

Do not go gentle into that good night by dylan thomas: analysis

[Life](#), [Death](#)



In his poem entitled "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night", Dylan Thomas uses the elements of TP-CASTT to illustrate how man should fight death to the very end. The title tells the reader to "not go gentle", meaning to not meekly and peacefully make the transition from life to death; instead to rage against it, and struggle with what vitality they have left. The poem begins with the speaker stating his argument — to fight against death, even unto old age. Subsequently, he describes the valiant and praiseworthy behavior of various exemplary men, one for each stanza: "wise men" who know death is inevitable; "good men" who are gratified by the honorable deeds they have done; "wild men" who were reckless and learned of death too late; and "grave men" who - despite weakness and failing sight — realize they still have power over death. Through the introduction of each example, the speaker - addressing his father - relates back to the theme: that no matter how one has lived their life, or how they feel about death, they should still die fighting. Every example of man Thomas uses tells of how - by fighting - these men are noble and admirable in dying. Also through his use of shifts in the poem, Thomas creates the impression that all men should struggle against their death. A shift is introduced (at the start of stanzas 2-5, accompanying) with each example of man fighting for life; a final shift where it is revealed who the speaker is talking to — his father. In the poet's placing of this revelation, the reader receives the sense that his father is much like the people stated in stanzas 2-5, and that like those men, he too should "rage against the dying of the light" (Thomas) Through the use of literary devices, Thomas illustrates how men should battle their death for the sake of a noble end. Thomas utilizes numerous literary devices which contribute to the mood

of the poem, some of which are: sustained metaphor, repetition, parallelism, oxymoron, and alliteration. As a sustained metaphor, he uses the times of the day to represent life and death: night being the void or the afterlife and daytime being life. This metaphor further emphasizes his plea — “ Do not go gentle into that good night”, ‘ good night’ representing death. Thomas also uses repetition for emphasis of his plea to his father: “ Rage, rage, against the dying of the light”. The repeated use of the word ‘ rage’ presents the image that the speaker is pleading with his fading father to keep fighting. Parallelism is seen, with each stanza introducing a type of man, and each ending with either the first or last line of the first stanza. In the sentence “ Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray” (17), there is an oxymoron - one cannot curse and bless someone at the same time, yet this is what the speaker is pleading his father to do; or rather, to have his father do something passionately, whether it be cursing or blessing. Finally, the author demonstrates alliteration in stanza 5, with the words ‘ blinding’, ‘ blind’, ‘ blaze’, and ‘ be’. This literary device then adds to the overall fervor the speaker shows by desperately pleading with his father to battle the oncoming ‘ night’, through the desperate, almost drum-like sound that can be heard if one reads stanza 5 aloud. The repeated use of the letter ‘ B’ will create a sensation of pounding and urgency. Thomas’ attitude toward death is clearly seen in the speaker’s lament over the necessity of death. The premise of this poem is the speaker encouraging his aged father to rebel against the inevitability of his demise, and to let the fire of his life burn brightly once again, before it must be extinguished forever. The speaker offers example after example to his father, explaining how each one of those

distinguished men fought against their fate, even when it was their time to depart. Demonstrated in the speaker's fervent appeal for life, one learns of Thomas' vision of death: that one should not relent and resign oneself to death, even onto old age — rather, one must defend and cling to life. By demonstrating the theme of how one should fight their death to the end, "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" reminds every reader to persevere and put forth effort even when loss is inescapable. "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" instructs man to use all of his strength and power for as long as he can and though victory is impossible, to keep fighting while he is able. The poet gives the impression of a noble death to the reader and to fight up to the end is a valiant thing to do. Also, the speaker in the poem is talking to their father - most people hold their parents dear, as they were the first to care for the offspring. The speaker did not want his father to pass away, but because all people die eventually, he wanted his father to at least die fighting. In the theme presented by this poem, Thomas reminds that while things may end badly, one should still fight while they have the chance so that one knows that they were brave and respectable to the very end.