

The speech of polly baker response



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Benjamin Franklin creates this powerful and intelligent character in the fiction story, *The Speech of Miss Polly Baker*. At the beginning, Polly Baker starts out humbly in response to being accused of giving birth to a bastard child for the fifth time. She asks the jury to listen to what she has to say. As she continues to talk, Baker starts to make strong arguments against harsh punishments that women are to bear from having an illegitimate child. Franklin using the voice of a woman strengthens his argument and enhances the story.

Polly Baker introduces herself as a, “ poor unhappy Woman” (6). Automatically, readers form sympathy for Baker. Franklin paints her as a tired and hard working woman, who is a provider for her children. Baker explains how she has cared for her children well, despite of not having a husband’s help. She could have had raised her children better if it “ had not been for the heavy Charges and Fines she have paid” (6). Because Baker has experienced the harsh punishments women had to endure for having a bastard child, readers form an emotional bond toward her although she is a fictional character. If Franklin was to just have written a piece from his point of view on this subject it wouldn’t of had as much influence.

Baker describes how the consequences of having an illegitimate child have caused abortions and mothers have, “ their own trembling Hands in the Blood of their helpless Offspring” (7). It is a different pain for a mother to experience the death of their child. Baker speaking on this empathizes how harsh the punishments are that a mother rather have their child to die. Franklin using Baker to express his thoughts was a smart way of connecting to readers’ emotions.

In The Speech of Polly Baker, Benjamin Franklin creates Polly Baker, a character that everyone can respect. Franklin expressing himself through Baker makes the story more interesting and empowering. Baker having five illegitimate children and raised them without any help is tiring Baker was punished for birthing them, but she should have been honored because being a mother is a tough job.