

English assignment



First, read the poem " Musee des Beaux Arts", starting on page 737. Then, what message you think the poet is saying about humanity W. H. Auden's poem " Musee des Beaux Arts" is based on based on a sixteenth century painter Pieter Brueghel's painting, The Fall of Icarus, and the poem deals with the theme of man's " universal indifference to human misfortune" and the poet, following a series of reflections, shows " how inattentive most people are to the sufferings of others" (Kellman). The poet states that the old masters understood the nature of human position on the sufferings of others and what happened to Icarus long ago is a reminder to all modern man. Suffering of various sorts can take place in the lives of every man; a man who " is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along" is not free from the clutches of misfortune or suffering (Schakel & Ridl 737). The old people hope for a " miraculous birth"; however, the new generation or rather children do not " specially want it to happen" (Schakel & Ridl 738). The lines echo the indifference of the new generation towards the sufferings of the old people and show how the old people are being disrespected, uncared, looked down and are marginalised in the contemporary society. The poem effectively combines the tragedy of Icarus with similar portraits from the readers' own world. Just as the ploughman neglected the ' forsaken cry' of Icarus, the modern man fails to value the martyrdom and loses hold of his human innocence. The poem, in a way, propagates the Christian values of showing empathetic feelings towards the sufferings of the fellow human beings. The poem brings to light man's lack of concern for his fellow beings and exhorts the readers to look into their life introspectively to amend their ways and absorb the Christian values of love and empathy towards everyone.

Read Chapter 21 pages 913-924 and discuss how character and conflict affects the drama “ The New New” by Kelly Stuart. (300 word essay)

Even though the primary purpose of dramas is performance on the stage, an effective reader can give shapes and lives to the characters in a play in the mind of his imagination which can act as a theatre. Reading a play necessitates an awareness of the names, nature and the relationship of the characters to each other. Similarly, an effective reader should have the imaginative capability to visualize the scenery on the stage as well as the costumes and the appearance of various characters. The effectiveness of a play depends on the character formation and the building of the dramatic conflict in the play and this paper tries to bring out how character and conflict affects the drama The New New by Kelly Stuart. Unlike other plays the script of The New New “ does not start with a list of characters”; the reader needs to understand each character from the stage directions (914). However, the reader is unable to grasp from the text where the action of the play is taking place; it is up to the reader to visualize and give shape to the two offices mentioned in the play based on one’s imagination. The readers have to be extremely careful to understand which action is taking place in the office of Jenny and Mercy and which of the actions take place in the office of Bradley and Craig. Similarly, two characters in the play never make their appearance in the play: Jeremy and Jimmy are referred to in the play while Naomi is the only person who knows Jeremy’s name. The dramatist makes use of the techniques of showing, saying and telling in the development of his characters. One understands the nature of both Marcy and Jenny when they turn their backs on Naomi and giggle at her. The

dialogues of the characters tell a lot about their personal traits- Jenny and Marcy spend time in gossiping whereas Bradley and Craig talk about “ finding ways to market a “ memoiristic novel” about surviving in prison without verifying facts about the writer” (Schakel & Ridl 921). The conflict in the story takes place with the arrival of Naomi when the reader realizes that Marcy’s and Bradley’s understanding regarding Naomi’s brother, Jeremy has nothing to do with the reality. While they conceive Jimmy to be “ charismatic, charming and smart”, the reality is that he is responsible for the “ tortured and strangled” and “ badly beaten” up face of Jeremy (Schakel & Ridl 918). The conflict in the play is internal conflict as Bradley understands at the end that he never tried to know the reality of what Jimmy had told him and was “ converting a callous murderer into a wealthy celebrity” (Schakel & Ridl 922). Thus, the reader needs to have a good understanding of the nature of all the characters in the play; any reader who fails to understand the role played by both Jimmy and Jeremy in the play is most likely to misread the play.

Works Cited

Kellman, Steven G. " Musée des Beaux Arts." Masterplots II: Poetry, Revised Edition. Salem Press, 2002. eNotes. com. 2006. 14 Jul, 2009 Schakel, Peter and Ridl, Jack. Approaching Literature. 2nd edn. Bedford/St. Martin’s: USA, 2008.