

"hunters in the snow" close reading essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the short story "Hunters in the Snow" Wolff uses the snow and cold atmosphere as a symbol of impact on the characters to create a theme of crisis, conveying the uncertainties and intricacy of human interaction and personal struggle. The weather itself plays a crucial role in defining the theme for this story. Winter is the symbol of death, hibernation, or depression. The snow also adds to the cold weather as a symbol of a blanket that obscures, and covers the secrets of loneliness, emptiness, and the coldness within each character's personality.

Their simmering resentment towards each other is aptly highlighted by the author with the appropriate setting of the cold bleak winter season. On page 3, the paragraph that begins "They left the woods..." is an important passage of this story showing the proof of resentment that Tub is holding towards his friends, Kenny and Frank. In this paragraph I read again how Tub was left behind to work on one side of the bank while his friends worked the other together. Prior to this passage, on the bottom of page 2, is another example of the un-friendly like behaviors that these two are showing. ...Tub had trouble getting through the fences. Frank and Kenny could have helped him; they could have lifted up on the top wire and stepped on the bottom wire, but they didn't. They stood and watched him. " It can be said that the cold, hostile environment is an outward expression of how the men behave towards one another. Kenny is rather hostile to Tub, while Frank is cold and indifferent to Tub and his multiple pleas for help throughout the short story. Jumping back to the paragraph on page 3, I also found more examples of the cold, snow weathered theme.

The snows surface is described as undisturbed and smooth. It is also described as being light, but it deceitfully turns into deep drifts that forced Tub to desperately use both his knees and elbows just to get through them. When I visualized nothing but untouched white snow while Wolff describes the silence that the breeze brings to Tub, a sense of loneliness and emptiness came across me. The crisis of Tub feeling lost and left behind is shown in the word usage of " fighting" while describing how he was moving himself through the deep snow drifts.

Using the word " fighting" makes the authors hidden meaning of desperation shown, helping me visualize the snow as something alive, evil, and an physical force holding him back. The cold, hostile atmosphere is directly linking to each of the men's personal struggles, hidden secrets, and the uncertainties of each character's behaviors. This theme continues throughout the rest of this piece by Tobias Wolff, shaping the complicity of this short stories unanswered ending involving the death of one of the characters.