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## A Comparative Study of the Metacognitive Components of Characters in the Novels the Little Prince and Jonathan Livingston Seagull

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### Abstract

This study adopts an analytical-comparative approach to examine the central characters of two allegorical-philosophical works, *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, and seeks to clarify the similarities and differences between these two characters in their intellectual, existential, and symbolic dimensions. The main issue addressed in this research is the analysis of how awareness, self-knowledge, and humanity's confrontation with the world are represented through the allegorical characters of these two works. To this end, such components as the ontology of the characters, their relationship with society and adults, their modes of learning and perceiving the world, as well as their symbolic and allegorical functions, have been examined. The findings of the study indicate that both characters appear as "enlightening narrators" and critics of the habitual and materialistic world of modern humanity. Nevertheless, *The Little Prince* primarily represents innocence, an ethical perspective, and fundamental existential questions, whereas *Jonathan* symbolizes liberation from mental limitations, individual transcendence, and movement toward practical and cognitive self-awareness. Furthermore, the difference in the ways these two characters confront the world reflects two distinct approaches in contemporary allegorical literature: one based on a return to simplicity and meaning, and the other grounded in transcending the boundaries of ability and experience. Ultimately, the present study demonstrates that a comparative reading of these two works can provide a deeper understanding of the function of philosophical-allegorical literature in conveying humanistic and spiritual concepts.


**Keywords:** Metacognition, *The little prince*, *Jonathan livingston seagull*, Comparative literature, Self-awareness, search for meaning, Journey.

## 1 | Introduction

Allegorical and philosophical literature has long provided an appropriate platform for raising humanity's fundamental questions concerning existence, meaning, identity, and ways of living. Writers within this literary genre often employ symbolic characters that transcend ordinary reality to express complex human and

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existential concepts through narratives that are simple in form yet multilayered in meaning. In such works, characters are not merely narrative elements; rather, each functions as a “sign” or a “mirror of meaning” through which readers are invited to reconsider values, relationships, and humanity’s place in the world. From this perspective, allegorical works possess not only literary dimensions but also philosophical, psychological, and epistemological aspects. Among the prominent works in this field, *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* occupy a distinctive position. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and Richard Bach, through a poetic, simple, yet thought-provoking language, have both sought to represent concepts such as freedom, self-knowledge, love, meaning, and liberation within symbolic narratives [1], [2]. In contrast, Jonathan, in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, symbolizes an individual moving toward breaking limitations, transcending imposed frameworks, and attaining a form of self-awareness and personal transcendence. Therefore, while the Little Prince represents ethical and existential questions, Jonathan more strongly embodies the will for cognitive transformation and mental liberation. Accordingly, the principal issue of the present study is to examine how the characters of the Little Prince and Jonathan function on allegorical and semantic levels, and how each conveys existential and human concepts to the reader in a distinct manner. Employing an analytical–comparative approach, this study seeks to investigate the ontology of the characters, their modes of confronting the world and society, their methods of learning and perception, as well as their symbolic functions, in order to clarify the fundamental similarities and differences between these two works. The significance of this research lies in the fact that a comparative study of these two characters can provide a clearer understanding of the different ways allegorical literature represents concepts such as self-awareness, meaning, and human experience, while also creating a basis for a deeper reading of contemporary philosophical–literary works.

