

Growing pains, in Mrs  
Tilscher's class, the  
early purges and mid  
term break essay...



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

There is many poem written on the theme of growing up which show poets own experiences and there observations of others. Through study of ' Growing Pains' by Vernon Scannell, ' In Mrs Tilscher's Class' by Carol Ann Duffy, ' The Early Purges' and ' Mid Term Break' by Seamus Heaney it can be clearly seen how poets use many different poetic techniques to create a tone and atmosphere in the poem that causes a certain reaction in the reader, such as emotive language, sensory imagery and form and structure of the poem.

' Growing pains' describes a five year old boy and his first experience of love and heartbreak for Jessica. The father does not know what to do about the situation because of this he follows his instincts. The boy does not understand what this new feeling is. The poem is written in the first person from the father's point of perspective. In contrast ' In Mrs Tilscher's class' describes the girls own memories of the primary school and her teacher ' Mrs Tilscher'.

The poem is in first person from the girls perspective. As in ' Growing Pains' It shows how her feelings change as she experiences some thing new, she is told a thing from a rough boy ' how you were born,' At the beginning of the she felt safe and at the end of the poem she feels insecure and worried like the little in ' Growing pains' Like ' In Mrs Tilscher's Class' ' The Early Purges' describes a boys child hood memories.

He is remembers animals being killed on a farm and he is upset and confused because of the kittens being killed he does not understand it is similar to the little boy in ' Growing Pains' As he gets older he is beginning to

accept that killing animals is essential to "keep pests down" so that the farm can run efficiently. The poem is written in the first person from the boy's point of view. 'Mid Term Break' also describes a young boy's reaction to death it describes and young boy's memories after his four year old brother has died being knocked over by a car. The poet describes that he sees when he comes home and how he feels.

He does not fully understand what is happening. The poem is written in the first person from the boy's perspective. In 'Growing Pains' the theme of love runs through the poem. The father's love for his son is shown by 'I covered him up and stroked his head.' This shows protecting and comforting actions from the father to the boy. The love for 'Jessica' he repeats her name showing how important she is to him, the name was 'blurred' this shows that he was crying. The theme of helplessness the father nor the son understand that is happening 'nothing I had read or heard/ instructed me in to what to do. This shows that he has no experience of this situation.

The boy can't put in to words how he feels 'She hurts- he touched himself between/ the heart and the stomach' 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class' The theme of discomfort runs through the final to verse of the poem in contrast to the first two verses which show her happiness and love of school. In the same way the father in Growing Pains protects and comforts his son, Mrs Tilscher protects her students. The poet felt safe at school this is shown by 'this was better than home.' and 'Mrs Tilscher loved you. her later discomfort is shown by 'a rough boy/told you how you were born' the poet is 'appalled' with this information. The words 'hot and fractious' also suggest this.

' Early Purges' The themes are the young boy's horror as animals are getting killed and lack of understanding due to him being so young " I was only 6 when I first saw kittens drown. " The poet shows that the boy is confused and upset because of the experience - " suddenly frightened, for days I sadly hung". similar to both the boy and the father in ' Growing Pains' At the end of the poem he has changed his views on people killing animals- " I just shrug, " Bloody pups. it makes sense." Time has passed he has become hardened.

He has realised that ' on well-run farms pests have to be kept down' He compares the pups to pests and he now shares the same view with Dan. His views have changed due to growing up this also the chase for the girl ' In Mrs Tilscher's Class' who is impatient to be grown. As in ' Early Purges' ' Mid term break' also covers the themes of the poem is death and grief. This is shown by ' In the porch I met my father crying/He had taken funerals in his stride. ' this shows that someone in the family has passed away and that the father was close to that person.

We also see the mother's reaction to the death ' as she coughed out angry tearless sighs. ' The two adjectives ' angry' and ' tearless' suggest that she is fighting and she is trying to support her son and husband and to not let her emotions take the better of her. The young age of the boy is shown through his reaction to the death, at the beginning of the poem it suggests that he does not know that his brother has died there is no reference of him crying and his observations of his brother are to the point this could indicate that he is in shock.

