

Bruce dawwe themes essay



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Bruce Dawe themes Bruce Dawe is a poet who inscribes not only controversial pieces of poetry but also poems that depict his own personal experiences in life. As many would say it Dawe is “ an ordinary bloke, with a respect for the ordinary” because he writes as a delegate to the everyday Australian. The two poems that represent the daily themes of life are Katrina and Homecoming. Katrina is a poem concerning a young girl who is inevitably dying and her father who is undoubtedly grieving.

It illustrates the theme of parent’s loving their daughter indefinitely by using a variety of poetic techniques such as metaphor, simile and rhetorical question. By using these remarkable techniques it aids the readers in fully acknowledge the love the persona has for his daughter. Initially, the poet employs similes in order to demonstrate his theme of parental love. For example he uses the simile “... your life shines like a jewel, each relapse a flash of light the more endearing” (Stanza 1) proves that the persona genuinely loves his daughter.

How does the poet confirm this? By the comparing of Katrina to a jewel, it shows that she is precious and valued to the persona. Through affirming this quote, he is stating that a relapse in Katrina’s health is akin to the adoration readers would have when shining light onto a precious jewel. At a point where one has to surrender this jewel, one will love it even more. That is the poet’s aim in this simile; the closer he gets to losing her, the more he will love her.

Due to this technique, the audience can perceive the powerful parental love that the persona has for Katrina by relating it to their love for a jewel. Hence,

by using similes the viewers are able to better understand the theme in Katrina. Moreover, the utilisation of metaphors has enhanced the poet's idea of endless parental love. For instance, the quote "... now you are suspended between earth and sky" (Stanza 1) declares the true love the persona has for his daughter. By employing the terms "suspended" and "earth and sky" it shows that she is on the edge of life and death.

In using this metaphor, Dawe has revealed that Katrina's life is dreadfully fragile. Generally, when a life is frail, people will feel sorrowful. By feeling sorrowful, many are sympathising with the guardian of Katrina, the persona. Correspondingly, the viewers understand the persona's situation and his affection for his daughter. Consequently, through applying metaphors, the audience can comprehend the idea of undying parental love in the poem Katrina. Furthermore, the exploitation of rhetorical question has augmented the subject of eternal love.

In particular, the question "Is your life opening again or closing finally?" (Stanza 1) illustrates the parental love of the persona to Katrina. Through this question, the persona is inquiring if she is going to live or die; breathe one more breath, or stop breathing altogether. Seemingly, both the author and the audience enclose a sentiment of uncertainty. Undeniably, uncertainty causes worry and the persona is implying through the rhetorical question that he is worried about losing something he loves, Katrina.

Henceforth, it shows the persona's unquestionable love for his daughter and thus the main theme of this poem. In contrast, the poem Homecoming is based on bringing the deceased soldiers home from the Vietnam War. It uses

poetic techniques such as onomatopoeia, metaphor and oxymoron in order to deliver its contemporary message about the deep tragedy of war. In employing these notable techniques, the poet has delivered his strong message powerfully. Firstly, the use of onomatopoeia has emphasised his influential implication concerning the deep tragedy of war.

For instance, the phrase “... taxiing in on the long runways, the howl of their homecoming rises surrounding them like their last moments...” (Line 17 and 18) genuinely shows the sadness of war. To “ howl” shows the soldier’s frustration and pain publicised by the sounds of the plane. By using onomatopoeia, the audience are given not only a visual image of the tragic situation, but also an oral one. Orally, the viewers are able to experience the sounds of the battlefield; the howls of pain and suffering.

Chiefly, they are able to understand the agony of the soldiers through a sensory level and hence experience their tragedy. Therefore, in suffering their tragedy, the audience is able to taste just how heartbreaking the whole war is and thus the main theme of the poem. Additionally, in creating metaphors the poet is able to distribute to the audience his theme of the tragedy of war. In the metaphor “... over the land, the steaming chow mein ...” (Line 11) the poet illustrates the tragedy of war. A “ chow mein” is a dish that fries numerous of different ingredients together in a wok.

The poet is trying to pronounce that the wok is the battlefield and all the different ingredients becoming fried, are actually all the soldiers dying. Like a “ chow mein” the different ingredients show the diversity of people dying from this war. It is not just the Vietnamese or the red-heads; it is everyone,

showing that a war is a universal catastrophe. Simultaneously, the physical amount dead from this war shows how tragic this war is. Thus, by showing the tragedy of the war, the audience is proven the main theme of this poem.

Likewise, the use of oxymoron is pivotal in delivering this message. In “ too late, too early” the oxymoron shows why the war is tragic. The “ too late” demonstrates how it is too late to save them while the “ too early” presents the fact that the soldiers were too young to die. The “ too late” grasps that even though it is universally known that war is useless, it’s too late to save the dead and through suffering the consequences, numerous of young lives have been wasted. This oxymoron forces the readers to think about who died and for what reason they died.

By showing that war is useless and investing so many lives into it, the viewers can see the amount of tragedy placed in the war. Thus, oxymoron assisted in showing the main theme to the audience. Conclusively, through Bruce Dawe’s poems the audience has realised contemporary themes. In Katrina the audience empathises with parental love through metaphors, similes and rhetorical questions while in Homecoming, the audience learns about the deep tragedy of war through onomatopoeia, metaphors and oxymoron. Overall, Dawe’s poems have taught many on the universal themes found in the ordinary lives of ordinary people.