

Angela's Ashes

Journals

Entry One: A Middle Name Problem (pg 17)

According to Malachy, middle names are an “American habit and there [is] no need for a second name,” (17). What is your middle name? Do you know what the significance of this name is (even your first name)? If so, what is it? If not, why haven't you asked? What do you think the significance is of this name? How do names define a person? For example, anyone named Mike is usually a good person. Explain people and experiences from your life.

Entry Two: A Father's Love for his Daughter (pg 30)

Why does Mam say, “He hasn't touched a drop since she was born. I should've had a little girl a long time ago,” (30). Who is “she”? What is the “drop” “he” hasn't touched? How has the birth of this girl changed him? How is this transformation possible? What does she have that the other boys – Francis, Malachy, Eugene, and Oliver don't?

Entry Three: Bananas Stolen (pg 32)

When Francis steals the bananas for himself, Malachy, and the twins, how desperate is he to feed them all? What is the situation that he has been forced into? By whom? What does the Italian grocer do to help his situation? Do you think the grocer knows Frank stole the bananas? Why or why not?

Entry Four: A Letter to Mama (pg 45)

What is the content of the letter Mam's cousins (Philomena and Delia) write to Angela's mother? What is the McCourt's situation? How bad is their life in America? Evaluate their situation based on family members' choices; focus primarily on Angela's and Malachy Sr.'s decisions. Have this family hit rock bottom? Do you think their life will improve in Ireland? Why or why not?

Entry Five: Death in Life (pg 62)

After Angela miscarries, Frank reflects on death assuming any situation with blood equals being gone forever, which may mean death. He has made this assumption based on Malachy's seesaw injury (19), the dog that was hit by a car (20), and Margaret (36). Look back at these three events; does his view of what may happen to his mother be incorrect? Does he want to know the truth of these events and how they may not necessarily mean death or a permanent absence? As a result of Franks' young life so far (he is almost five), what is his view of death? Does he understand it? Does he accept it? Why or why not?

Entry Six : An Irish Life for Me? (pages 1 - 67)

What is your impression of life for the McCourt's after their American experience and as they adjust to life in Ireland? Is there a difference between these two countries? Why or why not? Refer to specifics from pages 1 through 67 to support your claim; you must have two specific details, one for each country.

Entry Seven: The Twins (pgs 68-90)

When Oliver dies, and shortly after Eugene follows, what are Angela's, Malachy Sr.'s and Frank's reactions? How does each individual cope with the deaths of these children, while coping with Margaret's death? Refer to specific events from these pages to complete your response. Evaluate each character's response, as to whether you feel his or her reaction is appropriate.

Entry Eight: Pub vs Family (pg 95)

Why does Angela hope that "he might think of his family and pass the pub even once, but he never does," (95)? What is the situation between her and her husband? What explanation does he give for his choice? In other words, why is it "all right for her to be beginning at the St. Vincent de Paul Society for a docket for food but he can't stick a few spuds in his pocket," (95)?

Entry Nine: An Irish Christmas (pgs 97-101)

What is Christmas like for the McCourt's? Explain their economic situation during this event, dinner specifics, and how the family responds to this holiday.

Entry Ten: The Angel on the Seventh Step (pg 106-107)

How does Frank find comfort in this angel on the seventh step? What does he do in the middle of the night? Why does he need this angel?

Entry Eleven: The Big Mystery (pg 108)

Why does Frank comment, "There's no use asking more questions. If you ask a question they tell you it's a mystery..." (108). According to Frank, what is the "big mystery"? According to his father, when will he be able to understand? Do you think Frank is able to understand these mysteries of life now? Why or why not?

Entry Twelve: The Friday Penny (pgs 111-112)

Why does both Frank and Malachy say "I don't want it," to their father (112)? What is Malachy Sr's situation? How does Angela respond? Why? Do you think Malachy Sr. will change his ways as a result of his family's response? Why or why not?

Entry Thirteen: School Days (pgs 113-122)

What is school like for Frank? Who are some of his classmates? What are these boys like? Refer to the three boys mentioned on pages 114-122 to develop a response.

Entry Fourteen: Frank's First Confession/Communion (pgs 123-131)

What happens to Frank during his first confession and First Communion? Give a summary of each event and include your reaction to what occurs to him.

Entry Fifteen: The Importance of "Fags" (pg 138-139)

Why does Frank comment, "There may be a lack of tea or bread in the house but Mam and Dad always manage to get the fags..." (138)? What is his parents' justification for smoking? What does having these cigarettes mean to them, but what do they say to their

children? What ends up physically happening to Mam as a result of smoking? Explain the contradiction of this situation between parents and children.

