Character Analysis: Katherine Barlow

After reading some chapters of the book, ‘Holes’, I found a character with admirable personality traits named Katherine Barlow. Personally, I think this character really stood out and made such a huge difference in the whole book. Some of these traits she had were devotion, vengeance, and resistance.

It was clear Katherine was very devoted to her work, teaching. We know this because she spent hours teaching even with nuisance students like Charles Walker, who bothered her through out her teaching hours. Katherine’s devotion to her school was shown when she told the sheriff about it being torn down, “‘We don’t have much time!’ urged Katherine.”-chapter 26. Katherine was not only devoted to her job but especially to someone named Sam, who fixed several things in her school for her. Their relationship began with Sam fixing Katherine’s school roof in exchange for some of her famous spiced peaches. As the days went by, Katherine created a bond with Sam and was filled with sorrow once he finished fixing her school roof. “She was sad when the roof was finished.”-chapter 25. After the incident with Katherine and Sam kissing, Katherine warned Sam about his execution, “‘Thank god, I found you,’ she sighed, hugging him. ‘We’ve got to get out of here. Now!’ “-chapter 26. This is a sign of devotion, she obviously did not want him to get hurt, therefore warned him to escape.

Because of Sam’s tragic and unfair death, Katherine took revenge. “Three days after Sam’s death, Miss Katherine shot the sheriff while he was sitting in his chair drinking a cup of coffee.”-chapter 26. Katherine was absolutely devasted by Sam’s cruel death and not only sought revenge but also, almost completely lost her mind. She undeniably despised Green Lake after what they had done to the love of her life and so, became Green Lake’s most feared outlaw. With the name Kissin Kate Barlow, Katherine stole loads of treasures from several different people and places. This eventually led to Kate stealing goods from Stanley’s great-great grandfather, Elya Yelnats.

After twenty years, Kate returned to Green Lake. Two familiar faces welcomed her, Charles and his new wife, Linda but instead of a present in their hands, a gun was held and pointed directly onto Kate’s head. They forced her to walk, barefoot onto the boiling deserted floor and tell them where her hidden treasures were. Despite her feet being covered in bruises and blisters, she still refused to tell them where her stash was hidden. At this point, she really didn’t care if she was killed, as long as Charles didn’t find the stash. “’Go ahead and kill me, Trout,’ said Kate. ‘But I sure hope you like digging.’”-chapter 28. A yellow spotted lizard then appeared, and the last thing Kate did before she died was laugh. Kate’s resistance resulted in Camp Green Lake being made as a ‘discipline juvenile’ where young boys dug up holes ‘to build character’ but were really doing it to find Kate’s hidden treasure for Charles Wallace’s descendant, the Warden.

These are some of the traits Katherine had which really stood out to me, devotion, vengeance, and resistance. These characteristics had a huge effect on the story, even after her death and showed me how one’s personality can effect someone after even 100 years like how Kate’s choices effected Stanley.