

Contrasting images of childhood in “half-past two” and “hide and seek”

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These poems are about two different children, each having their own experience of something new that is not always welcome. These Two poems are both looking back on a childhood experience that the poets have experience, and been marked after their discovery of this experience, thinking they understood the world but finding out they didn't. However there is a major difference in this poem as " Half-past Two" is a strange and surreal poem while " Hide and Seek" sounds like a painful experience to the poet. " Hide and Seek" and " Half past Two" show contrasting emotions. Hide and Seek This poem's contrasting emotions are happiness and shock and disappointment, splitting the poem in two. It is a monologue to the poet's younger self. In the beginning the boy shows his happiness; for example, in line one, " I'm ready! Come and find me! " This shows the enthusiasm in which he carries out the game with. At this point he is only thinking about the game and shows a sense of competition and excitement while hiding " don't breathe. Don't move. Stay dumb. " After his peers have left he is thinking about how puzzled they are and is gleefully thinking how they would think he is " very clever. " However when he is not found for a while the thrill wears off, creating a dividing point in the poem, where it undertakes a change of mood and shows the boys doubts. This is at line 18 " It seems a long time since they went away. " He now feels lonely and notices painful or annoying things around him like the damp sand and the cold. He decides to come out as he is now feeling lonely. He gets out and calls for them but nobody comes and he is met with silence. He is feeling abandoned and slightly scared " the darkening garden watches. " The personification in that

line shows he is feeling slightly embarrassed as he is calling out to no-one. Tension is built up in the poem by the sentences getting shorter. When it says " the sun is gone" it suggests the sun won't rise again. Now he is feeling lost, scared and abandoned, his mind giving way to childish fears not realizing that he is only in the garden. Half past Two This poem's contrasting emotions are confusion, the sense of being lost. At the beginning we are told he has done something " Very Wrong. " The capitals letters are chosen by the poet because it is childish writing. He was confused when she told him he must stay in the school room till half past two, and he didn't know half past two as he had no knowledge of a measure of time but instead he has a set day when he knows when things happen, for his clock works around himself. Words like " timeformykisstime" are again childish and conversational. This is indicative of the nature of the poem. When he is left by himself he is hanging in limbo, where nothing is making sense. He knew what a clock was, but couldn't " click its language, " putting a hint of onomatopoeia in with the word click. So he kept on waiting, and he felt like he's " escaped" time, escaped meaning he has gone to somewhere better. He felt he was in somewhere timeless, where his life is dominated by routine no more, and he can pay more attention to the objects around him, like " the smell of old chrysanthemums, " until the teacher comes in and puts him back into school time, snapping him back to reality. However that moment without time stayed with him forever, remembering how he was lost in time and free, in a universe of surrealism.