

Harlem by langston hughes: meditation or threat

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The poet recognized the suffering and wasted potential, and the threat of violence in Harlem, as the peoples' dreams were deferred. With the last line, he is issuing a warning that injustice and deprivation could result in that explosion.

Question 2. " Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" Dylan Thomas: I have chosen this because it is full of a passion for life and refuses to accept that death is inevitable. The speaker wants to keep his father alive (it was written when Thomas' father was dying), so it is his voice. His repetition of " Do not go gentle into that good night" and " Rage, rage against the dying of the light" at the end of alternate stanzas, is full of urgent, vibrant vitality; he is willing his father and all who are old, to remember the wonder of life and stay to accomplish more. He includes all kinds of men, " wise men", " good men", " wild men" and " grave men", all qualities his father may have had. I like the way opposites emphasize power and differences: " Light" and " dark", " see" and " blind", " gentle" and " rage" and the auditory and physical imagery in words like " forked" and " danced", " sang" and " grieved" make the poem pulsate with movement and feeling. The themes of death and loss make the poet angry, and the images are like prizes offered to tempt his father to stay. He would accept anything from his father " Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears I pray" if only he would stay alive. Thomas rages against death as a waste of great potential for life in everyone.

Question 3. Poet v Speaker: The speaker in " Incident" is a little black boy, recalling a childhood memory, telling it from a child's point of view, with simplicity. The poet was taken to live in Baltimore as a child, so his adult voice recalls the event in the present.

In " Those Winter Sundays" the speaker is a grown man, reminiscing on his
<https://assignbuster.com/harlem-by-langston-hughes-meditation-or-threat/>

childhood. He takes us back to memories of his father, expresses the emotions felt then and brings us to the present as an adult. Hayden lived in a situation where his father and mother fought and he was beaten, so he too is the speaker.

Theme: The theme of " Incident" is racism, stretching across the years from 1925 Baltimore to the time the poem was written. There is disillusionment and irony too, for at the end, although it is all he can remember, there is something there of having overcome the experience.

" Those Winter Sundays" is on the theme of family, and father/son relationships in particular. The speaker/poet looks back at how his father cared for his family, on his one day of rest and how this went unappreciated.

Tone: " Incident", despite the simple childish rhyme, is ironic and the beginning and end of the poem add to this. It begins with " glee", then the " Baltimorean" reacting with childish and adult prejudiced response, dispels that joy, and the ending that tells how this has had a lasting impact, " but hey, I am still here to tell the tale" almost, is the ironic twist in the stark racist reality.

Hayden's tone is one of regret for failing to understand or appreciate his father's love. He talked about " speaking indifferently to him", but there are signs of danger too, " fearing the chronic waves of the anger of that house." The regret is expressed in the final two lines, about " love's austere and lonely offices."