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Reader as Writer- Monster

The novel “Monster” by Walter Dean Myers is the story of a young adult being put on trial and dealing with the themes of guilt, justice, race, and strife. Stephen is a young inner city kid that is facing a long term jail sentence if he is convicted for being a part of the murder of a grocery store worker. This novel communicates to the reader through the personal journal of Stephen and in the form of a script for a movie. The novel excels at engaging the audience and making a powerful story through the use of story and style elements.

The story succeeds to keep the audience interested through the dramatic situation and the mystery of the exact guilt or innocence of the main character. This story is a powerful one that is beyond ordinary life and has the inner thoughts and feelings of a character that is facing a long term jail sentence. “I have nightmares whenever I close my eyes”(pg 96) is just one example of fierce and raw emotion that is a very powerful and clear message to the reader. This technique of ensuring your story is able to touch the reader on a personal and emotional level is an effective tool. The ambivalence of the guilt of Stephen is also a very important and effective technique which makes the story so much more gripping. There are several conflicting points in the story where on one example Stephen says he wasn’t in the store and then another time he says he went in the store to get a piece of gum. The contradictions in the story give the power of the audience to judge what they believe is truth. This is an important element because the readers will be forced to think about and reflect on the story on a deeper level than if everything was clearly explained. A good writer for a novel will make sure that the audience is forced to reflect over the story which will ensure that they are engaged and an important part of the process.

The novel also uses the different mediums of the personal journal and the script which is unique and refreshing to the audience. This also serves to give two different perspectives to the story which adds to the complexity and depth as a whole.

As a guide for writing this novel shows that keeping the audience intellectually and emotionally involved will give a great chance for the success of the writing.