

# My position on “the chimney sweeper”

Literature



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My position on " The Chimney Sweeper" William Blake's " The Chimney Sweeper, " written in 1789, tells the story of what happened to many young boys during this time period in England. Too often, boys as young as five years old were being sold for the sole purpose of cleaning chimneys because of their small size. Blake does an amazing job at affecting me with this poem because you can really feel the pain of the poor boy Tom in the poem. Even though I had never heard of Chimney Sweepers before, Blake made me feel very strongly about the situation by writing in first person and using common language. One way Blake makes this situation easy to relate to is the writing style he uses. There was not one word that I did not know and that made it much easier to relate to and fully understand the entire poem. I think he did this purposely because the children he was writing about were so young and he wanted young kids to be able to take from this poem just as much as an adult would. My life, along with many other children's lives who have been touched by this poem were not as tragic as the boys he wrote about, but each of them can easily be strongly affected by the clear message he gives the reader. Each child, including me, will read this poem and think, " Things might get tough, but there is always a bright side. " He shows us this when he says, " Hush, Tom! Never mind it, for when your head's bare You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair, " (Blake 8). Blake's writing also allows for the reader to have very detailed visual pictures by writing in first person. Also, by using first person, it created a deeper sense of sympathy I had for Tom in the poem. It made me care that much more about him that he was an actual person. It made me realize not just the circumstances of what was going on, but how hurt and deprived Tom and many other children felt. The pain I feel for this boy is so strong when Blake writes, " So your

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chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep, " (Blake 4), because I know this quote symbolizes that poor boy dying from the soot. It is so personal and heart touching, any person can feel this young boy's pain. Not only does this poem describe to us what was going on in England and how terrible it was, but he makes the reader really feel strongly about the situation these poor boys were put in. Blake does an excellent job at making it easy to relate to these children and realize the seriousness of the situation. Harris