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Brian Patten’s purpose for “ The River Story” is mainly about describing the place that the river is situated and also to evoke emotions because Patten wants the reader to feel sorry and sympathy for harshly damaged river. The theme is developed throughout the poem by the way Patten has described the “ river as wearing lily – pads like medals” and “ kingfishes were his secret agents”, these quotes all come under how happy the river is and what a great life it is living.

As the poem continues it starts to introduce humans and how they vomit their poisons into him and clogged with garbage and junk. These quotes represent the damage that the humans had caused and how the river is slowly dying and becoming close to nothing but dried up dirt. The structure of the poem has a huge influence on the reader. The poem is has only one stanza with 35 lines, no chorus and the lines varied in length. Patten has put in a few rhymes but there is no rhyme scheme, which indicates how the river has not got a boring life, or dose not have scheduled daily life.