

# [Critical summary](https://assignbuster.com/critical-summary-critical-essay-samples-4/)

A well-known poet Louise Macneice beautifully writes this poem in a marvelous style. He has presented this poem in a manner of artistic perfection. Poet??™s feelings are speaking through the voice of an unborn child.? ? ?  In this poem, the poet is telling about the prayer of a child who is not born yet. The child is addressing and praying to ALLAH ALMIGHTY.

The child is afraid of this world and the people of this world who are passionless and brutal. They do not care about the feelings of their fellow men. He also says that this artificial world have no passions in their hearts.

They do not ever bother about anyone??™s sorrows and frustrations. The unborn child is now describing the reasons why he does not want to be born.? ? ? ?  In the beginning, he is talking to gracious ALLAH; he wishes that He should listen to him. He says that he is afraid of blood sucking bats, evil spirits and club footed ghouls. They all will destroy him, whereas he does not want to be ruined. After that he is asking ALLAH to console him.

He believes that human race will obstacle him in the expanded walls. This is a world of drugs and mafia; he wants to be saved from those who will affiliate him with their clever lies, on black racks rack him and shed his blood. Therefore he is expecting impatiently to give him comfort because he is not comfortable at all.? ? ? ? ? ? ?  The unborn child is a nature??™s lover. He is demanding for some beautiful luxuries of life, which have no importance for tyrant people of this world. He is accosting to the merciful and gracious ALLAH ALMIGHTY who is the best provider to provide him water for his mitigation, green grass for his growth, beautiful tees to talk to him, blue and cool sky to sing to him, birds and the light of guidance for his mind to lead him from the deviation of this world.? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?  Further more, he is now asking ALLAH to fill him with power and strength in opposition to those people debar his affability. They will shove him into a destructive automation.

He does not want to be used like a cog in a machine nor the cruel winds of the desert jolt him like a stream of leaves of dry flowers. He needs strength to bear the onslaught. He wants to be filled with durance against those who would blow him like thistle.

? ? ? ? ?  In the end, he is pointing towards a sorrowful aspect of the life of human beings that they are like stones. They have no hearts and feelings in them. They cannot console others in their lamentation. In the last line, he has said to ALLAH ALMIGHTY that if He cannot grant him the things that he has demanded and fulfill his prayers then do not send him in this world. ALLAH should kill him before birth. He does not want to be born because he does not want to be like those human beings who are just human beings by name not by merits and deeds.

In the poem ??? Prayer before Birth??™, the poet Louise MacNeice has drawn a picture of a corrupt, hateful and devilish world. Comment on the poetic devices and linguistic techniques he has used to create this image. Support your views with substantial evidence. In prayer before birth, Louis MacNeice uses a baby to convey his thoughts and emotions on the current state of the world. MacNeice wishes to emphasize how harsh and ruthless the world is, and how it can strip away a young unborn baby of its innocence. The poem, ??? Prayer Before Birth??™ is a dramatic monologue giving voice to a child in the womb, as yet unspoiled by the ways of the world he is about to enter, and a clean slate on which the world will write his fate. The poem is set out like an appeal, a cry for help.

The title itself, using the word “ prayer” shows that the baby is trying to get help for something which troubles him- which raises a question; why would a soon-to-be born fetus that has its whole life strewn in front of it be worrying about ??? sins??™ that he hasn??™t even gotten the chance to commit. We find it strange that a fetus has the ability to think or even ??? narrate??™ such a poem, suggesting how even though he isn??™t yet subjected to it, the evil omen outside is so intense that he could sense it from within his mother??™s womb. The poem flows from stanza to stanza in a rapid incantation of all the possible dangers the child may face beginning with the creatures of fable and nightmare, and moving on rapidly to include the horrors created by humanity. The most relevant technique that MacNeice uses is the irregular structure of the poem. Although it is presented as a prayer, the subject matter is contrasted to be vulgar, morbid and violent, heightening the effect all the more.

The varied length of the stanzas and lines is a mere reflection of the chaos in the world. The deterioration of humanity is effectively brought out through the cascading lines in the poem ??“ we are left with the feeling that with..

