

The analysis of
william wordsworth's
poem, 'the world is
too much with us'



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

William Wordsworth's poem, *The World is Too Much With Us* explores the results of distancing man from the natural world due to the societal obsession with materialism. My media product, *The People are Too Much Without Themselves* is a creative interpretation of this theme and it is about how humans obsession with technology is distancing them from each other. My media product is uses aspects of the poems content, style and structure to help accurately represent it.

William Wordsworth lived through the Romantic time period which heavily influenced this poem. Romanticism was a period of great change and revolution from a more scientific view of the world to a natural world. This was an " age that felt a new appreciation for the sublime in the natural world." (Victorian Web 1) However, this was also a time for the industrial revolution and this gave power and wealth to individual who had the most material wealth. Wordsworth displays the clashes between these two ideologies in a very apparent manner. In the speakers eyes the world is simply " getting and spending" and is laying waste to its " powers" (Wordsworth 2). This represents the idea of commodification and how humans are so focused on attaining power through material wealth that they are wasting their true talents and usefulness in order to do so. The speak also feels that society sees " little in Nature" and this shows how society does not appreciate and distances itself form nature (Wordsworth 3). I portray this idea in my media product by having a character in a game give up his heart in order to get a coin. In a game coins are not as rare as hearts and hearts are much more useful as they can provide healing, but the character still choses to accept this exchange. This entire scene is displayed

on a Gameboy which can only be operated by someone. This symbolizes how we as humans are doing this to ourselves and by doing this we are distancing ourselves from each other, much like how the speaker feels society is distancing themselves from nature.

The structure of this poem is also carefully chosen by Wordsworth to further emphasize the theme. He uses rhyme to emphasize and add meaning to nature. He rhymes "boon" with "moon" and "hours" with "flowers", and in this way by rhyming words that are about nature he creates an emphasis on them (Wordsworth 2-4). In my media product I represent nature through the people and I showed this sort of emphasis by having everything in dark and dull colours other than the people, which are in bright and vibrant colours, in order to emphasize their importance. This rhyme scheme is created through the sonnet structure Wordsworth uses and this is another very important choice he makes. The sonnet structure is very rigid and has many fixed rules. This clashes with not only Wordsworth "simpler, more conversationalist" style but also the poems theme of being free and natural as well (Robinson 20). By doing this in such a subtle way Wordsworth attempts to show how we are in a false consciousness. We are willing to accept this consumeristic view of the world not knowing the limits and barriers it puts on us and nature. In my media product I have large black bars which cover the video. Although most do not notice them they actually take away from the viewing pleasure and cover a considerable portion of the video. Both the sonnet form and the black bars in my video are subtle structural changes that take away from the overall effect of the product but are accepted by the viewer or reader simply because they are unaware.

Wordsworth has a variety of stylistic choices which all enhance the theme of the poem. He uses very powerful and well-chosen words in this poem and overall has a very strong emotional impact. He feels so strongly about humans distancing themselves from nature that sees it as a “sordid boon” (Wordsworth 4). When something is called a “sordid boon” it creates a very strong emotional response of contempt and this shows how impactful his diction is, in my media product I show this by creating a scene where two people are busy on their Gameboy and walk past each other. When they walk past each other their souls reach out for each other but cannot reach because they are being pulled away. His allusions also have a similarly strong emotional impact. His allusions of him becoming a “Pagan” and then seeing “Proteus rise from the sea” is like a call for revolution. (Wordsworth 10-13). Becoming a Pagan would mean that he would be an outcast from society but that was fine with him as long as it got him closer to nature. However, he takes this notion further by saying that he sees “Proteus” rising which symbolizes nature and all those who support it rising against the materialism of mankind and its supporters. In my media product I display this sort of idea by having an Aboriginal tribe dancing and chanting, and then a crow flying out of the video. The Aboriginal tribe symbolizes Paganism as they did not use technology and so they would be outcasts in today's society, and the crow symbolizes Proteus as in Aboriginal lore it is said to be a symbol for change and power. The crow flies out and breaks the black bars which shows it breaking free from the world's false consciousness. Both the crow and Proteus are calls for revolution against this society.