

Sample essay on four poems

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



A Comparison Essay

Four Poems: A Comparison Essay

The four poems that I must compare are " Life" by Paul Laurence Dunbar, " Life Through My Eyes" by Tupac Shakur, " We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks, and " Because I Could Not Stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson. There are many similarities and differences between all of the poems. They all have different structures and styles, but the themes are similar. They also have different settings. The main thing that is the same in the poems is that they all deal with life and death.

Each of these poems has a different structure. The Dunbar poem has two stanzas of five lines each, and the first two and second two lines of each stanza end with a rhyme. The last line of each stanza is the same, " And that is life!" This makes the reader think that this line is important because it is repeated. The poem by Tupac doesn't seem to have any structure because it is just one stanza thrown together. He doesn't use any punctuation and uses the number " 2" instead of spelling out " to." The disorganization that seems to be in this poem shows us that Tupac felt out of control, so maybe he did it that way on purpose to send his message. The poem by Gwendolyn Brooks is grouped in stanzas of two lines each. The first stanza is different than the rest, but the other stanzas all end with a period and then the word " we" so it looks like this:

We real cool. We

Left school. We

Ending each line with " we" makes the reader put emphasis on the " we"

when reading it out loud. Brooks must have wanted that word to stand out so it must be important, just like in “ Life” where the poet repeated the same line twice. Brooks also ends the poem with “ We die soon” after several lines with “ we” at the end. That makes the last line stand out also, and it seems to end suddenly. The poem by Dickinson is longer than the others, and seems more organized than the others when you first look at it. At first it seems that the second and fourth line in each stanza will rhyme, but as the reader reads through the poem it can be noticed that the poem does not follow that pattern. The second and fourth lines only rhyme in some of the stanzas. So since the poem is actually slightly disorganized, maybe Dickinson is trying to send a message that she felt out of control like Tupac did in his poem.

The settings for all of the poems are also different and help to send a message to the reader. Dunbar’s poem makes the reader think he is in a poor household or maybe even homeless. I think this because he talks about “ a crust of bread and a corner to sleep in,” and he mentions this twice. A person who was poor and maybe homeless would be grateful for something to eat and a place to sleep. And this poem does seem like he is grateful, even though he has a lot of hardship there are still things that he can find joy in. The poem by Tupac seems to be set among gangs in violent streets. He also talks about poverty and even uses that word more than once. Tupac also seems to be grateful for things, like “ fun and games” even though there are horrible things like “ poverty, murder, violence.” Brooks’ poem seems to be set in a bar, because she talks about pool players and the name of the place is the Golden Shovel. This poem also makes the reader think

about violent streets and gangs because she talks about leaving school and lurking late. The characters must be young city boys, just like in Tupac's poem. Dickinson's poem is very different, because the only two characters are her and death. The setting is a carriage that takes her and death through the countryside. They see children at school on recess, and fields and the sunset.

All of the poems talk about life and death. "Life" doesn't speak of death specifically but uses negative words like "weep," "trouble," and "tears." He also uses the word "moan" twice, and it seems he means a moan in pain or maybe even a moan before death. Tupac opens his poem by saying that if someone else looked at what his life was like it would scare them "to death." At the end of the poem he talks about his destiny. It's not clear if he's talking about his dreams, like becoming famous, or about his death. I think he's probably talking about death, and how that will finally take him away from all the bad things in his life. In "We Real Cool" the poet ends the poem with "We die soon." All of the other things she says that they are doing seem to lead to them dying. If they say that they're going to die soon then they must know that what they are doing is bad. Finally, in the Dickinson poem she talks about taking a carriage ride with Death. I think the beginning of the poem "Because I could not stop for death/He kindly stopped for me" means that she was young and had a long life to live, but maybe someone else she knew had died. So she learned about death but didn't actually die herself. She knew that she would die someday, just like in the other poems. Even though she is learning about death during the carriage ride, she still notices beautiful things like the sunset, the children,

and the fields of grain.

Each of these poems gets their message across in different ways, but the messages are similar. They all talk about life and death, and they all know that death will come someday. The good thing is that all of the poets know to appreciate the little things like laughter, sunsets, and food, even when things seem bad in their lives. That is an important lesson to learn in life, because things are not always perfect. All of these poems teach us to appreciate the good things even when there are lots of terrible things in our lives.