

Comparing poems essay



**ASSIGN
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In the poem, “ The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls” written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and the poem “ Thanatopsis” written by William Cullen Bryant, two different ways in which one may view death is established. In “ The Tide Rises the Tide Falls” Longfellow’s diction, imagery and figurative language help to create a tone of eeriness. While in Bryant’s poem “ Thanatopsis” he creates a more peaceful/calming tone. In Longfellow’s poem his use of imagery such as “ The sea in the darkness” and “ the twilight darkens” help give the reader a feel of being at the sea at the darkest time of the day which helps to create that eerie tone.

Longfellow also uses a description of sounds saying “ the curlew calls” also help him to create his tone of eeriness. On the other hand Bryant’s use of imagery such as his phrases “ The golden sun and “ the meadows green” give the reader a sense of being out in nature with a bright shining sun in a quiet calming place which helps to support the peaceful/calming tone. He also goes on to say “ Yet not to thine eternal resting-place shalt thou retire alone...

Though shalt lie down with patriarchs if the infant world, -with kings...” Giving one the image of once they die being placed in the ground, and they will not just lie in the ground and rot, they will be placed in the ground not alone but with kings, and “ The powerful of the earth”. Longfellow uses phrases such as “ The day returns but nevermore, returns the traveler to the shore” to set his eerie tone. That phrase makes the reader think about what may have happened to the traveler who was there at the shore the day before, then went into town & never returned.

Where as in Bryant's poem words and phrases such as " mellow" and " he speaks a various language for his gayer hours" not only help establish his peaceful tone they also allow the reader to think of something that is free of tension and the phrase " he speaks a various language; for his gayer hours" makes the reader think of a happy time and place. Both poems use a lot of figurative language to help set their tone. In Longfellow's poem he uses the phrase " Darkness settles

The little white waves with their soft white hands efface the footprints upon the sand" to help make the tone eerie. One may notice that Longfellow states that darkness has already started to settle in. As the reader is reading this phrase they might also notice that seas do not have " soft white hands" to " efface the footprints upon the sand" with. The phrase though helps the reader to imagine a sea at dark with the tide waves as their soft white hands and then effacing the footprints that the traveler had previously left; helping to create that eerie tone.

Bryant's use of figurative language shows a whole other outlook on the situation. Since Bryant is trying to set a calming/peaceful tone to his poem he uses words and phrases that help enforce peacefulness. For example, one of his phrases states, " She has a voice of gladness, and a smile and eloquence of beauty" as he speaks about Mother Nature. Though nature may not be able to be seen he Bryant explains it in such a way that helps one to get the peaceful/calming vibe in which he is trying to give off, which helps to set the tone.

These two poems help to establish that there is always more than one way to view a situation. While in poems written by poets Longfellow and Bryant they focused on the topic of death, there is always more than one point of view on any topic. Both poems seem to enforce that death comes either way but while Longfellow's poem introduces a happy way to think of death, saying that when you're about to die you should go outside into nature and be happy and though death may happen to everyone, it is a peaceful happy thing that you should embrace.

Bryant's poem gives a completely different outlook on death. Bryant's poem makes one view death as a thing that happens to everyone, with no way of escaping it. Throughout Bryant's poem the last phrase of each stanza reads, "And the tide rises, the tide falls", which makes you think that even though you may have died and your life has stopped everything else that was around you still continues on.