

Explore how conflict affects those not fighting in the conflict poems

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



In *The Falling Leaves* and *Poppies*, compare the effects conflict has on those not fighting. In *Poppies* by Jane Weir and *The Falling Leaves* by Margaret Postgate Cole both poets use a variety of methods to show effects conflict has on those not fighting. Use of structure and language is important in presenting these effects. This essay will explore both poems to analyse the effects of different methods as implemented by the poets. The structure used in the poems along with similes and metaphors to describe the soldiers in both poems give a sad, solemn tone, to show how the poet was effected by conflict.

The use of enjambment in *The Falling Leaves* gives the sense of long pauses and broken thoughts and feelings of the poet showing that it saddens the poet to think of hundreds of soldiers losing their lives in war. In *Poppies*, “ All my words flattened, rolled, turned into felt, slowly melting. ”, is used to show that the feeling of her son leaving to fight in a war was hard to explain and that the words meant nothing as the feeling was too strong to explain in words. The emotion of the poet is clearly described in both poems. I resisted the impulse” and “ I was brave, as I walked with you”. Both quotes from *Poppies* show that although the poet felt upset that her son was going to war, and that she felt he was too young, she allowed her son to do as he wanted. This shows realisation that he had grown up, that it wasn't her decision to allow him to go and that she didn't want to upset him by showing how she really felt. In *The Falling Leaves*, the poet describes her emotion through the weather. “ like snowflakes wiping out the noon;” this shows that she was feeling saddened and upset from what she had seen.

Both poems describe the soldiers as innocent. For example, in *Poppies*, the poet's memories of her son were all those of his youth, showing that he was still an innocent child. In *The Falling Leaves* soldiers are compared to graceful, white snowflakes. " Like snowflakes falling on the Flemish clay". White is purity, cleanliness, and innocence. This may be emphasising the idea that all soldiers were still children that needed guidance from their parents and were naive and were only killed as they had little guidance.

This idea of innocence could show that the impact on those not fighting was much larger because the soldiers did not deserve to die in the eyes of the poets. However, the soldiers are also described as " brown leaves dropping from their tree". This may give the impression that those fighting were not important, just as leaves aren't important to a tree. The idea of the brown leaves may mean that they had completed their ' service' and were no longer useful but that it was not an issue as new soldiers would replace them.

The amount of death is recognised in *The Falling Leaves*, the soldiers are described as " a gallant multitude", generalising huge number of dead soldiers as one unit. This lessens the portrayed sorrow of those not fighting by making all soldiers faceless and identical. Whereas in *Poppies*, it is much more personalised, this creates a feeling of grief and shows that the poet thinks it may be harder to cope with the loss of those in war than is portrayed in *The Falling Leaves*.