

Choose any two stories from opening worlds which you find both moving and amusing. How do the writers arouse these responses and support your answer with reference to the text.

In the stories “Two kinds” by Amy Tan and “The Gold-Legged Frog” by Khamhsing Srinawak, the writers, whilst putting across a significant meaning also use their own style of humour to arouse amusing responses.

“Two Kinds” is based on the complex relationship between a mother and her daughter. In particular Amy Tan focuses on the clashes between old Chinese culture and newer American culture. Tan, whose parents were also Chinese immigrants, uses her own past experiences to put together a touching and compelling story of generation clashes.

The story is both moving and compelling because it deals with important issues such as the relationship and bond between mother and daughter but it also shows other aspects which can be considered amusing such as the languages spoken by the mother to her daughter and also the competition the mother has with her friend wanting the best for their daughters. The struggling bond between mother and daughter is shown when the mother is watching a talent programme on the television when she hears a girl playing the piano. This gives her an idea and she immediately calls her daughter over and hints that she should try this out.

“Just like you. Not the best because you not trying,” she says after her daughter says the girl on TV is trying hard. From the start of the book, the daughter says that her mothers believes she can be anything she wants and although their attitudes in life clash, it is how we feel for them both and how we understand the traditional and modern views in life that makes the story so moving.

We see another moving part of the story when the daughter brings up a subject from her mothers past about two of her children dying. It is when her daughter says, “I wish I were dead! Like them!” that we see a different side to her mother. Instead of “slapping” her daughter or shouting in Chinese, “she backed out of the room, stunned, as if she were blowing away like a small brown leaf, thin brittle, lifeless.” This shows that although they may not have too much in common, they both know how to upset one another, thus in a way showing that there is a bond there and they are very much connected in a mother-daughter way.

We see elements of humour in this story also. Amy Tan uses her own personal knowledge as a linguist to show the mothers Chinese style American accent. This is not only amusing but it is also a reminder to the reader that the mother is not a native American but that she is a immigrant living in America in a modern society.

Another humorous aspect to the story is that of the relationship between the mother and the mother’s friend who is also a Chinese immigrant. By Amy Tan putting this into the story, it shows that the mother is not the only person who wants best for her child and that maybe it is a characteristic of many Chinese parents to want a lot from their children.

“She bring home too many trophy,” lamented Auntie Lindo, “all day she play chess. All day I have no time do nothing but dust of her winnings. You lucky you don’t have this problem.”

“Our problem worser than yours. If we ask Jing-mei wash dish, she hear nothing but music. It’s like you can’t stop this natural talent.”

The boasting of the parents underlines the Chinese society and the clashes with the American culture. However it splits the moving story of the mother and daughter because instead of a culture clash, there is an amusing friendship clash between two old friends.

“The Gold-Legged Frog” is another story which is both moving and amusing .