

"lineage" by margret  
walker and "the  
courage my mother  
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vincent m...

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## **“ Lineage” by Margret Walker and “ The Courage my mother had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay Essay Sample**

Have you ever wondered how it would feel to have the courage of your ancestors? In the two poems “ Lineage” and “ Courage” the authors Margret Walker and Edna St. Vincent Millay uses descriptive words to describe their ancestor’s abilities. There are several similarities and differences contained in these two poems.

To begin, both of the speakers desire to acquire something that they do not have, but exists in their family. The speaker in “ Lineage” values the fact that her grandmothers were strong (l. 1, 11). Clearly this strength is something that speaker remembers about her grandmothers; she ends her poem with the question, “ why am I not as they?” (p12) but it is not strength that the speaker of the other poems wants. Though their ancestors had strength and courage, the two speakers, indeed, lacked the ability.

Secondly, these two poems are differentiated from one another because they include female speakers that bring compassion into the poem. The speaker in “ Lineage” repeats “ My grandmothers were strong” (l. 1, 6) to show how strong they once were and how she, today, lacked strength. When their ancestors existed, women were not given any rights or privileges depriving them of freedom. The speaker says “ They moved through the fields sowing seed” (l. 3) representing they had no privileges but they still worked hard and strong, standing up for what they stood for. Although women had no rights, they had still stood tall and worked their way up to freedom.

Finally, both speakers' ancestors had left something behind, whether it is an item or a memory, it encouraged them to use what they have and forget about what they want. In the poem "Lineage" the speaker says "They were full of sturdiness and singing" (l. 5) meaning that they left behind a sense of pride and strength that would be acknowledged in the future. Another important aspect of their ancestor's life, is the items that were left behind. In the poem "Courage" the speaker says "The golden brooch my mother wore..." shows that her mother had left an item so that one day, her siblings may find useful in their journey towards their goal. Items and qualities are vital to a person's life when a person of their family has passed away because it shows them the ability and strength to do anything.

If one were to read the poems, they would not understand the author's point of view but only a plain poem. If one were to read it carefully and understand what the author is trying to say, then one can understand its concept. In relation, the two poems "Lineage" and "Courage" have more similarities than differences.