***Title:***

The fifth child

***Author:***

Doris Lessing

***Published in:***

1988

***Title explanation:***

This book is called “The fifth child”,because it goes mostly about the fifth child of the Lovatt family;named Ben.This fifth child was different in all options.

***Theme:***

*Maternal love*; Harriet loved her children including Ben who was different in all options.

***Subtheme :***

*Treatment towards abnormal people*; the family was incapable to deal with Ben and that caused sometimes more problems.

***Motives:***

\**Happiness*: After Harriet and David got married they were on a search for their “happy” family. Their dream of living in a big house with a lot of children overshadowed everything else. They rushed into having children and finding that happiness.

\*\**Fear*: After the birth of Ben, the whole family feared him. The family couldn’t accept Ben for who is he and it was clear that they weren’t going to. No matter what they didn’t try to put their judgments aside and talk to Ben as if he was their brother/child.

***Perspective:***

The story is told from the point of view of Harriet (Third person omniscient).

***Setting:***

The story takes place in the sixties(1965-1986) and it's mainly situated in the Lovat’s house(London,England).

***Main characters:***

\**Harriet*;she has blue eyes, soft lips.She is the wife of David Lovatt and the mother of the five children.She is a round character,because in the story she is defined both physically and mentally.

\*\**David*;he has greyblue eyes,a round candid face and soft brown hair.He is the husband of Harriet and the father of the five children.He is a round character,because in the story she is defined both physically and mentally.

\*\*\**Ben*;he is the fifth child of David and Harriet.He was an angry,hostile little troll who seemed to cause condemnation and dislike from everyone.He is a round character,because in the story she is defined both physically and mentally.

***Conflicts:***

\**Man vs. Self*; when Ben had been taken to London,Harriet could not banish him from her mind.

\*\**Man vs. Society*; while Ben was growing up he was getting treated very differently from others.

\*\*\**Physical conflict*; when David and Harriet made love.

***Plot:***

When David Lovatt meets Harriet at an office party, they both immediately fall in love. They both share the same conservative outlooks, which they perceive to be a rarity in the London of the 1960s.

The two marry and purchase a large house in a small town within commuting distance of London. The couple both intend to have several children, a wish frowned upon by the rest of the family. By the time they have four children, two boys and two girls, their house becomes a centre of joy not only for them but for all their relatives and friends who come and visit. This continues until Harriet has a fifth, wildly disfunctional child, Ben. Her painful pregnancy with him marks the beginning of the misery and suffering that this child brings to the whole family.