

# [I felt a funeral in my brain essay](https://assignbuster.com/i-felt-a-funeral-in-my-brain-essay/)

“ I felt a Funeral, in my Brain”

Life, death, and reincarnation are portrayed in Emily Dickinson’s poem “ I felt a Funeral, in my brain”. The use of words associated with death gives the poem an ominous and dark karma. To add to this karma, important words that are strong in meaning are capitalized. At the beginning of this poem the feelings of grief and pain are evident. Throughout the rest of the poem, there is a strong sense that the speaker needs to make a choice between a world full of trouble and pain or a heaven that brings solitude and peace. This is all part of a vicious cycle. Sometimes when life doesn’t turn out for the best, you need to wait until your cycle is up. This is reflected clearly at the end of the poem. The speaker lives life, passes away, and is reborn again into this world all throughout this poems’ entirety.

The first two words of this poem reveal strong feelings. The words “ I felt” show that the speaker is talking about themselves. The line “ I felt a Funeral, in My Brain” brings to mind death; the word “ Funeral” is strongly pointed out by its capitalization. This word combined with “ Brain” can be simplified into the fact that death is inside the speaker. “ And Mourners to and fro/Kept treading -treading- till it seemed/That Sense was breaking through-.” Here, the speaker is bothered by their inner death that keeps mourning over and over throughout their head. The marks between “ treading -treading-” allow a pause between the two words, inducing a long, repetitive treading. This repetition causes irritation. Finally, “ Sense was breaking through”. This simply means that the constant repetition is now starting to make sense. A feeling of relief has surfaced, but only for a short while.

In the second stanza, as quickly as the voices made sense to the speaker, the quicker they stopped. In the line “ And when they all were seated” the relief stops, its being seated. When relief is seated and not moving, all seems to stop. The speaker brings us to the funeral by using the words “ A Service”, meaning funeral service, like one that takes place at a funeral home. Unlike the last stanza, where it all started to make sense, this stanza gets confusing. Confusion is shown in this line, “ like a Drum-/Kept beating -beating- till I thought/My Mind was going numb-“. Besides showing confusion, this shows repetition between “ beating -beating-” and “ treading -treading-“. This time though, at the end of the stanza instead of making sense, the speakers’ mind is going numb. The speakers’ thought process is dead, they are not thinking anymore.

In the third Stanza the voices start to take over by opening a box. Shown in lines 9-11, “ And then I heard them lift a Box/And creak across my Soul/With those same Boots of Lead”. This box is opened and all the problems and troubles lingering inside are released upon the speaker like “ Boots of Lead” weighing the speaker down. These problems build up and “ Then Space- began to toll,”. Portraying suicidal thoughts, the speaker can’t take anymore and it’s all beginning “ to toll”, meaning that it is coming close to the end. The upbringing of the soul in line 10 gives a sense of spirituality to the poem, the meaning of these words reflect the concepts of life and death.

During the duration of the fourth stanza, the speaker now hears voices calling to him. This is where the switch from life to death occurs. The line “ As all the Heavens were a Bell,” is very interesting. What are most bells used for? A church bell rings during time change, a school bell rings when it’s time to change class. The use of “ bell” in this line is to show the exit from earth and the entrance into heaven. The speaker hears these bells signifying change in the line “ And Being, but an Ear,”. The speakers describe themselves as an ear, as if to say all that could be heard was the call to heaven, and nothing more. “ And I and Silence, some strange Race/Wrecked, solitary, here-“. These lines tell us that the speaker finally relaxes. “ And I and Silence” reflects the relaxation and relief of the pressures and pain. The line “ some strange Race Wrecked” describes the exiting of life into death, the human race is “ wrecked”. Then all is peaceful, “ solitary, here-“, “ here” being Heaven.

In the last stanza the solitude breaks, and all that was once good is dropping, as if this was the wrong choice. This is seen in the line “ And then a Plank in Reason, broke,”. If “ Reason” is a deck made of wood containing many planks, then if a ” Plank” was to break you would fall. This would reflect the next line “ And I dropped down, and down-And hit a World,.” Here is where the speaker falls through the deck or, “ Reason” occurs. The speaker drops from Heavens and continues dropping. The emphasis (repetition) on dropping down is to show how far heaven is away, and how far the speaker actually was before falling. This brings him back to reality, back to the world were life begins and ends. The words chosen for the line “ at every plunge,” show the repetition of falling, restarting the cycle of life. The line “ And Finished Knowing -then-” describes reincarnation. Once the speaker “ lands” back on earth, the speaker starts a new life. “ Finished” is emphasized like other words throughout the poem, but the use of “ finished” at the end of this poem fits accordingly. “ Finished” fits well at the end of this poem because not only is the poem over, but it signifies the end of life and the start of a new one. The lines separating “ then” at the very end make it seem as though the words are fading away as did the thoughts of the speaker from the past life.

The speaker made it through the cycle of life, living dying and rebirth. Each stage was a hard endeavor, with some followed a period of relief, and others followed with a sense of desperation, as if things will never get better. Heaven and earth’s descriptions contrast each other so much, but no matter how peaceful Heaven seems, the gloomy karma still lurks throughout. This vicious cycle of life will always continue just as it is reflected in the poem.