

# Emily dickinson's "tell all the truth but tell it slant" essay sample



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## **Emily dickinson's “ Tell all the Truth but Tell it Slant” Essay Sample**

Tell all the Truth but tell it slant—

Success in Cirrcuit lies

Too bright for our infirm Delight

The Truth's superb surprise

As Lightening to the Children eased

With explanation kind

The Truth must dazzle gradually

Or every man be blind—

Emily Dickinson poem “ Tell all the truth but tell it slant” is about telling the full ‘ truth and nothing but the truth’ and how its affects ones perception of how “ truth” should be told.

The opening line “ tell all the truth but tell it slant” is the same as that of the title. Emily Dickinson does this because she wants the reader to realise that the poem's main idea is that truth is stated indirectly toward us. It is supposedly too powerful to be taken in all at once and that we are unprepared and not willing to admit to it. The word “ slant” could have several meanings to it, for it could mean that something is not straight or it can give greater significance to a letter or word that is slanted or put in

italics. Furthermore it could be used as a bias, a persons point of view to which he believes is correct.

However, the second line indicates that lies are in " Circuit."

Dickinson misspells the word ' Circuit' to give it greater emphasis. . It is also used to place a greater emphasis on the idea, that the truth is not straight. This idea in turn connects to the 1st line that one must tell the truth, but in slant. She repeats this theme throughout the poem and indicates that, the truth must be told indirectly as it is " too bright for our infirm delight" meaning that we are not able to handle the full truth and its divine meaning. The word ' infirm' is strong in the sense that it makes us, human beings look weak, since we are not capable of knowing the full truth and that is why Dickinson writes that it should be given to us as steady progression so that we can understand the ' truth' when we are ready or that we cannot take the truth because its too much to handle. We cannot take the truth because human beings have alternate motives and that some of us are hiding secrets which we do not want revealed. It is human nature.

It can also be argued that if truth is given to us as a " superb surprise," that we could not even comprehend its true meaning and that it is a powerful and dangerous entity.

Dickinson continues and writes " as lightening to the children eased," " with explanation kind." Lightening can be seen as a powerful bolt of energy and can be seen as a form of purity or " light," in addition Dickinson is trying to convey the point that the truth can be told in a slanted way as if you were telling a child " with explanation kind" what lightening is and how you are

gradually telling them the truth but not the whole truth because they would not easily understand the full meaning. In other words the children are being told what lightening is to ease their fears but are not given the full meaning as it would confuse them and in turn make them more frightened..

In comparison to lightening being seen as light, Emily Dickinson's work can also be seen to have connection with Plato's " Allegory of the cave" in which he describes the man in the cave as blinded from the world. That man only believes that something is real by observing it and getting used to the fact it is there, and is gradually being introduced believing that it is ' truth.' The fact that light is being used to signify the intelligent region for human beings and for those very few who able to be in the intelligent region should be considered wise. These images give connotations to vision and how we rely on our senses to believe what is true.

The final two lines of the poem give out many views, " dazzle gradually" is an oxymoron which is effective because it depicts how ludicrous the real truth will be if it is presented to us. Truth is being compared to light as of the same ideas of Plato and that to my belief Emily Dickinson is trying to convey the point that the truth should be told to us gradually or " every man be blind." What she means in the last line is that blindness is caused by the instant truth and would not see because of it power. Overall Emily Dickinson tells this poem in a circuitous route which is very effective and necessary in the point she was trying to convey . She makes the reader come to realise how complex her writing is when trying to grasp her point. In Conclusion she is trying to convey the point that truth must be told in a round about way so

that we can accept it and be able to understand its concept, Not instantaneously but gradually.