

# Effects and techniques in haiku – assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The immediate effect of the poem on me was confusion and irritation. I felt it was deceptive. It looked so simple, and was so short, yet I could see no meaning behind it. It frustrated me that even after several re-readings all I could think was a bird in a tree. Upon re-visiting the poem, I concentrated on how it made me feel –melancholy, wistful, yet also peaceful. I found I liked it despite the sadness it seemed to evoke. b)I think the subject matter is a bird in a bare tree, at dusk. (98) Question 2 a)Techniques used in this poem are:

•Alliteration “ bare branch” (Line 1) Assonance “ rook roosts” (Line 2) “ autumn dusk” (Line 3) •” Kigo” – a word stating or suggesting a season “ autumn” (Line 3) b)The alliteration of “ b” creates a cold, lonely sound. The assonance of “ roo” and “ u” evokes the cry of a bird, deepening the melancholic and sad effect. The “ kigo”, or season reference, of autumn has the effect of a suggesting things coming to an end because of the season’s place in the year, and again adds to the melancholic effect. (98) Question 3 a)My interpretation of the meaning of the poem is that individuals can find peace and rest, living with only the bare essentials.

While this may seem an austere life, simple living can allow individuals to find the beauty, greatness and richness that exist all around them in nature – as in an autumn dusk. Even in moments of sadness and despair, nature has the power to uplift us. b)My interpretation of the poem is based on the context in which haiku exists, my knowledge of the work and principles of the poet himself, and the effects of the techniques used in the poem, on me. The evolution of haiku was greatly influenced by Zen Buddhism which is “ focused on meditation, a simple life and living close to nature” (Baugh et al, 2006, p. 2). This haiku alludes to all three things – a bare branch signifying a

simple life, the rook roosting or resting, suggesting meditation, and finally, the autumn dusk representing nature. Additionally, a key concept of Zen Buddhism is simplicity and momentariness – the rook in the tree is a simple image, while the autumn dusk is a momentary event in nature. The author of the original Japanese version of the poem, Matsuo Basho, was particularly concerned with “sabi”. This means “feelings of quietness and isolation, and an appreciation for the old and unobtrusive”. (Baugh et al, 2006, p. 65).

The rook roosting is certainly an unobtrusive image, evoking a certain quietness precisely because the rook is resting. The solitary rook and bare branch suggest isolation, while “autumn dusk” suggests endings, or things growing old. I think Basho’s use of “sabi” in this poem contributes greatly to its melancholic effect. I noted that the poem also had an effect of wistfulness and peacefulness upon me. I think this is created by the visual image of a small rook in a tree against a vast skyline that is the autumn dusk. The contrast of the large versus the small is a feature of haiku, which causes a shift in the reader’s perspective.

I find it very peaceful to be reminded of how small and unimportant I am as an individual when compared to the magnificent workings of the universe as a whole and this image does that for me. Finally the techniques used in the translation of Basho’s poem such as the alliteration and assonance brought to mind the cry of a bird, which while contributing to the gloomy effect, also induced peace – perhaps because of the repetition of the sound, and the fact that usually things have to be pretty quiet for you to notice the cry of the birds. 444) Task 2 Question 1 I found Task 1, Question 1, the easiest part of the assignment. I could quite clearly remember my feelings upon the first <https://assignbuster.com/effects-and-techniques-in-haiku-assignment/>

reading of the assignment and it was easy to see how these had changed after working through the course material. I found Task 1, Question 3 the most challenging part of the assignment. I felt I was repeating my answers to the other questions and therefore worried I wasn't hitting the points the question was trying to bring out from me.

Question 2 A quick plan of the answer before I started writing it probably would have been helpful to show how the answer built upon my answers to questions 1 and 2. This would have allayed my fears and saved time checking that I was expanding and explaining my ideas rather than just repeating them. (142) References Baugh, T. , Brickley, P. , Perryman, L. A. (2006) Making sense of the arts, Milton Keynes, The Open University.