

# Journal entry essay example

Literature, William Shakespeare



Imagery in William Shakespeare's " Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day" and William Wordsworth's " I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"

Both William Shakespeare and William Wordsworth rely on nature and its beauty to denote the true state of their emotions in their poems.

Shakespeare compares his beloved with the loveliness of nature to evoke visual impressions of the person's beauty, in an effort to make an abstract notion such as love and devotion more palpable, by comparing it to something that most people agree is beautiful. Wordsworth on the other hand, utilizes the beauty of nature around him to denote the pensive state of his mind, in a poem which possesses an almost musical flow, urging for people to recognize the undeniable connection and interdependence of man and nature. Thus, for both poets, nature imagery serves a very important role, in denoting the true state of their emotions.

Shakespeare commences his sonnet with the comparison of his beloved with the summer's day, but not even that is enough, because " Thou art more lovely and more temperate" (Shakespeare 11). In this instance, not even the beautiful, flowery, warm and tender summer day imagery can match the loveliness of the speaker's beloved. As the poem progresses, the speaker introduces the imagery of light, commencing with " the eye of heaven," which is how he refers to the sun, as it starts to resemble a human face with a " golden complexion" (Shakespeare 11). All of this evokes images of warmth and sunshine, a feeling of love and protection, which is exactly how he sees his beloved.

However, before the ending of the sonnet, the speaker mentions Death and shade, suggesting at the fact that after light, darkness comes. This might be

suggestive of the cycle of nature, life and then inevitable death, but the speaker shows no remorse or sadness. On the contrary, he believes that the poem will give his beloved an everlasting life, where her beauty was compared, and even overcame that of nature itself.

Wordsworth's speaker, on the other hand, is describing his wanderings, and the sighting of natural wonders he is privileged to see by a lake. What he sees might not seem extraordinary at all at first sight, because what he has in his field of vision are mere daffodils, but it is not the flowers themselves which fascinate him so, rather it is the feelings they evoke in him. He manages to find beauty in the simplest of things and this is a fact that makes him happy when he is sad, which gives him a soothing feeling when he is restless, and which gives him something to ponder about when he is jaded.

Just like Shakespeare compares his beloved with the summer's day, Wordsworth compares himself with clouds: " I wandered lonely as a cloud" (Wordsworth 72). Thus, he is using personification for an inanimate object, such as clouds, and he continues to do so with the daffodils. This personification symbolizes his effort to show that we all came from the very same source, we are the same, we are born, we live, we die, just like everything in nature does. This personification strengthens the nature imagery as being an undeniable part of the human world. All of this evokes pleasant memories in the speaker, as he feels the " bliss of solitude" amongst this wealth of nature (Wordsworth 72).

Thus, nature imagery is of equal importance for both poets, though they utilize it in a different manner to portray their feelings. While Shakespeare

connotes the beauty of nature to the beauty of his beloved, and accepts the dark shades that are to come in everyone's life, Wordsworth is content finding bliss in nature, acknowledging his unquestionable connection with it.

### **Works Cited:**

Wordsworth, William. *The Collected Poems of William Wordsworth*. New York: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1998. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *The Sonnets*. New York: Digireads, 2005. Print.

### **Characterization in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman**

Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* denotes a struggling family whose members are not able to express their feelings in an articulate way, but are trapped in a vortex of dissatisfaction and self-denial. The plot centers around the father-son relationships, where the father wholeheartedly believes in the idea of the American Dream, but his inability to realize and accept the true state of affairs lead to his psychological downfall. This, in turn, has a very strong effect on his sons, in a mixture of betrayal and abandonment, leading to the painful denotation of the personal tragedy of each single character in the play.

The protagonist, Willy Loman, is a tragic hero, but not such as the ones from mythical stories readers are used to hearing about. His tragic flaw lies in his inability to comprehend the true nature of his beloved American Dream, his failure to look beyond his self-delusions and the lies he has been telling himself. He honestly believes that hard work is the only true road to success, but is unable to delve profoundly into this idea and just stays on the

superficial side of things he believes in. For instance, he states “ that selling was the greatest career a man could want. ‘ Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go, at the age of eighty four, into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people?” (Miller 81). He reveres his great role model, Dave Singleman, but fails to comprehend the fact that even Singleman must have had rough periods, times of misery and poverty. Thus, his obsession with being liked by everyone will eventually lead him to notice the great disparity between the apparition of the American Dream and his own life.

This, in turn, greatly affects the domestic sphere of his life. Happy, for instance, is the replicated image of his father and all the traits that will eventually lead to the tragic end of Willy’s life. His character is a one-dimensional one, meaning he remains equal throughout the play, without the slightest change. He possesses the same, delusional and inflated traits of his father, the same need for recognition and the same blind ambition, as he claims his position of an assistant buyer at the store, while he is only the assistant buyer’s assistant: “ I mean I can outbox, outlift and outrun anybody in that store, and I have to take orders from those petty, common sons of bitches till I can’t stand it anymore” (Miller 24). Like his father’s, his psychological condition is beyond repair.

Biff, on the other hand, is the only character willing to delve deeply into himself to realize the truth. He does not pay any attention to his brother’s and father’s inability to face the misery of the condition they have found

themselves in, and simply acknowledges the fact that many things have gone wrong, but now, instead of turning a blind eye like them, he confronts the real state of affairs and manages to confront his failures. This makes him the able to rid himself of the extravagant fantasies that his father has of him, leading to him being perceived as an underachiever by Willy. His role in the drama is to expose his father's delusions, in an effort to save not only himself, but the entire family.

In the end, it is painfully obvious that the Lomans are a highly dysfunctional family unity, and despite the fact that Willy perceives his sons as the mythic figures of Adonis and Hercules, they are all far from it. Had they been able to understand and support each other as a family, maybe the tragic end would not befall Willy. However, their inability to cope with reality and face their errors, make them the dysfunctional unity that Miller presents, as a warning to those who blindly believe in something, seeing only the good part, and keeping their eyes tightly closed at any occurrence of the bad.

### **Works Cited:**

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. Revised. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.