## 2 | Literature Review

Research on allegorical and philosophical literature has gained considerable prominence in recent decades, particularly in the fields of character analysis, semantics, and psychological criticism. In this regard, works such as *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* have consistently attracted the attention of literary critics and scholars in the humanities due to their symbolic structures and their philosophical and anthropological capacities. Nevertheless, most studies conducted on these works have focused primarily on their philosophical, mystical, ethical, or psychological dimensions, while comparative examinations from a metacognitive perspective have received comparatively little attention. A significant portion of the studies related to *The Little Prince* has concentrated on the analysis of concepts such as love, innocence, loneliness, the crisis of modern humanity, and criticism of the adult world. Some researchers have regarded this work as an example of existentialist literature in which the author, through a simple yet poetic language, portrays the crisis of meaning and the disintegration of human relationships in the contemporary world [3]. Furthermore, in a number of studies, the Little Prince has been analyzed as a symbol of the “inner child” and as a representation of an authentic human perspective; a perspective that stands in opposition to the rigid and materialistic rationality of the adult world [4]. On the other hand, studies conducted on *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* have mainly emphasized concepts such as freedom, self-knowledge, individualism, spiritual transcendence, and liberation from mental limitations. Many critics have regarded this work as a symbolic narrative of humanity’s movement toward perfection and the transcendence of socially and psychologically imposed boundaries. Moreover, some studies adopting mystical and psychological approaches have interpreted Jonathan as a symbol of a human being who advances along the path toward recognizing truth and attaining inner freedom. In the field of comparative literature, research has also been carried out on allegorical structures, the hero’s journey, and spiritual concepts in the works of various authors. However, most of these studies have focused on comparing general philosophical concepts or narrative structures, while paying less attention to the “metacognitive development of characters.” In fact, the concept of metacognition has been discussed primarily within educational psychology and cognitive sciences, and its application to literary analysis, particularly in allegorical literature, still constitutes a relatively new area of study [5]. Accordingly, the present study seeks to address, to some extent, the gap existing in previous research by examining the characters of the Little Prince and Jonathan from a metacognitive perspective through an

analytical–comparative approach. What distinguishes this study from earlier works is that, rather than focusing solely on philosophical or ethical concepts, it places the processes of self-awareness, reflection, and mental transformation at the center of analysis. Furthermore, it demonstrates how these two works, through journey, experience, and contemplation, also invite readers toward a form of self-understanding and a renewed recognition of the meaning of life.

### **3 | Theoretical Foundations and Research Methodology**

In allegorical literature, characters are not merely agents of the narrative; rather, as symbolic elements, they are regarded as carriers of the intellectual, ethical, and existential layers of the text [6]. From this perspective, character analysis can serve as a means of uncovering the author’s worldview and the manner in which concepts such as self-awareness, meaning, freedom, and humanity’s relationship with the world are represented. Accordingly, this study, relying on an analytical reading of *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, examines the functions of their principal characters. In this method, the semantic structures and character traits of the two works were first extracted and then comparatively analyzed on the basis of their shared and differing components. The principal aim is to clarify how existential and epistemological concepts are represented through symbolic characters in these two works. The analytical framework of the study is based on several principal components. The first is the role of character in the narrative, which examines the position of the main character in advancing the course of the narrative [7]. This refers to the extent to which the character functions as an enlightening narrator, an experiencer of the path toward knowledge, or an agent of transformation and awakening for others. Following this, the type of inquiry and method of learning are examined, focusing on how the characters confront the world and how they attain knowledge. In *The Little Prince*, inquiry is primarily ethical, emotional, and relationship-oriented in nature, whereas in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, the process of learning is grounded in self-awareness, experience, and the transcendence of mental limitations. Another component concerns the relationship with the social world and the adult system, which examines the characters’ modes of confronting society, established rules, and the habitual world surrounding them. In this regard, the *Little Prince* adopts a critical perspective toward the behaviors and values of adults, while Jonathan seeks to redefine the boundaries of ability and to transform both individual and collective perspectives. Furthermore, the symbolic function of the characters is considered through an analysis of their symbolic dimensions and the concepts they represent. The *Little Prince* symbolizes innocence, the search for truth, and ethical awareness, whereas Jonathan symbolizes freedom, flight, liberation, and individual transcendence. The final component concerns the ultimate direction of character transformation, examining the final destination of the characters’ developmental journeys in the two works. In this sense, the transformation of the *Little Prince* culminates in an understanding of love, responsibility, and the meaning of human relationships, while Jonathan’s path emphasizes liberation from inner limitations and the attainment of practical and cognitive self-awareness. Based on these components, the present study seeks to demonstrate that, despite their shared use of allegorical structure and symbolic characters, the two works offer different yet complementary approaches to explaining meaning, self-knowledge, and humanity’s relationship with the world.

