

# Image of nature: mary oliver's singapore essay sample

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



In the Mary Oliver poem "Singapore", she speaks about how some people expect all poems to only be about nature and obvious happiness. However, she shows that with imagery they can be found in the least likely of places. She talks about this woman she sees in a Singapore airport restroom cleaning an ashtray in the toilet and she compares this image to a vision of nature. In this poem, the author uses a collaboration of imagination, nature imagery, and what she physically sees to compare the woman and the work she is doing to nature and happiness. The structure of Oliver's poem is setup to go back and forth between what is really happening and what is being made up in her imagination.

In Mary Oliver's "Singapore", she shows how the woman she sees in the airport cleaning an ashtray in the toilet can be related to happiness. At the first glance of the woman, the author is disgusted, "Disgust argued in my stomach and I felt, in my pocket, for my ticket". She is not happy about the vision she sees and like the average person, she looks at the woman's appearance and immediately judges her. Mary shows how with a little imagination you can find happiness in anything or anyplace. It is believed that in poems, you should always be in a place of happiness, "A person wants to stand in a happy place, in a poem", and with imagery this is where the author tries to place the woman.

In the structure of Oliver's poem, she jumps in and out of reality and the creations of her imagination, where she is attempting to imagine happiness and nature. For instance, she starts off talking about what she sees, "In the women's restroom, one compartment stood open. A woman knelt there,

washing something in the white bowl." She then compares it to nature," A waterfall, or if that's not possible, a fountain rising and falling." In her imagination she sees a woman standing in front of a beautiful fountain or waterfall but in reality it is just a dirty flushing toilet. With nature symbolism, the author tries to compare the woman to nature in an effort to demonstrate beauty in such a strange situation. For example, the author writes, " She does not work slowly, nor quickly, like a river.

Her dark hair is like the wing of a bird." Since all poems are supposed to be about happy places and nature such as, river birds, and trees, the author is trying to compare the woman to the nature in her imagination. In this Mary Oliver poem, through the use of imagery and comparison, this woman and her disgusting job turn into a beautiful vision of nature. As the author mentioned her disgust of the woman in the beginning of the poem, " Disgust argued in my stomach and I felt, in my pocket, for my ticket", she is minimizing her disgust of the woman by comparing her to the beauty of nature. As Douglas states, " Oliver depicts nature as ugly or cruel, she shows us beauty and acceptance". In this poem, the author poses questions such as, what would you do if this woman walked or worked next to you? What would your reaction be if you were in this situation?