

# D.H. Lawrence Essay

*"From the poetry of D.H. Lawrence you have studied, select the poems that, in your opinion, best demonstrate his ability to use vivid language and imagery to deliver penetrating truths about life."*

D.H. Lawrence's poetry deals with many different subjects through his use of vivid language and imagery. Many of his poems deliver penetrating truths about life, particularly when writing about personal experience through eye-opening themes which allowed me to relate to him. I find that his use of vivid imagery is seen in his poems: 'Snake' and 'Call into Death' predominantly. Lawrence's use of tactile imagery through soft, tender images is seen in: 'Baby-Movements II, "Trailing Clouds"'. Finally, his beautiful use of contrast is seen in 'Bavarian Gentians', where his use of colour is astounding. As a poet, D.H. Lawrence delves into a vast variety of poetic techniques to display his view on life. His penetrating truths impacted me in a way I have never seen before.

In 'Snake', Lawrence uses a combination of vivid imagery and colour to depict a setting in which the speaker found a snake drinking from a water-trough. The snake is described as 'yellow-brown' which creates a sense of warmth. Lawrence's use of sensory description caught my eye immediately.

"The deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark carob-tree"

The poet uses an auditory technique of sibilance to capture the tone of the poem immediately. The soft, gentle tone in the beginning of the poem is soon contrasted with the use of harsh constant sounds such as 'c' and 't' and onomatopoeic words.

"And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter. I think I did not hit him"

These clear, concise statements continue when the speaker is violent towards the snake. The poet is hit with the penetrating truth that society has taught him to despise something that he likened to royalty.

"The voice of my education said to me he must be killed"

This truth resonated with me. This poem made me think about my education and how society has impacted me. This hatred for nature was mutual, I too hated the snake, and I too 'despised myself' after learning this penetrating truth. This was unique among the poets that I have prepared.

The use of vivid imagery is also used in 'Call into Death'. This use effectively conveys the idea of loss in my opinion. Lawrence's use of repetition and colour in this poem makes it memorable and aesthetically pleasing to the reader.

"The white moon going among them like a white bird among snow berries"

This simile brought the poem to life for me as I associate the colour white with vitality and hope. The use of repetition here amplified my emotion greatly while reading. The poet has clearly lost someone in this poem and is 'willing' to join them in death, yet the poet cannot, life has a strong hold on him.

"If I could lift my feet, my tenacious feet, from off the dome of the earth to fall like a breath"

The poet through the contrast of lifting and then falling, describes the puncturing truth that life clings on to us and we, to it. Through these soft, tender images I was able to empathize with the poet. The harsh truth that life is transient resonated with me and made me think.

The use of soft, tender images is also a feature seen in 'Baby-Movements II, "Trailing Clouds"'. The poem consists of three simile sentences that give structure to this free-verse poem. The tactile transition from light to heavy depicts a child and a mother by comparing them to a bee clinging to a flower.

"As a drenched, drowned bee hangs numb and heavy from the bending flower, so clings to me my baby"

The use of alliteration at the beginning of the poem creates a memorable, calming tone. As the poem progresses, Lawrence's use of comparison soon permeates the mood in the second simile.'

"As a silent bee at the end of a shower draws down the burdened flower"

The incredible frankness and realism of this line is what I think made Lawrence stand out from poets. This child has burdened the poet. The tone has changed to one of heaviness and regret. Throughout his works I don't believe he has ever been so honest. This poem opened my eyes to the theme of parenthood and the sharp truth that parenthood can be a burden. I really admire the poet's honesty here.

The use of contrast in 'Bavarian Gentians' is exceptional as the poet portrays the myth of Hades and Persephone. The darkness of the underworld contrasts the torch-like flowers and the yellow day.

"Smoking dark blue giving off darkness, blue darkness, upon Demeter's yellow-pale day"

The repetition of the words 'dark' and 'blue' show a strong, memorable contrast to the bright colours in the poem such as the 'yellow-pale day' or the 'white-cast day'. This hypnotic use of language mesmerizes the reader and lulls us into following the route of his imagination. The poet describes literal darkness and also ends the poem with the psychological darkness that one feels.

"I will go to the wedding, and be wedding-guest at the marriage of the living dark"

This determined resolve was fascinating to me as the use of repetition hypnotized me again and gave me the message that the speaker had embraced the darkness finally and had found it within himself. I believe after reading this poem that everyone has darkness within themselves, this was indeed a shocking truth for me. The poem gave me hope however, through the paradox that darkness cannot be, without light and that there is always an alternative to darkness.

It cannot be disputed that D.H. Lawrence is an extremely versatile poet. His ability to use vivid language in his poems is irrefutable and his use of vivid imagery is one of a kind. Each poem is a feast for the senses. Lawrence's honesty provides vivid insights into his life and experiences. Each poem incorporates a penetrating truth about life. The poet teaches the importance of nature while also keeping the reader's attention for example, an amazing poetic ability. Not only did I learn amazing, penetrating truths while reading Lawrence's poems, I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of them. From vivid images to harsh truths, Lawrence is truly an unbelievable poet.

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Eoghan Ó Tuile  
Gaelcholáiste an Phiarsaigh