### **4 | The Concept of Metacognition and Its Reflection in Allegorical Literature**

Metacognition is one of the fundamental concepts in the field of cognitive psychology and refers to “an individual’s awareness of their own mental processes and the ability to control and regulate them.” This concept was first seriously introduced in cognitive theories and gradually expanded into the fields of education, philosophy of mind, and literary criticism [8]. Metacognition goes beyond mere thinking; it means that an individual not only thinks, but also becomes aware of the way they think and is able to evaluate, regulate, and guide it [9]. In theoretical literature, metacognition is generally considered to consist of two main components: first, metacognitive knowledge, which refers to an individual’s awareness of their own ways of thinking, learning, and perceiving; that is, an understanding of how one thinks, how one learns, and what

factors influence one's cognition. Second, metacognitive regulation, which refers to the ability to plan, monitor, evaluate, and revise mental and cognitive processes during experience and learning. These two components can also be observed in narrative literature, particularly in works in which characters achieve self-awareness through an experiential and reflective process and, in the course of understanding the world, arrive at a renewed perception of themselves [9]. In such narratives, characters are not merely engaged in external actions; rather, they undergo an "inner journey" that leads to a re-evaluation of beliefs, values, and ways of confronting the world. From this perspective, allegorical literature provides a suitable framework for representing the process of metacognitive development, as it expresses mental and philosophical concepts through symbols, journeys, and metaphorical experiences. Among contemporary allegorical works, Jonathan Livingston Seagull and *The Little Prince* are prominent examples that can be analyzed within the framework of metacognitive development. Both works narrate the stories of characters who transcend ordinary experience and, through journey, reflection, and confrontation with the world, attain a form of self-awareness.

## 4.1 | Summary of the Two Works within the Framework of Metacognition

### 4.1.1 | Jonathan livingston seagull

In reading the well-known works of Richard Bach, the main characters often appear as "paths toward awakening." Jonathan, as a character on a philosophical journey, is less engaged in mere social critique and is more concerned with transforming the quality of perception and ways of living. Jonathan Livingston Seagull is the story of a seagull who, unlike the rest of the flock, does not see the purpose of life merely in fulfilling daily needs, but rather in seeking perfect flight and the experience of mental freedom. From the very beginning, Jonathan challenges the established rules of the community and attempts to transcend imposed limitations. In this work, flight is not merely a physical movement; it is a symbol of mental transcendence, the growth of awareness, and liberation from self-imposed boundaries. The narrative structure of the work depicts a journey from imitation to self-knowledge, a journey in which the protagonist gradually realizes that true limitations lie not in the external world, but within the human mind and attitude. Accordingly, the central message of the work is based on self-knowledge, redefinition of capabilities, and the transcendence of mental constraints. Throughout this journey, Jonathan is typically placed in situations that enable him to recognize and abandon limiting beliefs. His questions are of the type "How should I live?" rather than merely "What is right or beautiful?" Therefore, learning in this work is a process of changing perspective and reconstructing one's worldview [10]. In this context, metacognition is manifested in the form of self-awareness and reflection on one's abilities and limitations. Jonathan gradually realizes that the purpose of flight is not merely physical skill, but a means of self-knowledge and attaining mental freedom. By consciously distancing himself from the flock, he chooses a path of learning and personal growth, and through experience and trial and error, reaches a new level of perception. In this work, metacognition is linked to the concepts of "transcendence" and "the crossing of mental boundaries [8]." In Bach's works, flight is generally a metaphor for "becoming." The character (and consequently Jonathan) ultimately attains a form of freedom rooted in the acceptance of inner truth that a human being can be imprisoned within his or her own mental frameworks. Therefore, the symbolism of Jonathan refers more to liberation from one's internal boundaries than to relational ethics in the style of *The Little Prince*.

