

# Wilfred owen essay sample

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



Wilfred Owen, through his poems, shows the harsh reality of human conflict and contrasts the portrayal of these conflicts with the reality. Owen's purpose is to challenge our thoughts and perspectives on war to show its true effects and stop the glorification that it receives in society. This can be seen in his poem *Dulce et Decorum Est* as he causes us to question whether it really is sweet and decorous to die for one's country by showing the reality of war through his personal experiences. These views can also be seen in the poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth* as Owen portrays the treatment the dead soldiers are receiving contrasted with the treatment a normal desist civilian would receive. This helps to give the forgotten soldiers a voice and an identity.

Owen challenges the reader to question the understanding of dying for your country in war by showing the harsh reality of it through his personal experiences. This is evident in the poem *Dulce et Decorum Est* as Owen uses multi-sensory imagery and derogatory language to show the true reality of war. The multi-sensory imagery is used to portray the brutality of the soldiers' ordeal and can be seen when he is describing the effects the mustard gas is having on one of his colleagues as he states, 'The blood come gargling from the froth corrupted lungs'. The derogatory language such as, 'lame' and 'blind' and imagery in the first stanza, 'beggars under sacks', degrades the soldiers and causes the reader to feel almost sorry for them and therefore creating a sense of pathos. By showing the true reality of the soldiers and their ordeal Owen challenges our thoughts and perspectives on war and causes us to question whether it really is worth dying for our country.

The poem *Dulce et Decorum Est* demonstrates how Owen challenges our thoughts and perspectives on war by warning the reader and showing them the reality of it. Owen does this by speaking about the horrible experiences in first person by using personal pronouns such as, 'I saw him drowning' but then in the third stanza he switches to second person as he states, 'If in some smothering dreams, you too could place behind the wagon we flung him in'. This shift to second person suggests that Owen is warning the reader about what could happen to them if they participated in war as this is what happened to his colleagues. This is done by Owen in order to influence the readers' opinion about serving in the war as it contradicts the propaganda that is being promoted in civilian life and therefore challenges our thoughts and perspective on war.

The poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth* also challenges the reader's thoughts and perspectives on war by contrasting the treatment of the dead soldiers compared to those of civilians. Owen does this through his diction as he refers to the dead soldiers as 'cattle'. This takes the soldiers identity away and therefore respect as Owen is degrading the dead soldiers in order to show the lack of respect they receive. Owen then uses juxtaposition to contrast this by showing what the soldiers are not receiving which normal civilians would as he states, 'No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells; Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,'. This transition causes bathos which then forces the reader to understand the lack respect the dead soldiers are receiving compared to civilians.

Anthem for Doomed Youth also conveys the harsh reality of war and the emotional effects of it. Owen demonstrates this through the personification of the guns as he states, 'The monstrous anger of the guns'. This provides the reader with an insight into the reality of war and contradicts the image proposed by propaganda. Owen does this again through the aural imagery, 'the shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells; and bugles calling for them from sad shires'. This shows the effects of war on the soldiers and causes an emotional connection between them in the reader which therefore enforces the harsh reality of war. Both of these aspects challenge the reader's perspective on war as they both contradict the glorification it receives through propaganda.

Wilfred Owen, through his poems, challenges our thoughts and perspectives on war in order to show the true effects and to stop the glorification it receives in society. Owen does this in both poems Anthem for Doomed Youth and Dulce et Decorum Est as he contrasts societies views and depictions of war from societies views as a result propaganda and the harsh reality as a result of Owens personal experiences. Owen also demonstrates the true effects of war by showing the treatment of the dead soldiers and the lack of respect which they receive by contrasting the funerals the soldiers received to civilian ones. From both poems we gather the understanding of Owens negative perspective towards human conflict and his purpose which is to show us the true and unglorified reality of war.