

One of the greatest thinkers, Mahatma Gandhi once said, “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” These are words that you may have heard before, but what do they mean? In life when someone physically hurts us, we always have the choice to retaliate with violence, or choose compassion. Mahatma Gandhi believed that when we choose to hurt others even if they hurt us first, we are only introducing more violence and negativity to the world. Mahatma Gandhi believed that we should never treat violence with violence. This message is illustrated through the character of Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones in the story “Thank You, Ma’am.” Imagine walking home from a long day of work and someone sneaks up behind you tugging at your purse. What would you do? In “Thank You, Ma’am” by Langston Hughes, a teenager, Roger, decides to rob a woman. Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones is that woman, and she chooses to treat Roger with compassion. Her character illustrates that the theme of “Thank You, M’am” is that compassion can change a person’s life.