### 4.1.2 | The little prince

This work narrates the symbolic journey of a child who, by passing through various planets, encounters different characters and, through these encounters, attains a deeper understanding of humanity, love, friendship, and the meaning of life. *The Little Prince* is less a "rational adult" guided by practical logic and more a representation of a childlike perspective that views things from a new angle. He explores the world through fundamental questions, and his mode of learning, through simple yet profound inquiries, demonstrates that truth can be found in the simplicity of perception [10]. The type of questions is usually concerned with the "nature of values": "Why do certain things become important?" "Why does attachment to another create meaning?" "How can one be responsible?" This form of questioning turns the character

into a “teacher of existence [11].” A figure who is not meant to conquer the world, but to learn to see it correctly. The journey of the Little Prince is more than a physical displacement; it is an inward search for truth and meaning. At each stage of his journey, the Little Prince encounters a manifestation of the adult world a world in which rigid rationality, self-interest, and the neglect of human values dominate relationships. In this work, adults are often trapped in ways of seeing that prioritize quantity and function over meaning. From the perspective of the narrative, the “disease” of adults is the reduction of their ability to perceive essence and inner meaning. Therefore, the Little Prince functions as a kind of “semantic healer”; through his presence, he challenges the rigid value system of adults. With a childlike yet profound gaze, he questions this world and, through experience and dialogue, arrives at a new understanding of love, responsibility, and truth. His friendship with the fox represents the climax of this cognitive process, where “seeing with the heart” is introduced as a symbol of inner awareness and true understanding. Ultimately, the Little Prince comes to emphasize love and responsibility. “Taming” is not merely a romantic event; it is a philosophical model for establishing a genuine bond a bond that requires time, attention, and responsibility. In this way, his character becomes a symbol of the “ethics of relationship.”

## 4.2 | Allegorical and Symbolic Analysis in the Two Works

One of the most important semantic layers in allegorical literature is its symbolic dimension, where characters, objects, and situations operate beyond their literal meanings and become carriers of philosophical, psychological, and existential concepts [12]. Within this framework, an examination of the symbols in *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* demonstrates that both authors employ a complex and multilayered system for conveying meaning; a system in which the characters and narrative elements are regarded as reflections of the inner condition of modern humanity [12]. In *The Little Prince*, the symbols are primarily centered on human relationships, emotion, and moral perception. The rose, as one of the most significant symbols in the work, is not merely a living being within the narrative, but rather an embodiment of love, attachment, and responsibility; a form of love that, despite its simplicity, requires care, attention, and commitment. The fox also plays a symbolic and essential role in the story, and through him, the concept of “taming” is presented as the formation of a deep and meaningful relationship between a human being and the Other. This relationship, in fact, represents a kind of moral awareness according to which the value of objects and individuals is shaped not by their outward essence, but through emotional connection and human attention. Furthermore, the various planets through which the Little Prince travels symbolize different human types and diverse ways of living in the adult world; a world in which meaning has been lost amid rigid systems, power-centeredness, and the repetition of everyday life. Even a mysterious element such as the snake, at the end of the narrative, can be interpreted as a symbol of transition, death, and return to the source of existence, pointing to a cycle of experience and awareness. In contrast, in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, the symbolic system is organized more around freedom, individual transcendence, and the expansion of mental consciousness. In this work, “flight” is not merely a natural action or physical skill, but a symbol of humanity’s liberation from mental and social limitations. As the main character progresses along the path of learning and experience, flight evolves into a level of awareness in which the boundaries between body and mind, reality and possibility, and limitation and freedom gradually fade away [13]. The flock of seagulls in this narrative symbolizes a society trapped within the frameworks of habit, fear, and repetition, having lost the ability to transcend its own boundaries. In this context, Jonathan, as a symbol of the different individual, represents the possibility of liberation and the redefinition of human identity; an identity formed not through conformity to the collective, but through conscious choice and personal experience. Even the concepts of “speed and altitude in flight” in this work may be interpreted as symbols of different degrees of awareness and various levels of understanding. In a symbolic and semiotic conclusion, it can be said that in both works, the system of symbols serves to express a kind of hidden truth about humanity. The difference, however, lies in the fact that in *The Little Prince*, this truth is revealed primarily through emotional, ethical, and human relationships, whereas in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, truth finds meaning through the process of mental liberation, the breaking of cognitive boundaries, and the attainment of inner freedom. In other words, both authors employ

the language of symbolism to move beyond the surface level of the narrative, yet one moves toward the “depth of relationship,” while the other moves toward the “expansion of awareness and capability.”

