

Requiescat and mid-term break on the theme of death essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

After looking at the two poems, Requiescat and Mid-term break, I have seen a poetic way of expressing the feelings shown in the mourning of a death. However, these two poems are quite different even though they are both built around the theme of death. Requiescat uses an ABAB rhyme scheme where as Mid-term Break doesn't seem to have a set rhyme scheme. Both are still effective though and are also probably very sensual as death is a problem that has hit most of us at one time or another. In both of these poems the writers seem to have lost someone close to them.

Seamus Heaney's poem 'Mid-term Break' is written about the death of his younger brother while he was away at boarding school. This title may be thought of by some as having a relevance to the breaking of bones as a car hits a person. Requiescat shows that Wilde is taking the death of this person hard... he seems to refuse to accept she is dead... "Tread lightly, she is near, Under the snow, Speak gently, she can hear..." this is almost like he thinks she is still alive and still sensitive to these actions, but he seems more acceptant towards her death in the second stanza but quite resentful towards her death... All her golden hair, Tarnished with rust".

He speaks with the attitude that it's a waste of a life. Also the fact that he says 'her golden hair' may suggest that she is quite young and has died early before she had achieved anything special, just like the person who has died in 'Mid-term break' as he was only four years old and his life has barely even begun, so both these deaths have resulted in people not being able to finish their life fully.

In the third stanza of Requiescat, we see that Dickens relates her to lilies and snow... this is significant as snow is reminiscent of peace and tranquillity, lilies are also reminiscent of this, and another significance of this is that lilies are used at funerals. It also says, “ she hardly knew” and “ so sweetly she grew” showing again this was a premature death. He then goes into the fourth stanza and shows the realisation of her death using phrases like “ Coffin-board, Heavy stone” and this may be significant reflecting that this may be weighing him down.

He also says: “ I vex my heart alone”, realising that he will have to live without this person and he also says: “ she is at rest”, realising that she is dead and is now at peace, and this finalises her death in his mind. He also shows this view of her death when he says: “ Peace, peace she cannot hear”, showing that he understands she is dead and is at full peace. He finishes off by saying: “ My whole life’s buried here, Heap earth upon it”.

This suggests that this person was very important to him, and now that no longer exists. This is also shown in the poem “ Mid-term break” which is about Seamus Heaney’s young brother’s death and would have also been very sensitive for him as he would have been very close to him. He also shows the emotions of others to this death, “... I met my father crying... he had always taken funerals in his stride... And Big Jim Evans was saying it was a hard blow. He speaks about his embarrassment as old men stood up to shake his hand and tell him they were “ sorry for my trouble”.

He also talks of how his mother let out angry, tearless sighs and goes on further to talk about the arrival of the ambulance containing his brother

corpse, and describes it as stanced and bandaged, which gives an idea of what has happened to it at the hospital. He also describes the room which his brother was in, and talks about how “ snowdrops and candles soothed the bedside” which suggests innocence and purity.

He also speaks about this being the first time he has seen his brother in six weeks and he says “ paler now” which suggests bitterness about the death, and he tells us towards the end how he died, saying “ Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple” and “ the bumper knocked him clear” and we can see that he has been knocked down. We also find out just how young his brother is, “ A four foot box, a foot for every year”. Both these poems are on the theme of death and both reflect both writers’ feelings about the deaths. They are both very emotional and morbid poems and are similar but contrast as well.