

Daffodiles by william wordsworth and how nature provides mental and spiritual ful...

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Introduction

Do humans truly understand the value of nature that is around them? The influence of nature is found almost everywhere and affects human behavior on a daily basis. William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," is a lyric poem that is commonly known as Wordsworth's most famous work. Published around 1807, the poem includes elements of romanticism through the primary focus on nature. This particular focus rebelled against the Industrial Revolution of this era as it provided a means of escape from the world of industrialization. The poem portrays the speaker's mental journey as the speaker recalls the memory of the daffodils that give him comfort when the strong feeling of loneliness lingered. The poet expresses the relationship between nature and the speaker, and how the motion of nature influences the behaviors of humans. William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" puts forth the notion that nature provides comfort from the realities of industrialization as the speaker expresses how nature has the ability to provide one with mental and spiritual fulfillment. This is demonstrated through the poet's use of creative imagery, strategically used repetition, and inventive personification.

The Sight of Daffodiles

Through the means of creative imagery, Wordsworth effectively reveals the mental and spiritual fulfillment that nature can bring upon a person. This is first shown in the first stanza of the poem where the location of the daffodils is visualized. The speaker became immersed by the sight of the daffodils without even realizing it at the time. The imagery highlights the beauty in

which nature can bring as the speaker paints the picture of “ A host, of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees” (Wordsworth 5-6). An expanding field of daffodils can be visualized beside a lake and beneath the trees in the area. This use of imagery causes the reader visualize the speaker’s feelings and emotions as if the reader were to experience that moment in person. Wordsworth used descriptions appealing to the sense of sight to assist the reader to imagine or feel the same joy the speaker felt at that very moment. Wandering lonely, the speaker came across a moment of captivation, acting as a distraction from the negative feelings they harbored. A second way imagery reveals the mental and spiritual fulfillment that nature can provide is placed in the second stanza where the speaker continues to observe the field of daffodils that stretch around the lake. The second stanza uses imagery to continue the description of the daffodils as the speaker steadily observes the daffodils. The speaker states the observation of the daffodils as ‘ Ten thousand saw I at a glance, Tossing their heads in sprightly dance’ (11-12). The imagery creates the visualization of a large number of flowers moving in unison like movement that expresses the harmony the poet finds in nature. The word choice “ sprightly dance” is what is used to create that sense of harmonic movement. Wordsworth’s continued imagery allows the reader to better understand the feelings of the speaker through a multidimensional perspective by creating images with a sense of action, and movement. Wordsworth’s clever use of imagery effectively adds depth and meaning to the scenery of daffodils that unfold before the speaker. The use of Wordsworth’s imagery supports the idea that nature is a treasure that can always comfort and provide one with the sense of

fulfillment as proved through the speaker's feelings of awe that overrules the loneliness and aimlessness they had felt before.

Captivating the Mind

Nature has the capability to captivate the mind of humans distracting them from the world and providing a sense of mental and spiritual fulfillment as seen through the use of smartly placed repetition. Firstly, through the use of cleverly placed repetition, Wordsworth highlights the captivation the speaker felt through the observation of nature. This is seen in the third stanza of the poem where the word "gazed" is repeated. The poet employs the use of repetition when the speaker says "I gazed – and gazed – but little thought" (17). The literary use of the word "gazed" conveys that the speaker is staring and never ceases to keep staring at the daffodils. This expresses the feeling that the speaker no longer thinks about the loneliness they felt before as the speaker looks fixedly at the flowers, bewitched by the beauty of nature. Here Wordsworth proves that the alluring charm of nature acts as a distraction from the stress of industrialization. Secondly, Wordsworth successfully creates the force of emphasis within the poem through use of continued repetition exhibiting the speaker's captivation of nature. The repeated alliteration of the /w/ sound in, "What wealth the show to me had brought" (18), applies emphasis on the value of nature that is held within the speaker. By observing the daffodils, the true value of nature is revealed to the speaker as the word "wealth" is seen not as materialistic wealth but spiritual and mental wealth. The use of alliteration slows down the pace of the poem and allows the reader to become more engaged in the poem. This

slowed pace lets the reader understand the value of nature just as the speaker does by creating time to process the speaker's realization. The cunning use of repetition Wordsworth used highlights the wealth the speaker found within the captivation of nature. The idea that nature has the ability to provide one with mental and spiritual fulfillment is evident through the speaker's feelings of awe that overrules the loneliness and aimlessness they had felt before.

Keeping Company Through Lonely Times

Personification within the poem communicates the vital role that nature plays in one's life to comfort as well as to soothe one's mind and spirit. Wordsworth's use of inventive personification shows how nature can possess the ability to keep one company through lonely times. Seen in the first stanza, the poet applies human characteristics to the "daffodils" that the speaker observes. The daffodils are seen to be "Fluttering and dancing in the breeze" (6) and dancing is a human action usually performed with the purpose of amusement. Wordsworth chooses to humanize the daffodils as people that can move and dance to reflect the speaker's perspective on the flowers. This comparison effectively communicates the Romantic idea of finding expression human behavior and in nature. This establishes the link between humans and nature that allows nature to soothe the mind of the speaker. The beauty of nature can have the profound ability upon humans to minimize negative emotions and become more vigilant and creative. Through reminiscing in the memory of the golden daffodils the speaker reimagines the feeling of bliss, as the speaker includes "And then my heart

with pleasure fills And dances with the daffodils” (23-24). The daffodils and speaker’s heart is personified by the poet as dancing alongside each other. The speaker no longer has the feeling of loneliness because the memory of the daffodils keeps the speaker’s heart company by engaging in a “ dance”. A dance is commonly seen as something elegant and harmonic that bonds people to one another and so the flowers replace the absence of other humans when the speaker feels lonely. The impact of nature is so strong that even a memory had made the speaker elated when they were dejected. The poem describes the healing power of nature on one’s mind and spirit. This demonstrates how the influence of nature on humans is unending.

Conclusion

It is evident that nature has the capability to create a sense of mental and spiritual fulfillment within a person as shown in the poem “ I Wandered as Lonely as a Cloud” by William Wordsworth. Humans are fragile creatures that need comfort in times of need and the Wordsworth provided that escape people needed during hard times of the industrialization era in Victorian England. Wordsworth’s emphasis and clever use of imagery, repetition, and personification, make it apparent that the speaker in the poem develops an intense appreciation for nature to the extent that he finds comfort in just the memory of the daffodils. Nature replaced the sense of loneliness that the speaker felt with happiness and a sense of direction as the speaker no longer wandered aimlessly like an isolated cloud. The speaker values nature as an essential for the speaker’s mental and spiritual well being. This proves that nature ultimately plays a vital role in human life and it is clear that

Wordsworth intended this into his poem. Though Wordsworth did direct this statement, it is seen in modern day that humans do not truly understand the value of nature. This sad a modern-day concern is neglected and ignored all while the environment of the Earth continues to be destroyed. This is not to say that humans will never change, perhaps humans will one day come to a realization and learn to greater appreciate the beauty in which nature creates and the fulfillment it provides.