

# [Peter skrzynecki belonging essay](https://assignbuster.com/peter-skrzynecki-belonging-essay/)

“ The poems of Peter Skrzynecki convey a sense of both alienation and the hope for a brighter future. Discuss with reference to at least 3 poems. ” Belonging is a broad but complex perception that highlights our sub conscious need to feel a connection with something. A sense of belonging or not belonging can produce a strong emotional response within us. The poems Feliks Skrzynecki, St Patricks College and Postcard by Peter Skyrzynecki adopt the common themes of alienation and hope for a brighter future.

The theme of alienation is more decisively depicted in the poems Feliks Skrzynecki and St Patricks college, in which the persona is in a continuos battle to find his true identity and in doing so ‘ let his light shine’. On the other hand, the poem Postcard is somewhat a collision of the speaker’s two world’s, his own quest to belong and embrace the Australian culture whilst also trying to hang onto his Polish heritage. The composer emphasises these themes through the implementation of techniques including extended metaphors, allusions and personification.

Ultimately, the poems mentioned above intricately recognise the feeling of alienation and hope for a brighter future. The poem Feliks Skrzynecki conveys a sense of alienation which is epitomised through the bitter-sweet relationship between the father and son. The speaker’s cultural alienation from the father is decisively explored in the final stanza of the poem in which an extended metaphor is implemented to show the shift from adopting his father’s heritage to embracing the Australian culture.

The speaker first claims how embarrassed he was when ‘[he] forgot [his] first Polish word’ until further comparing his father to ‘ a dumb prophet’ who could do nothing but ‘ watch [him] peg [his] tents further and further south of Hadrian’s Wall’. The oxymoron and simile ‘ like a dumb prophet’ shows the true sadness associated with the helpless father as he can see his son drifting away from him but cannot prevent it from occurring.

Comparing the father to Hadrian’s wall (a military structure built by a roman emperor to protect soldiers guarding camps in England from the Scots in the north) is symbolic as it justifies the father’s qualities of strength whilst also alluding to his inability to adapt to a new cultural environment. The speaker makes comparisons with himself and a soldier who has to march ‘ further and further south’, this alludes to the speaker embracing the new Australian culture and inevitably losing connection from his father’s Polish heritage.

Essentially, this final stanza sums up the general message of the poem and leaves the responder with a deep sense of sadness when contrasted to the happiness in the beginning of the poem. In relation to the central idea of alienation, it is depicted once again in the sixth stanza of the poem when the speaker reflects on his cultural alienation compared to his father who is happily contained within his own cultural world. The father makes no effort to conform with and adopt the Australian culture which is proven in the line ‘ kept pace only with the Joneses of his own mind’s making’.

This metaphorical term alludes to competitive materialism, highlighting that Feliks makes his own standards and does not conform with the views of mainstream society. Furthermore, the composer states that his father is ‘ happy as i have never been’. The utilisation of the pronoun “ I” shifts the focus of the poem towards the son who has not been able to find happiness himself as he has been living his life in the shadow of his father. Consequently, placing an emphasis on the alienation and grief experienced by the son.

The core theme of alienation can be further depicted and given deeper meaning through the poem of St Patrick’s College which also addresses the “ barriers to belonging”. The alienation of the persona in this poem can be precisely shown through the quote ‘ caught the 414 bus like a foreign tourist’. The simile allows the composer to demonstrate the speakers sense of social alienation and the fact that he is disengaged with the country in which he feels as if he is a ‘ foreign tourist’.

In addition, the speaker claims that he was ‘ uncertain of [his] destination everytime [he] got off’. This elevates the speakers inability to find a connection with the country and environment that he calls home, henceforth reinforcing the fact that he is subject to alienation on a social and cultural basis. On the other end of the spectrum, the poem Post card by Peter Skrzynecki shows the collision of the speakers two world’s, that is, Australian and Polish heritage. The poem is somewhat the beginning of a brighter future for he speaker as it ties together all his feelings experienced in earlier poems, which therefore enables him to ‘ let his light shine’. Even though the speaker has been constantly neglecting his Polish heritage, this poem displays the composer alluding to the fact that he will connect with it in the future. This is highlighted in the quote ‘ we will meet before you die’. The technique of high modality in the quote enables the responder to grasp a clear idea on the certainty of the speaker having a future connection with his Polish heritage.

This also highlights the speaker engaging in the beginning of something new as the previous poems have highlighted a cultural alienation which is somewhat embraced is the poem, signifying his hope for a brighter future and prosperity. Ultimately, the poems Feliks Skrzynecki and St Patrick College by Peter Skrzynecki deals comprehensively with the barriers which prevent belonging, alienation and the unwillingness to not conform within a sociocultural context.

The poet has successfully explored the social and cultural concepts of belonging in-conjunction with effective techniques in order for us to truly understand these concepts. However, the poem Post Card creates the sense of a brighter future with the persona finding the potential to ‘ let [his] light shine’. Henceforth, the poems mentioned above by Peter Skrzynecki convey a sense of both alienation and the hope for a brighter future.