Entry Sixteen: Fintan, Frank, and Paddy (pgs 156-169)

Who is Fintan? Explain specific about this boy on Frank's class. What happens after a fight Paddy gets involved with as to why these three boys hang out together? What do these three do together? Why do Frank and Paddy ditch Fintan? What happens to Frank and Paddy as a result? What is your reaction to these two characters - Fintan or Paddy? In other words, what is your opinion of these two boys? Why?

Entry Seventeen: Must Do to Survive (pgs 173-186)

At the age of nine, what does Frank do to survive by himself and to step up to help his family survive? Refer to pages 173-186 to develop three different actions he takes to survive day to day.

Entry Eighteen: Typhoid Fever (pgs 190-210)

What happens when Frank is in the hospital for over two months? Explain what happens referring to specifics from pages 192-202. Upon his return home and back at school, has he changed his attitude towards his father? Why does he comment, "...but my father in the morning is still mine," (208)? What has Frank come to understand about his father?

Entry Nineteen: Which Gender will Support a Family? (pgs 216-221)

What is the debate surrounding the McCourt household? Determine two issues Frank's parents are discussing. What view does Dad have? What view does Mam have? Who do you think has the better argument, Dad or Mam? Why?

Entry Twenty: Now Conjunctivitis (pgs 224- 230)

What new ailment has afflicted Frank? How does he receive treatment? What happens to him? Explain his situation. Will he ever "...build up [his] health with nourishing food plenty of beef and eggs," (230)? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-one: When Mam's Sick (pgs 235-249)

What new challenges does Frank face when his mother is sick? What happens to him and his siblings? Explain. What does Dad do to improve his family's situation? Does this improvement last? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-two: Job with Mr. Hannon (pgs 257-267)

Why does Mr. Hannon say to Frank, "Go to school, Frankie, and get out of Limerick and Ireland itself," (259)? What does he know about life that he does not want Frank to experience first hand? How does a friendship develop between Frank and Mr. Hannon? Do you think Frank will take Mr. Hannon's advice? Would you take someone's advice to prevent you from having a similar experience? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-three: Worse Off? (pg 273)

Mam comments, "There are always people worse off and we can surely spare a little from what we have," (273). Why does she and Michael have this point of view? What do they

both do to help others who are in need? Why do you think these two feel the need to help others who are worse off even though their life is not much better?

Entry Twenty-four: Education vs Manhood (pg 289)

Upon Frank completing elementary school, he is encouraged to continue school by Mr. O'Halloran and his Mam. Frank declares, "I don't want to go, I want to work, I want to be a man," (289). Why does Frank feel he must become a man at the age of 13? What does he have plans to do if education is not in his future? Do you think he will be successful in the workforce? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-five: On My Own (pgs 293-308)

Why does Frank decide to leave Laman Griffin's house? What happens between the two of them? As a result of his decision to leave, what does Frank have to do now to survive? Where does he go? What does he think about? How has he changed as a result of his decision to move out? Why has he changed?

Entry Twenty-six: A Pile of Rags or Not? (pgs 316-318)

Even though Mrs. O'Connell and Miss Barry constantly remind Frank and the other telegram delivery boys to "deliver the telegram and that's all," why do they ignore their requests? Who does Frank meet upon his deliveries of telegrams that include a money order? Briefly describe the three characters he encounters. Why does he decide to help them? Would you help them if you are ever in Frank's situation? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-seven: Smart Boy Wanted (pgs 326-334)

Why does Frank decide to respond to the sign in an office window and not take the exam to make him a permanent telegram boy? What circumstances in his life at this time influence his decision to change jobs? Look back at pages 326-334 for specifics to help you develop the circumstances he is in and to help analyze Frank's decision. Is this the climax or turning point of this novel? Why or why not?

Entry Twenty-eight: First Pint Gone Wrong (pgs 338-343)

On Frank's 16th birthday, he sees a Franciscan priest. Why does he decide to confess his sins to this man? What does he reflect about, especially as to why he asks, "But I want to know about Theresa Carmondy in hell, Father," (343)? To help you analyze Frank's thoughts, look back at pages 338-343 to develop specific events leading up to the confession.

Entry Twenty-nine: Getting Ready to Go (pgs 347-358)

Ages 16, 17, 18 and 19 have Frank saving up for a trip to America. What jobs does he have to help him save? What other acts does he do to help get more money? Upon leaving for America, Frank reflects that "I should have stayed, taken the post office examination...I could have brought enough money for Michael and Alphie to go to school with proper shoes and bellies well filled," (358). Why does he decide to leave Ireland alone instead of staying with his family? Do you agree with his decision to leave his family behind? Why or why not?