

Ms. Cavallaro

Teacher's Name

English 7

February 15, 2017

### Memoir Comparison Essay

Many times people are inspired to write memoirs about their own lives, or authors are inspired to write short stories about a character's life. These stories are usually based on an important event that has happened and that teaches a lesson. Authors usually want the people who read their short story or memoir to learn the lesson as well. The memoir "The Bike" by Gary Soto is a memoir Gary wrote about his experience growing up and riding his bike around his neighborhood. The memoir "She Thinks I Don't Know" by Alison A is written about Alison's tough childhood growing up with an alcoholic mother. Both the memoir "The Bike" and "She Thinks I Don't Know" are unique memoirs about the author's life, which also have many things in common such as discussing the relationship a child has with his or her mother.

"The Bike" by Gary Soto and the memoir "She Thinks I Don't Know" by Alison A. are similar because they both discuss the relationship a child has with his or her mother where a lie takes place. For example, in "The Bike," Gary Soto explains to readers that his mother used to always give him false warnings. When Gary's mom tells him not to ride his bike on Sarah Street he says, "I began to think that maybe this was like one of those false rainbow warnings." This shows that Gary's mother often told Gary stories in his childhood that were not necessarily true. Similarly, in the memoir "She Thinks I Don't Know," Alison's mother tries to hide the fact that she drinks alcohol often. Alison writes, "she thinks she's so clever, the way she hides it under

things in her room. But I find it. She thinks she's so good, the way she covers her breath with cinnamon candies and mints. But I smell it..." This shows that Alison's mom is not honest with Alison and tries to lie and hide the fact that she drinks frequently. Although both "The Bike" and "She Thinks I Don't Know" have these similarities, they are also very different.

"The Bike" by Gary Soto and the memoir "She Thinks I Don't Know" by Alison A. are different because in "The Bike" even though Gary gets in trouble, he has a positive relationship with his mother; on the other hand, Alison and her mother have a negative relationship. In "The Bike" it is clear that Gary respects his mother. At the end of the memoir when he comes back from riding on Sarah Street he says, "I lay down when she came out with the belt, and I didn't blame the dog or that stupid rainbow." This shows that Gary respects and understands his mom's decision to punish him after he did something to disobey her. He knows that she is right and what he did was wrong. On the other hand, in "She Thinks I Don't Know," Alison describes her mom's actions as humiliating. She says, "does she think of how embarrassed I am to have friends over, especially when it's really bad?" This quote shows that the mom's behavior of drinking a lot of alcohol is ruining the relationship between her and her daughter. Alison is embarrassed of her mother's behavior and does not want anyone else to see it. Clearly, the main characters in "The Bike" and "She Thinks I Don't Know" have two very different relationships with their mothers.

As you can see, the memoir "The Bike" by Gary Soto and the memoir "She Thinks I Don't Know" by Alison A., are both very different stories, but they also have things in common.

The memoirs are similar because they both discuss the relationship a child has with his or her mother where a lie takes place. However, the memoirs are different because Gary Soto has a positive relationship with his mom whereas Alison does not. Memoirs are unique stories about

the author's life, but many times emotions, feelings, and relationships that the author experiences can be shared by many people.