

# The modernist features in prufrock literature reviews example

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Time does not only shape the world; it shapes the ideas that are created by the human mind. There are different ideas that can be expressed in writing, poetry offers one of the best genres in literature whereby people are able to express their ideas and make them known to the world. When writing there are different issues that influence a writer to write about a certain topic or issue. Many writers are influenced by issues that take place within the society, they develop their ideas from this issues . Another key factor that influence a writer or a poet the period in which he/she is writing, there are poets who wrote their pieces long time ago and are not influenced by modernity while there are modern writers who address modern issues. The ability of a poet or writer to connect events that shape the society and the world at large with the ideas in the poem is what determines whether a poem will remain relevant for years.

Poetry has gone through lot of changes over time; social, economic, political and other historical events have shapes up the artistic expression in different eras. Poetry has shifted from a period of romanticism to realism then from realism to modernism, . Each period marks a historical movement that brought in a new historical period, in poetry and literature at large. Realists mainly focused on an authentically presentation of the world while modernism was focused on expressing cultural movements in a different way from the others. In the modern period, poetry gave an expression of the intrinsic cynicism, skepticism, and desire to derive various meanings during that period . T. S Eliot is a poet who fits in the modern world of poetry.

Thomas Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri in the year 1888; he attended the Oxford, Sorbonne and Harvard University and developed his passion for

poetry while still in college. Ezra Pound became one of the biggest fans of Eliot's poetry and he became a member of his literary circle with his first poem to be published in the Poetry magazine being "The Love Song of Alfred Prufrock" (Chris 21).

Eliot has expressed various modern themes in his poems with "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" being the key poem for analysis in this paper. This poem is one of the modernist masterpieces composed by Eliot and has various aspects of modernity. There are different themes linked with modernity that are evident in the poem, these themes include inevitability of death, triviality, time grapples and the human quest for meaning in the modern world. The poem is written in the first person point of view which is a preference used by modern poets to symbolize subjectivity in the society. Modernist era is also influenced by scientific ideas, in the fifth stanza of the poem, Prufrock repeats the phrase "there will be time", and this phrase is in support of the modernist poets that time is neither static nor fixed (Eliot 12). A true modernist is one who does not only rely on theories or believes what has been written without testing. Prufrock is a true modernist who knows that his end is coming soon, and that time is continuous. He does not rely on the calendar, clock or the sunset to measure his time; he uses experiments like the modern scientist. Prufrock says that he measures his time using coffee spoons that is a rather unique experiment.

Modernism is not only expressed by themes that a poet uses; there are also key elements such as styles and stylistic devices that are used in the poems. Metaphors and abstraction are some of the techniques that have been used widely in the poem, in the first stanza there is the description of the yellow

fog that behaves like stray animal, in this stanza he is trying to make sense of the experience that he went through, thorough abstraction he can make clear to the reader what was taking place in his life. An abstract idea is created when Prufrock describes how he feels when pinned and wriggling on the wall, this idea is an abstract one that expresses the dissatisfaction in human life. This can be linked with the social dissatisfaction which arises in times of war and the political changes which were taking place during the shift to modernism. Prufrock questions the meaning of life and asks whether what he had gone through was worth it. Prufrock gives a description of his baldness and thinning hair giving using a high level of imagination, it draws the reader to the theme of self-consciousness. Prufrock also fears his own death which develops the theme of the fragility of life and mortality.

Sexuality is also a theme that is highlighted in the poem, Prufrock uses a divided approach when describing the female body, and he does not describe it in full but uses fragmented description. Through the description, Prufrock describes the sexual anxiety and difficulties that face human interaction. Many modernist writers and poets use many of the themes that are covered in the poem.

Eliot is a member of a bigger group of modernist poets and writers who changed the face of poetry. Modernist poets have been able to address issues such as technology, social growth and the political and cultural growth in the modern world (Bloom & Harold 73). Poetry has tremendously changes with the transformation brought about by the modern poets, with new issues emerging; there are many ideas that can motivate a poet to write about the

modern world. Eliot together with other poets who expressed the modernist approach in poetry was able to pave way for a new generation of poets.

## **Work Cited**

Ackerley, Chris. T. S. Eliot the love song of J. Alfred Prufrock and the Waste land. Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks, 2007. Print.

Bloom, Harold. American modernist poets. New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2011. Print.

Eliot, T. S.. The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock, by T. S. Eliot a lively learning guide. Sunnyvale, Calif.: Shmoop University, 2010. Print.