. Another hazard which there is in life is if we take all the wonderful things that we do have for granted. The poet gives some examples of the nice thing that we can have in life and the majority of the time we take these particular things for granted. These examples are also most of the joys of childhood, which suggests that the child is afraid to grow up he wants to stay a child and flourish in the thrills of his freedom. ??? Water??? is simple and pure and a necessity to live on.

So when the child wants ??? water to dandle??? him, he wants a simple life and pure love and affection. The line ??? grass to grow for me??? ha ??? g??™ alliteration and reminds us of our fantasies of endless green fields and a clean free environment. This is a contrast to the ??? tall walls??? in the second stanza. There is a ??? t??™ alliteration in the line ??? tree to talk / to me???, this shows that the child would prefer to talk to the enlightened trees than listen to the luring ??? lies???. In the line ??? sky to sing to me, birds??? there is an ??? s??™ alliteration. This is about the endless free sky which surrounds the world and all the creatures that bask and sing for glee of it??™s beauty. The ??? white light??? has internal rhyme and is a symbol of purity, innocence and peace but the ??? light??? represents the sun in the sky and its warmth.

The ??? light??? guides the child, gliding through the ??? sky??? like ??? birds??? to heaven. In a perfect world no one would take anything for granted and they would appreciate everything they have. In a perfect world we would be young and free forever.

stoat???, a sly, sharp-toothed, quick-footed animal like a person who leads you into traps and deserts you when you need them most. In the second line the ??? b??™ alliteration in ??? bloodsucking bat???, ??? t??™ alliteration in the ??? bat or the rat or the stoat??? and the ??? bat??? and ??? rat??? internal rhyme create a sort of spitting sound which fits the imagery of these animals perfectly. The line ??? club-footed ghoul??? creates an image of an awful person that haunts and hassles you,.

.. Louis MacNeice expresses his strong views on the human life by writing a poem through an unborn childs voice.

He starts off by asking God to protect him from various dangerous animals that could harm him such as blood sucking bats and land rats. The poet uses vivid language through the childs fears through words such as hear me and not come near me which also rhyme. Furthermore the poet tries to emphasize the unborn fears through metaphors such as human race may with tall walls wall me, being afraid of being taken control by other people who use wise lies to make believe something that is not true . The tone of fear despair and sadness is stressed constantly throughout the poem with the repetition of I am not yet born as it shows that although the foetus hasnt entered the human world yet, he is already concerned about all the evils that could affect himAlliteration such as grass to grow for me and trees to talk to me and personification like water to dandle me add to the deep meaning of the poem but in this stanza referring to the good aspects of human life. The fourth stanza is concerned with all the sins that humans commit in this world.

The foetuss fear of sinning is seen though the metaphors of my worlds when they speak me. And my thoughts when they think me as he is afraid of being brainwashed performing acts beyond his control which would turn him away from anything holy and sinful. Throughout the poem the poet uses such a form of writing that each stanza starts from being wide and then narrows down towards the end and makes it easier for the reader to carry on as the poet feel s the pressure on him from society. The fifth stanza refers to the foetus being worried about various situations in his future human life as for example old en lecture me and bureaucrats hector me, but he wants God to help him stand up by himself even when he is under pressure from other people. He also wants God to help him how to choose the right path even in the mast dangerous times as in the metaphors white waves call me to folly and the desert calls me doom referring to various dangerous adventures the he might be tried to lure into. The foetus desires to be protected from people who think they are better than others, the man who is beast or who thinks he is God. The negative vocabulary emphasizes the depressing mood of the poem.

The stanza before last is more detailed in the foetuss description of fears about human life which implies to his unwillingness to be turned into a person who doesnt think for himself being brainwashed by other people and performing acts that hey want him to perform, a cog in a machine. He doesnt want to be used by other in anyway, thither or hither and thither like water held in the hands that would spill me. The last stanza concludes the unborn childs fear of being turned into a being without his own thoughts or feeling. It concludes that rather turning into a machine without thought hed rather not be born, otherwise kill me. Louis MacNeice has quite a negative view on human life which he demonstrates through his style of writing and use of vivid language and imagery. The poet sees the society turning its members into uncaring human beings unable to think for themselves because of pressure from other people surrounding them.