**Table 1. Analysis of the symbols in the two works.**

Row	The Little Prince	Jonathan Livingston Seagull
1	The rose=love and responsibility	Flight=liberation of the mind
2	The fox=understanding and taming	The sky=transcendence
3	The planets=human types	The flock of seagulls=traditional society
4	The snake=transition and return	Flight speed=transcending limitations

## 5 | Shared Characteristics of the Little Prince and Jonathan in the Allegorical and Enlightening Structure of the Narrative

A comparative examination of the characters of *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* demonstrates that, despite their intellectual and narrative differences, these two characters share certain fundamental characteristics. Both works are shaped within the framework of allegorical and philosophical literature, and their main characters function beyond the role of a mere “fictional individual,” acting instead as carriers of meaning and mediators for the transmission of awareness [14]. This characteristic has led these two figures to remain in the reader’s mind not merely as fictional protagonists, but as symbols of a form of intellectual and existential awakening. One of the most important shared features of these two characters is their enlightening function within the narrative. Both *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* have a presence that brings about a shift in the perception of both the reader and even the narrator. They perceive the surrounding world differently, and this difference in perspective compels others to reconsider ordinary and conventionalized concepts [15]. In *The Little Prince*, the main character, through his simple yet profound questions, separates the narrator’s and the reader’s mind from routine and a superficial view of the world. Through brief and symbolic conversations, he redefines concepts such as love, responsibility, friendship, and truth. His presence creates a kind of moral and emotional awakening that calls the reader to reconsider human values. In contrast, Jonathan in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* plays an enlightening role at a cognitive and mental level. By transcending accepted limitations and striving toward perfect flight, he invites others to discover their hidden abilities and break free from mental boundaries. Thus, both characters appear as “agents of awakening,” yet one emphasizes moral awareness while the other focuses on cognitive and individual consciousness. Another shared feature of these two characters is their unconventional and distinct perspective on the world. Both stand in opposition to habitual and conventional ways of seeing society and attempt to discover new meanings for life and human experience. *The Little Prince*, with his childlike and innocent perspective, challenges the world of adults. He finds behaviors that appear normal and rational to grown-ups to be meaningless or even absurd. This different point of view reveals truths that are often overlooked in everyday life and is grounded in simplicity, emotion, and the authenticity of human relationships. On the other hand, Jonathan, with an inquisitive and philosophical mind, does not view his surrounding world solely through the lens of survival and repetition. He seeks to discover new dimensions of freedom and capability, which sets him apart from the flock. His unconventional view of flight is, in fact, a symbol of transcending mental limitations and achieving self-awareness. In both works, this different perspective becomes the foundation for the formation of meaning within the narrative and turns the characters into agents of intellectual transformation. Another important similarity between the two works is their use of allegorical language and structure. *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* both employ symbolic narration to convey philosophical and humanistic concepts. In these works, the characters are not merely figures in a story; rather, each one represents a deeper concept. *The Little Prince* symbolizes innocence, the search for truth, and an authentic human perspective, while Jonathan represents freedom, transcendence, and mental liberation. As a result, their actions and experiences also acquire meanings that go beyond the surface level of the narrative. Allegory in these two works allows complex philosophical and existential ideas to be expressed in a poetic and accessible language, enabling the reader to reflect on the self and the world through the characters’ experiences. Consequently, the fundamental similarity between these two characters lies in their

symbolic and enlightening roles; each, in a different way, invites the audience to reconsider meaning, knowledge, and the way of living.

