

Rattler diction essay



The Rattler Diction The speaker in “ The Rattler” conveys that difficult choices are made in life to test one’s morals and actions in a situation. He does this by using diction to deliver a sense of respect for the rattler and equality between the man and the snake. The speaker wrote this story in order to show empathy for the snake as he speaks for the snake’s perspective.

A relationship with the audience is established through creating remorse for the snake yet embracing the speaker’s “ duty” with upholding understanding. The speaker’s choice of respectful diction toward the snake portrayed the rattlesnake to being a fair opponent. The snake was “ capable of long range attack and armed with powerful fangs” yet it did not move in response to the speaker until he had initiated an “ unprovoked attack” on the snake.

The speaker describes the snake to have power and the ability to attack with a likely chance of accuracy – this indicated that the rattler was not helpless but in fact the complete opposite because it could have easily attacked first. The natural recoil the snake had in response to the speaker’s first attack shows that the snake had not expected combat because the rattler had done nothing to “ provoke” him, showing the powerful snake had not initiated the first hit but must defend itself for its own life.

When the speaker had brought out his weapon, the snake had “ shot” into the bushes and “ shook and shook his fair but furious signal”. The snake’s hiding from the man usually shows cowardice, but describing the snake to have “ shot” into hiding illustrates its speed – as if the snake were like a

bullet. His hiding in the bushes was not an intention of cowardice but was later shown in the sentence almost as if a desperate call for peace when the snake repeatedly “ shook and shook” his “ fair but furious” rattler.

Repeating the word “ shook” puts an emphasis to indicate its desperation while the rattler was calling for a “ fair” warning with its rattler, but once again shows to be desperate as it shakes “ furiously”. At the same time, the speaker uses diction to show the equality he had with the snake. The snake had “ quite sportingly [warned]” the speaker not to attack, but when the speaker had attacked and dragged the snake out with its broken back, “ he struck passionately once more at the hoe”.

The speaker had used the word “ sportingly” to characterize the sportsmanship between the two. This word is a light word used in this essay but it indicates in this situation that the snake and the man are playing at a game, the snake represented as an equal in this competition. The speaker also uses the word “ passion” to give the snake equality to man as passion is usually a human emotion. This shows that the rattlesnake has the ability to feel the same emotions and pain, leveling out the mentality between the two to show honor.

The speaker also illustrates the rattlesnake to be “ rigid”, “ suddenly arrested”, and “ undulate” when it had first spotted the speaker, a potential threat, to show that the snake was not predatory, but cautiously watching to see what intentions the man had. These choices of words balance the snake because even though the snake already possessed deadly weapons of its own, it did not feel the need to attack unless provoked. Which shown here

through the words the speaker chose to describe the snake's first appearance, strips the rattler of its danger and emphasizes humanity in the snake.