

# The fish poem



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Fish is an interesting poem which illustrates an encounter with a “tremendous” fish. The animal is anything but beautiful and is described in almost sick-like detail. In the end the speaker releases the fish with joy. My reasoning for this is that the speaker understands the years of fighting the fish gave to survive.

A sense of “victory” was felt, and there was no other reason for the fish to be kept. The poem is written in the first person, and the author is indeed the fisherperson who is describing their catch. This would mean the persona of this poem is someone who is experienced in fishing and is telling a story of one of the fishing trips they took. The first line of the poem the author starts out by declaring that they had “caught this tremendous fish.” The words allow you to imagine this fish in your mind (imagery).

With this image imprinted in the readers mind the author then describes that the fish did not fight, which in most cases would seem odd. The average person would know that a fish would usually put up a struggle before they finally were brought in. The author had back to back lines claiming that it indeed did not fight which was done to make a point. This is no ordinary fish and the fisherperson knows that.

Similes and metaphors are frequent throughout the rest of the poem.

Descriptions of the fish are very dark and unsightly. An example would be when the skin was described “like ancient wallpaper,” then followed by saying it was “stained and lost through age.” Who would want to catch a fish that is as ugly as this? Although the fish may seem ugly in appearance

there seems to be a sheer beauty that lies not on the exterior but maybe within.

The fisherperson continues to examine their catch and describes the fish with great imagery. Age is something that is first brought up in line eleven and re-occurs throughout. Metaphors convey its skin as “stained roses” and “eyes like old scratched isinglass.” Stained and old both come with age, thus this fish is rather old. At this point the author seems to sympathize for the fish and the details are sympathetic as well. Imbedded within the fish’s jaw are five hooks and their lines still tied.

Imagery again paints a picture of this fish with dangling lines of freedom. It is freedom which the fish fought for and one can only respect that. “A five-haired beard of wisdom” as the author says. With age comes wisdom.

This fish is old and filled with wisdom that is beyond any normal fish. This fish is special. Victory filled the boat that day and it did not come from the size of the fish. It did not come from the fish’s appearance (which was awful). The victory came from the facts that this fish has struggled and fought for its survival.

Through this entire struggle only one was able to catch this fish. Then author goes into a state of euphoria and speaks of the surroundings, before releasing it back into the waters. Many times when something memorable takes place you soak in your environment. I believe this is what was occurring in lines sixty-five to seventy-five.” I caught.

” “ I thought.” “ I looked.” “ I admired.” “ I stared.” “ And I let go.

” The whole story could be told through these lines which began each new thought. Although these words describe the event, without the details one would not see the difference between this fish and any other. The poem “ The fish” is a great poem that includes the struggle for survival, the wisdom gained with age, and the respect one has for another creature. In the end I believe I would have released the fish as well.