

# George orwell's 'a homage to catalonia' essay sample



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George Orwell's 'A Homage to Catalonia' is a very emotional piece. We find this from the beginning of the extract when Orwell starts off with "it is very hard to describe what I felt". From this we feel quite sympathetic towards him. It becomes clear he finds it awkward and hard to speak of such events without recollecting and reliving the negative emotions he went through.

Orwell uses onomatopoeia in the second paragraph by describing his fatality by using "bang and flash" as if a rifle is going off. It shows the sudden and quickness of it. I feel this also shows how quick the life was snatched away from the soldiers 'in a flash'.

Orwell seems a loving type. He often mentions his wife and his family giving us a 'family man' persona i. e. emotional and caring. It allows us to see that they are highly important to him. The most sentimental part lies in his last moments where he says "first thought, conventionally enough was for my wife". Once again we pity him for the fear and pain he had to endure.

The extract is from his autobiography. This means it is a very biased account. The things he says can not be backed up and things could be exaggerated and toned down especially for the reader but it doesn't seem too graphic to allow such exaggeration. He speaks in first person "They laid me down again while somebody fetched the stretcher." By talking in first person we once again feel a very personal account of events. Maybe with such a delicate subject such as war, he felt his personal accounts would give a deeper meaning to the reader rather than a biography written by someone else. This allows him to 'put his heart in to it' more.

Being an autobiography, we can justify irregular language that can be used. In this particular piece Orwell says "The stupid mishane infuriated me". Using the word "stupid" it allows us to feel his aggravation and angst more, therefore this language can be used successfully in this example to enhance mood.

Orwell oddly portrays the wars harsh realities, not in the stereotypical way but in a softer, more subtle approach.

The Extract overall seems very negative indeed. In the line "a feeling of being shrivelled up to nothing" we truly understand the emptiness and coldness the war affected him. It may not be an extremely graphical adaption of war but it still creates strong, painful emotions. The extract is filled with imagery and descriptions. In the quote "Only a violent shock, such as you get from an electric terminal" gives us a very strong account of his injuries. It makes us pity Orwell because of what he goes through and the pain he endures.

This autobiography was written in 1936, after the war. This is probably the main reason why this is less patriotic as after being affected by the war, Orwell would have his own experiences that may have changed his perspectives and may question why he was so eager to volunteer in the first place. Orwell may have been influenced by the world and how things had changed from the beginning so he could easily put this knowledge into his autobiography and could have easily been affected/inspired by the authors of the time period, articles and the events that followed.

Wilfred Owens poetry showed a massive contrast between pre-war and pro-war. In 'the women and the slain' the patriotic line "To die in war for brothers" reveals dreams of being a hero, feeling proud where as in the first sentence of "Dulce Et Decorum Est" Owen describes the soldiers as "old beggars" and "like hags" showing a more degrading and insignificance to their deaths. As if they mean nothing. If this extract was pre-war we would expect it to be more patriotic, nobler.

At the end of the extract, after hearing Orwell has been shot in the neck and survived, Orwell says "I would merely have congratulated him on his good shooting". This allows us to feel he is not bitter for what has happened to him and gives us relief that he does not hold a grudge over this.