

Analysis of james joyce's literary techniques in the novel portrait of the artist...

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Throughout the course of the novel, Joyce illustrates Stephen in several different positions of thought, from innocence to rebellion to strict piety to liberation. It is this final stage of development through which Joyce utilizes an extended metaphor, as well as an allusion and emotional diction to portray Stephen's growth into a free, independent, and matured persona. The extended metaphor of flight is used to show the liberation Stephen feels from his former ways of thinking and living. He declares that "An instant of wild flight had delivered him...", and describes the experience as if "His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified..." By referring to himself as "delivered", "purified" and "beyond the world", Stephen casts away his old methods of thinking and in comparison sees his new disposition as being enlightened. This flight is then extended to that of a hawk or an eagle, in that "His throat ached... to cry piercingly of his deliverance.

He puts this into sharp contrast with the "dull gross voice...the inhuman voice that had called him to the altar." By using words with a usually religious connotation, such as "deliverance", Stephen compares his experience to one of a religious epiphany. However, it is rather contradictory that Stephen would choose these words, as in the same sentence he bitterly reflects on his old, pious life. This hints that Stephen, although he has made large strides in development, is not done maturing. Joyce's choice of diction also largely reflects on Stephen's newly found freedom of thought.

The experience itself is depicted heavily with repetition, such as when he describes "An ecstasy of flight made radiant his eyes and wild his breath

and tremulous and wild and radiant his windswept limbs. " This arbitrary, repetitive description contrasts deeply with Stephen's former pious persona, in that his thoughts and actions were strictly scheduled and directed. Joyce's word choice also represents the very emotions of Stephen as he describes his new disposition as " timeless", " fluid", and " that all ages were as one to him. " The freedom of thought helps Stephen transition from a fragile boy constantly looking for a purpose in life, to a young man who is flexible and strong enough to handle the hard times he is faced with. The allusion to the Greek tale " Dedalus and Icarus" uses the story's motifs and characters to help portray Stephen's development throughout the story.

He recognizes the extremes of his earlier thoughts, referring back to the Greek story in how Icarus refused to fly a middle path. He compares himself to Icarus, seeing the story's motifs as " a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood..." In jumping from one extreme lifestyle to another, Stephen's actions mirrored Icarus' flight pattern. Stephen further emulates Icarus in that he denies his father, and takes little respect in him. However, Stephen also realizes that his namesake Dedalus plays significance in his matured life, to the extent that " his strange name seemed to him a prophecy. " Dedalus, who in the story followed the middle path, reflects his older qualities at the end of the novel.

In addition, Dedalus loses his son to extreme paths much in the same way that Stephen loses his innocence and childhood. Joyce is able to show Stephen's transition into liberated thought through the use of the extended

metaphor of flight, the allusion of the story "Dedalus and Icarus", and though specific word choice and repetition.