

# "the hill" analysis – assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

For this assignment I chose to write about "The Hill" by Edgar Lee Masters. "The Hill" is included in "The Spoon river anthology" was one of Masters' most famous works. The poem I chose is unique in its subject in that it idolizes how the lives of the deceased were portrayed. While most would be turned off by the idea of writing about epitaphs and the reasons behind the death of humans, Masters was able to successfully take what is normally a cheerless subject and translate that sorrow to curiosity.

The poem begins by comparing four men who stem from different walks of life. One weak of will, one strong of arm, another a clown, one a boozier and the last a fighter. While during their life they were very different men Masters points out that they are all still residing on the same hill in the same graveyard. He makes a point several times throughout this poem that regardless of what you did while you were alive, when you die you will ultimately be forever sleeping next to, and therefore equal to, what could be a total stranger.

The second stanza then describes how those five men died. The ways they died seem to be related to their walks of life. One can assume that the stronger man was probably the one that died in the mine, and the fighter probably died in the brawl, but once again Masters ends the stanza reminding us of how regardless of their death they're all buried on the same hill. The next group of people that are buried in this graveyard that Masters analyzes all happen to be women.

Similar to the last stanza, each character took a unique path through their life. We come to find out in the following stanza that all of the women

mentioned died in ways that were similar to how they acted. This being the second time that people have died in ways that coincided with how they lived their lives, it is safe to say that Masters is comparing the death of each character to choices each made in their life. At the very end of the poem Masters takes the idea behind "The Hill" in a slightly different direction.

He talks about Fiddler Jones who lived ninety years of his life partaking in almost every task that most people would consider to be a dire or sinful life. He drank heavily, got in fights and didn't care about anything including his wife and children, but he's still managed to live longer than any of the other characters in this poem. While there are many people throughout this poem who lived much more fulfilling lives than Fiddler Jones, Masters makes the point that death doesn't necessarily take who should go first. "The Hill" is a great example of how poetry can incorporate any subject.

While many poems will get lost throughout the years it is safe to say that "The Hill" can and will make an impact on many more generations to come. It remains simple in its message; regardless of the path you chose in life, at death all humans will be equal. Yet while many would argue that we are determining the outcome of our afterlife while we are living Masters uses "The Hill" to remind us that death knows no boundaries. As stated earlier it is now easy to see how Masters was able to successfully take what is normally a cheerless subject and translate that sorrow to curiosity.