

Poetry appreciation of earle birney's "david" essay sample

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Poetry Appreciation Of Earle Birney's "David" Essay Sample

Earle Birney's ballet, "David", is a very emotional piece of literature. The poem is narrative as told through the eyes of Bob, David's friend. The theme that follows throughout this poem is the onset of maturity and all the barriers that must be overcome as one moves through this period in their lives.

Bob and David live a carefree life filled with adventures in the mountains until a tragedy strikes their very existence. Bob must make the most difficult decision of whether to end his friend's misery. He loses his innocence or as Bob says, "the last of my youth" through this experience. Bob makes the decision to do what his friend wants by pushing him over the cliff instead of doing what he first thought was right in trying to save his friend by going for help.

The environment, character development and imagery play a key role in setting the cynical tone. The choice of descriptive words in this poem makes it easier for the reader to understand and accept the decisions that are made and which capture the reader's emotions on different levels.

"David," written by Earle Birney displays two distinct and different characters. The two characters are David and Bobbie. They are both avid climbers who love their jobs in the mountains. They seek the thrill of new adventures and challenges. Though, both characters are very unique. David is older and wiser. He is more mature and patient. He teaches new things to Bob and has the skills to survive in the mountains. It is David who saves Bob

from falling and in doing so, slips and falls himself. Even then he accepts his fate by stating that he had not checked his footing well enough.

David's attitude toward mercy killing is, he feels that when an animal or human is suffering because of an injury or illness it should be taken out of its misery. Bob does not feel that this is right in the beginning when he finds a robin and wants to tame it. David quickly took the robin and killed it because it could never fly. Later Bob has to make the same decision concerning his friend when he is lying on the ledge asking to be rolled over the side of the mountain.

In the end, Bob realizes that it is right to end the suffering which is shown when he pushes his friend off the cliff to put an end to his pain. Bob is less experienced and younger than David. He is innocent though he learns many valuable lessons throughout the poem. Bob is crucial to the story for he represents the theme which is of his loss of innocence. He learns to make difficult decisions and to live with them through their shared experiences.

Setting in Earle Birney's poem, "David" is important in creating the mood and displaying the theme. It shows the true characters by showing them in an environment which they love. David is patient and wise which is shown in the ways he meets dangerous situations, for example, when they were caught in a dangerous storm in the mountains. Both characters loved nature and the mountains which they climbed. They learned many lessons from their experiences and the environment for example, patience in waiting out the storm and letting the ice melt. The setting is described in great detail

and it aids in foreshadowing the end with the description of the talon which “David named the finger”. David dies in the environment in which he loved.

Imagery and foreshadowing are evident in this poem and help reflect the theme. When David and Bob come across an injured robin, Bob wishes to keep it but David kills it for he wanted to put it out of its misery. David displays compassion by committing this act and it foreshadows on the decision that Bob will soon have to face. Also, when they find a goat's skull it foreshadows danger and perhaps a fatal fall. Even though they are skilled climbers, even a goat can fall to its death on the dangerous mountains.

Earle Birney's “David” contains a rich collection of important values, choices and qualities that exist in everyone's life. It is a story about life and death, of sacrifice and love. The strong friendship between David and Bob is demonstrated throughout the poem. The willingness to live with the consequences of one's decisions and the changes that happen because of these decisions. The shared love for nature and the mountains, its beauty and its dangers each contribute to the choices everyone has to make at different times in their lives. The strength, endurance, challenges, risks and obstacles that everyone encounters in our lives are represented in this poem. “David” brings out the best in everyone and challenges each of us to examine our place and our decisions in this world in a new way.