Also he does not understand what is happening just like the boy in ' Growing Pains ' and ' Early Purges' In ' Growing Pains' Metaphors are used to show how upset he is ' The darkness whimpered' this describes he is crying in the dark. The word ' whimpered' makes us think of a scared animal ' His eiderdown/ untidy carpet on the floor' this shows that the boy is upset. Diction shows how upset the boy is ' distraught' is means very upset and distressed. ' Blurred' shows that he was crying. ' little moan' links to ' the darkness whimpered' the adjective little suggests helpless and young.

The poet uses sensory imagery visual and aural the poet also uses emotive language. ' In Mrs Tilscher's class' Happiness is shown in poets use of imagery that appeals to are sense of sight, hearing and smell. The girl says that that ' Mrs Tilscher chanted the scenery' this uses your sense of sight. The line ' The sent of a pencil slowly, carefully shaved. ' this appeals to the sense of smell. ' A xylophone's nonsense heard from another form this appeals to your sense of hearing. In verse three lines 1 and 2 there is a metaphor about growing up and reaching puberty- ' inky tadpoles changed/from commas into exclamation marks.

This line can also be compared to the poems ' Growing Pains' and ' Early Purges' as both of the boys in the poems are growing up in different ways. ' Early Purges' In the poem it uses much of sensory imagery which makes the poem emotive to the reader. The poet describes the sound of the kittens in the bucket " a frail metal sound/ Soft paws scaring like mad. " the words ' frail' and ' soft' show how helpless the young kittens are. Their fear and panic is shown by they are ' scrapping' like mad.

The poet also goes in to the detail of what the kittens look like after they are drowned he uses the simile ' like wet gloves' showing how the kittens are not moving comparing them to a man made object they are " Glossy and dead. " There is no care or respect shown to the kittens . they are ' slug on the snot' and ' sluiced' on the ' dung hill' like a piece of rubbish also shown in the simile ' mealy and crisp as old summer dung' comparing the kittens to animal excrement.

Dan's lack of care is shown by ' scraggy wee shits' this feeling is also shown by the poet in the last two last verses as he calls them ' bloody pups' and ' pests' Mid term Break' In this poem the poet uses lots of sensory imagery which makes the poem emotive to the reader The poet describes peoples reactions to the person that has died. Some of the reactions there is not evidence of them crying, but on the other hand there is evidence that they know what has happened but they were not as close.

This is shown by ' and big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow' also ' by old men standing up to shake my hand/ and tell me there were sorry for my trouble' The poet also describes that there is a small baby in the room this is shown by ' The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram. this shows that the baby does not know or understanding that has happened and he properly wont until he/she is older. The poem is also surjesting that the only sound that this heard this the baby's. We also do not know if that baby is related the person that has died e. g. brother or sister. At the end of the poem the poet tells use the age of the person that has died and from this we can we know what the relaionship was to the young boy ' a four foot box, a

foot for every year' this shows that the person that had died has four and that it was a great shock for such a young boy to die at such a young age.

'Growing pains' It is a narrative poem the tone is very conversational there is enjambment 'he seemed quite happy there until/ three weeks after at night,' this gives the effect of the father telling the story this is also shown in the use of speech. The poem has not got verses, a regular rhythm or a regular rhyme which further gives the feel of a piece of prose. This also shows that the father's confusion and concern. However the last two lines there is a rhyming couplet. The father is comforting his son the rhyme gives the poem a type of lullaby effect.

In 'Mrs Tilscher's class' it is a narrative poem each verse describes a part of a child's life in chronological order. There is no regular rhyme or rhythm enjambment used this gives an effect of reading prose. The poem is divided into four the first two verses are both have 8 lines in them and the last two verses have 7 lines in them this shows that the mood changes. In the first two verses the poet describes the safety of childhood. In the last two verses the safety has changed by the knowledge "of how you were born" as the child reaches puberty.