

## Poems about Fathers

The best stories told is when the writer uses literary techniques that help the reader visualize what he want us to know or feel. Being able to visualize the writing is what keeps me interested and wanting to know more. Three poems I feel mastered the art of capturing an audience attention were “My Papa’s Waltz” by Theodore Roethke, “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden, and “My Father’s Hats” by Mark Irwin.

“My Papa’s Waltz” by Theodore Roethke is a poem about a father and son spending quality time together. The poem centers on a father who apparently is a heavy drinker and a mother who barely tolerates the father’s presence. Despite any flaws the man may have, his son adored him and the time they spent together. The boy recalled how he played around the house with his father until it was bedtime. The author used the literary technique simile when he wrote, “But I hung on like death” (3). When you think of death, you think of the end of something, but to say you were hanging on is like trying to stay awake. Another literary technique used was metaphor. An example is when the author states, “You beat time on my head” (13). This figure of speech can be an expression of rhythm as in rhythmically or playfully running around the house or it could be a sense of time as in sense of being tired. The mood in this poem is happy and playful.

“Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden is a poem about a boy recalling the things his father did to care for the family. It’s possible the father was a single parent because he seemed to do a lot of household tasks that were traditionally a mother would do. Those tasks included warming the house, making sure his son’s shoes were polished each day, and waking him up for

school. Imagery is the literary technique used in this poem. Examples of how the author used imagery was when he used descriptions such as “blueblack cold” and “hear the cold splintering, breaking” to describe how cold it was (2, 6). While the story is told from the kid’s perspective, I can’t help but feel sadness for the father. He seemed to work so hard and not be appreciated. The author stated, “No one ever thanked him” (5) and “Speaking indifferently to him” (10). It seems ironic that he worked so hard to bring warmth to his family yet they were so cold to him in return.

“My Father’s Hats” by Mark Irwin is a poem about a boy reminiscing how he would play in his father’s closet as a child and let his imagination run wild. He writes about how he would pretend to be someplace else with just the touch of one of his father’s hats. He describes what he see, smell, and the sounds he hear when he is transported to this imaginary forest. The author uses the literary technique imagery in writing this poem. Imagery is the use of descriptive, nonliteral language relating to the senses. One example, is when the author writes, “and on the inner silk crowns where I would smell his hair and almost think I was being held, or climbing a tree” (10-13). After reading this poem several times, I feel when the author use of the word crown could also be interpreted as a metaphor meaning a higher place. A crown can an object you put on top of your head, it could be top of your head, or maybe it’s the emotion the author is feeling when he thinks about his father. The mood throughout this poem is happy and playful. The boy is full of wonder and imagination.

Each literary technique used in these poems help me understand what the author wanted me to feel. My mood changed from being happy to sad then back to being happy again. The poem that was most appealing to me was “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden. Reading it reminded me of the relationship I had with my father. My father also worked hard each day to make things better for his family. It wasn’t until I became an adult that I began to really appreciate just how much he had done for us.

## Works Cited

Hayden, Robert. "*Those Winter Sundays*". Ed. Frederick Glaysher. n.d. Liveright Publishing Company. 31

January 2016. <<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/those-winter-sundays>>.

Irwin, Mark. "*My Father's Hats*". n.d. 31 January 2016. <<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/my-fathers-hats>>.

Roethke, Theodore. "*My Papa's Waltz*". n.d. 31 January 2016.

<<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/172103#poem>>.

	Y	N
Describes what each poem is about		
Interprets and analyzes the meaning of each poem, applying the terms, mood, imagery, and simile or metaphor appropriately		
Supports statements about the poems using evidence from the texts		
Explains which poems are appealing and why or why not		
Begins with an introduction that clearly introduces the topic		
Introduction contains a clear thesis statement		
Ends with a conclusion that synthesizes the ideas in the essay		
Writing is clear ,with no major errors		
Any sources of information are cited, using APA format, with no major errors		