## **6 | Fundamental Differences Between the Characters of the Little Prince and Jonathan Livingston Seagull in the Path Toward Transformation and Meaning**

Despite the structural and allegorical similarities between *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, there are fundamental differences in their perspectives, the direction of the characters' development, and the way meaning is represented in the two works. These differences cause each work to embody a distinct worldview and propose a different path toward awareness and self-discovery. In fact, although both characters seek truth and attempt to transcend the superficial level of life, the ultimate destination of their quests and their manner of confronting the world are not the same. One of the most essential differences between these two characters lies in the nature of the questions that shape the narrative. In *The Little Prince*, the central questions revolve around concepts such as love, responsibility, friendship, and moral values. Throughout his journey, the Little Prince constantly seeks to understand the true meaning of human relationships, and through his experiences, he concludes that the real value of life lies in emotional bonds and responsibility toward others. His relationship with the rose and his conversation with the fox are the clearest manifestations of this perspective that emphasizes the authenticity of emotion, commitment, and the human meaning of connection.

In contrast, the questions raised in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* are more cognitive and existential in nature. Jonathan's primary concern is not emotional relationships but rather the discovery of hidden abilities, transcending limitations, and attaining spiritual and mental freedom. He strives to discover his "true self" and move beyond the boundaries imposed by society and the mind. Therefore, his transformation is centered on self-awareness, personal growth, and cognitive evolution. In other words, the Little Prince searches for the "meaning of relationship," whereas Jonathan seeks the "meaning of liberation and individual perfection." The way these two characters confront the world also reflects a fundamental difference in their worldviews. The Little Prince interprets the world through human relationships and emotional experiences. He perceives the value of everything according to the depth of the connection and meaning formed between human beings and the world. Consequently, his understanding of life is grounded in emotion, empathy, and an ethical perspective. For him, understanding the world is impossible without love and responsibility, and truth can only be revealed through "seeing with the heart." Jonathan, however, redefines the world primarily through inner transformation and individual choice. He finds meaning not in emotional attachment but in the process of growth, experience, and transcending mental limitations. In his view, one approaches truth only by overcoming fears, habits, and imposed boundaries. Thus, Jonathan's relationship with the world is founded on freedom, willpower, and individual transcendence. This distinction demonstrates that while the Little Prince believes in a kind of "relationship-centered ethics," Jonathan represents a form of "liberation-centered self-awareness." Another important difference between these two works lies in the type of criticism the authors present regarding the modern world [16]. In the works of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, social and existential criticism hold a prominent place. In *The Little Prince*, through the protagonist's encounters with various characters, the world of adults is portrayed as one trapped in quantity, routine, and the forgetting of human values. Characters such as the businessman, the vain man, and the king symbolize individuals who have lost the meaning and truth of life amid calculation, power, and superficiality. Therefore, Saint-Exupéry's criticism is primarily directed toward the crisis of meaning in life and the decline of humanistic vision in modern society. In contrast, the criticism presented in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach is more psychological and philosophical in nature. The central issue in *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* concerns the limitations imposed on the individual by the mind and inner fears. The flock of seagulls in the story symbolizes a society that fears change, difference, and unfamiliar experience. Thus, Bach's critique focuses on humanity's inability to transcend mental boundaries and embrace its own latent potential. Consequently, it can be argued

that Saint-Exupéry is primarily concerned with criticizing the external world and the crisis of human relationships, whereas Bach emphasizes the critique of inner obstacles, fears, and the restrictive structures of the mind. Another fundamental difference becomes evident in the ultimate destination of the characters' transformative journeys. At the end of his path, the Little Prince realizes that love and responsibility are what give meaning to human life, and that the value of every relationship lies in the degree of care and commitment toward others. His transformation ultimately leads to a form of moral and emotional maturity. Jonathan, however, reaches a stage of freedom and awareness in which mental and physical limitations lose their significance. He attains a form of individual transcendence and unity with truth that goes beyond the material world and established rules. Therefore, while the destination of the Little Prince is a "return to meaning and humanity," Jonathan's destination is "liberation and inner perfection." These are two distinct paths, each representing a particular philosophical interpretation of life and self-awareness. Finally, through the explanations provided and the examination of the similarities and differences discussed in this chapter, and in line with the metacognitive objectives concerning the progression and transformation of both characters, we may now proceed to the concluding chapter.

