

Finding Oneself in Yann Martel's Life of Pi and Ian McEwan's The Cement Garden

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Helen Keller had many obstacles that challenge an individual's mental and physical strengths. She was a woman both blind and deaf, but put aside her challenges that test her perseverance, leading to an ambitious life worth living for. Though these obstacles of being both blind and deaf would stop most from doing much in their life, it did not stop Helen, which allowed her to become a successful author and educator ("Helen Keller.")

The novels [The Cement Garden](#) by Ian McEwan and *Life of Pi* by [Yann Martel](#) both display the challenges in which the main characters' resilience and determination to surpass their difficulties are tested. In *The Cement Garden*, Jack, the narrator of the book, explains how he and his three siblings are pushed to hide their beloved mother who is deceased underneath cement at their home. Hiding their mother must be done to prevent the town from knowing their parents are dead, otherwise they will be taken to the orphanage. In *Life of Pi*, Pi Patel, a sixteen year-old struggles to stay alive on a boat with Richard Parker, a 450 lb Bengali tiger, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean after losing his entire family to the angry sea. Through the exploration of these novels, the theme of losing innocence to overcome their obstacles is viewed. They remain similar in the sense that characters are forced to perform unthinkable acts when not being restricted by the rules of society.

However, they differ in the methods these characters form relationships with the people around them to continue their existence for survival. The two novels also differ in the way the characters cope with their fears during these life changing situations.

The characters in the two novels have their innocence tested which was eventually lost as ...

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...characters overcame a struggle which makes them lose their innocence and how they utilize their fears for survival. But due to the isolation from society, they break the rules that a civilized being would have, forcing them to create bonds only with those around them. Overall, the lesson taught by both works of literature is that the common goal of survival may only be achieved by getting past the comfort zone. This means that when one is in a dangerous situation, they cannot keep doing things the easy way, and must understand that sacrifices must be made. If one is not prepared to push themselves, they are bound for failure

Works Cited

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