each story to support your reflection. A literary analysis is not simply identifying themes or point of view in a text, but you must explain how each literary detail contributes to the meaning of the literature.

### Requirements/Rubric

#### CONTENT: 20 POINTS

- Writer analyzes how two texts from the same period treat similar topics and analyzes how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- Writer cites strong and thorough textual evidence to support analyses of what the texts say explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an authors' implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.
- Writer develops the thesis with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- Writer includes at least three pieces of evidence from each story to support analyses, reflection, and research.
- Essay is a minimum of 5 paragraphs in length and paragraphs are all an appropriate length for grade level.

#### FOCUS: 20 POINTS

- Writer clearly establishes and develops a thesis and completes all sections of the task without getting off topic.
- Writer explains how all evidence provided directly supports the thesis.
- Writer produces clear and coherent writing in which the development is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

#### ORGANIZATION: 20 POINTS

- Writer organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.
- Writer uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- The writer's supporting reasons are organized intentionally and easy to follow.
- Writer introduces topic and thesis statement to audience that is followed with evidence.
- Writer provides a conclusion that supports the information or explanation presented.

#### STYLE: 20 POINTS

- Writers uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic.
- Writer establishes and maintains a formal style.
- Writer uses an objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

#### CONVENTIONS AND FORMAT: 20 POINTS

- Writer uses proper grammar, mechanics, usage, and punctuation. Writer has very few errors that do not impact or take away from the readability of the essay.
- Writer has typed essay using proper MLA Format.
- Writer turns essay in on time.

**Due Date:**

**Total Points: 100**

## Literary Comparison Key - Answers will Vary

### Plot (Setting, Characters, Major Conflict)

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper
protagonist is female, Mrs. Louise Mallard	protagonist is female; narrator is unnamed
protagonist suffers physical illness (heart condition)	protagonist suffers mental illness (nervous depression; most likely PPD)
Set in the 1800s	Set in the 1800s
Major conflict (internal) is Louise is relieved her husband is dead but knows she should be upset	Major conflict (external) is the narrator is mentally sick but society (including her husband) is forcing her to repress her thoughts which worsens her condition
Characters include: Louise Mallard, Brently Mallard (the husband), Josephine (the sister), and Richard (Brently's friend)	Characters include: the narrator, John (the husband), Jennie (John's sister), Mary (caretaker for the baby)
Louise is aware that she is "trapped" by marriage. She whispers, "Free! Body and soul free!" After her husband's death.	The narrator is aware her husband is hindering her recovery process. "John is a physician, and <i>perhaps</i> —(I would not say it to a living soul, of course, but this is dead paper and a great relief to my mind)— <i>perhaps</i> that is one reason I do not get well faster."
Readers know little about Mr. Mallard and how he treats his wife, so much has to be inferred about their relationship. Readers can assume the couple has no children since none were mentioned.	The narrator often discloses her husband John's behavior. He often gaslights her. "John does not know how much I really suffer. He knows there is no <i>reason</i> to suffer, and that satisfies him."
Louise and Brently's marriage seems to be a social responsibility, not a loving relationship. "And yet she had loved him--sometimes. Often she had not."	The narrator believes her husband has her best interest in mind but is blinded by arrogance. "Dear John! He loves me very dearly, and hates to have me sick."
Louise felt she was being controlled by her husband. "There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. She felt it criminal no matter the intention. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination."	The narrator feels John wants to help her, despite the fact that he doesn't adhere to her requests. She sometimes uses sarcasm to express her frustration that he doesn't listen. "And dear John gathered me up in his arms, and just carried me upstairs and laid me on the bed, and sat by me and read to me till it tired my head." "It is so hard to talk with John about my case, because he is so wise, and because he loves me so."

### Point of View

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper
Third person point of view	First person point of view
Third person omniscient allows readers insight to what all the characters are thinking	Unreliable Narrator makes us question how factual events are being told
The point of view allows readers to know that Mr. Mallard is going to be “dead” before Louise knows (dramatic irony) and that people treat her so delicately because of her heart condition	The point of view allows us to know that while John thinks the narrator is healing and getting better, she is actually getting worse; she's just become occupied trying to free the woman from behind the wallpaper (dramatic irony) that it seems like she's less depressed

### Author's Background

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper
Kate Chopin was born in Missouri, 1850; her father was killed in a railroad accident, her brother died in the civil war; she grew up in a household with all women.	Charlotte Perkins Gilman was born in Connecticut, 1860; her father abandoned the family and she grew up in poverty.
Has six children with husband Oscar. He passes away in 1882 making Kate a widow at age 30. She was left with a huge amount of debt from her husband's death.	She married Charles W. Stetson and had one daughter. She suffered from melancholia or severe depression. She became divorced after 10 years.
She moved back in with her mother and started a social club that was like a book club. Her mother soon passes away and Kate suffers from depression. She becomes a full-time writer to cope.	In 1898, she published <i>Women and Economics</i> that declared economic independence for women and gave insight to the trouble of gender roles in society. She became very involved in writing feminist literature.
She died in 1904 of a massive cerebral hemorrhage.	After discovering she had breast cancer, she took her own life in 1935.

### Themes & Topics

The Story of An Hour	The Yellow Wallpaper
You never really know what's going on in other people's relationships.	Someone's life can appear fine from the outside, but what's really going on is much different.
Your life can change in an instant.	Mental illness can't be cured by locking someone in a room and not allowing them to interact with others. Mental illness can not be ignored.

Most people require a sense of independence.	People need a way to express themselves or an outlet for their thoughts.
Portrays marriage as oppressive for the time period	Portrays women as inferior to men during this time period
Tragedy can help people realize how they really feel about something.	Physicians can undermine patients based on what is believed to be true by society during the time.

### Text Structure

<b>The Story of An Hour</b>	<b>The Yellow Wallpaper</b>
The story takes places over the course of one hour	The story takes places over the course of a few months
Information is explicitly given to readers	Text is written in journal form (which is secretly written since the narrator is prohibited to write) and readers must make inferences because the narrator is unreliable and hallucinating

### Mood and Tone

<b>The Story of An Hour</b>	<b>The Yellow Wallpaper</b>
Tone: surprised, sad, relieved, free, depressed	Tone: anxious, desperate, depressed, helpless, empowered
Mood: depressing, optimistic, joyful, horror	Mood: mysterious, unsettling, creepy

### Symbols

<b>The Story of An Hour</b>	<b>The Yellow Wallpaper</b>
The open window: represents opportunities and freedom that Louise has gained; the nature described represents new life	The wallpaper: represents the narrator and her imperfect mental state. It keeps deteriorating and although she asks her husband to fix it, he will not.
Her heart: Her heart condition is a representation of how Louise is also weak with her emotions	The house: a beautiful mansion, isolated from the rest of the street looks dreamlike from a far, but inside there are barred windows, peeling wallpaper, and the greenhouses are shattered. The outer appearance does not match the inner appearance, much like mental illness where someone can seem fine, but they are struggling internally.