**Table 2. Comparison of the similarities and differences between the characters of the two works.**

Analytical Component	The Little Prince	Jonathan Livingston Seagull
Role in the narrative	Enlightening figure with a childlike and ethical perspective	Enlightening figure through experience and individual transcendence
Type of awareness	Emotional–ethical awareness	Cognitive and self-aware consciousness
Central questions	Love, responsibility, friendship, and meaning in human relationships	Freedom, capability, and transcending mental limitations
Type of relationship with the world	Relationship-centered and emotional	Individual-centered and inward-oriented
Style of transformation	Return to the authenticity of emotion and human values	Liberation and individual perfection
Type of social criticism	Critique of the adult world and rigid rationality	Critique of fears and mental limitations
Symbolic function	Innocence, love, and human truth	Freedom, flight, and self-awareness
Learning path	Emotional and relational experiences	Experience and cognitive reconstruction
Final destination	Understanding love and responsibility	Attaining mental freedom and the true self

## 7 | Conclusion and Final Remarks

A comparative study of the characters in *The Little Prince* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* demonstrates that, despite differences in intellectual structure and philosophical orientation, both works belong to the category of allegorical narratives grounded in awareness and self-knowledge. The authors of these two works attempt, through the creation of symbolic characters, to move the audience beyond the surface level of the narrative and invite them to reflect upon the meaning of life, the nature of humanity, and the manner in which human beings confront the world. From this perspective, the Little Prince and Jonathan are not merely fictional protagonists; rather, each represents a distinct worldview and a particular mode of understanding existence.

The findings of this study indicate that both characters undergo a form of metacognitive development, meaning that their external experiences lead to an internal process of reflection, understanding, and mental transformation. In both narratives, the concept of “journey” carries symbolic significance and, rather than signifying mere physical movement, represents a transition from unawareness to a new stage of perception and self-understanding. Nevertheless, the fundamental difference between the two works becomes evident in the ultimate destination of this journey and the type of awareness achieved through it. In *The Little Prince*, the process of understanding is shaped through emotional and ethical experience. Through encounters with various individuals and situations, the main character realizes that the truth of life lies not in appearances, calculations, or material relations, but in human connections, responsibility, and the ability to “see with the heart.” The world of the Little Prince is one in which innocence, love, and loyalty are presented as authentic human values, calling the audience to return to a pure and forgotten human perspective. In contrast, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* follows a different path. In this work, the protagonist’s movement is centered on liberation from mental boundaries, transcending imposed limitations, and attaining inner freedom. Through experience, practice, and overcoming fear, Jonathan comes to realize that many human limitations are products of the mind and habit. Therefore, the understanding in this work possesses a more philosophical and introspective nature, inviting the audience to discover hidden capacities and transform their own perspectives. The comparative analysis also revealed that differences in the way the world is criticized constitute another essential distinction between the two works. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry focuses primarily on the crisis of meaning in life, the decline of human relationships, and the quantitative outlook of the modern world, whereas Richard Bach emphasizes fear, mental stagnation, and humanity’s inability to transcend restrictive frameworks. Thus, one seeks to reconstruct humanity’s relationship with others, while the other seeks to redefine humanity’s relationship with the self. Despite these differences, both works ultimately converge on one point: the attempt to awaken the audience and liberate them from a habitual and superficial mode of existence. *The Little Prince*, through the language of emotion and meaning, and *Jonathan*, through the language of freedom and transcendence, both call human beings to reconsider their ways of thinking and living. For this reason, these two characters may be understood as two different yet complementary responses to a shared question: how can human beings experience life beyond routine, in a deeper and more authentic way? Ultimately, the comparative study of these two works demonstrates that contemporary allegorical literature is not merely a means of storytelling but also a platform for addressing fundamental human concerns and representing the process of self-awareness. The significance of these works lies in the fact that they invite readers not to accept definitive answers, but rather to engage in reflection, questioning, and the discovery of a personal meaning of life. From this perspective, the Little Prince and Jonathan both symbolize a journey whose final destination is humanity’s attainment of a deeper understanding of the self, the world, and the truth of existence.

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