

Poems # 7

Poems about Fathers

Writers have always sought for a way to better convey emotion and description. Authors have come up with ways to express their art through metaphors, imagery, and mood as a way to further detail works of writing and poetry. This essay will review three poems and discuss some of the ways the author(s) chose to describe their works to the reader. This review will encompass the following poems; “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden, “My Papa’s Waltz” by Theodore Roethke, and “My Father’s Hats” by Mark Irwin. All three poems describe relationships between a father and his child through the use of imagery, mood, and metaphors.

“Those Winter Sundays” written by Robert Hayden is a poem with several great examples of metaphors and how they can be used to better describe a scene. During this poem it describes the temperature as, “cold splintering, breaking” (Hayden 1) instead of just saying it was cold. This helps the reader to better visualize how cold the scene truly is. Robert Hayden describes the scene giving the reader the idea that it's so cold that the air its self has become frigid and hard to endure. Personally, this line helps me to better relate to the poem having grown up and now currently living in a place inhabited by frigid cold temperatures. Similarly to the previous metaphor, “In the blueblack cold, then with cracked hands” (Hayden 1) also gives another example of how brutal the environment is. This line gives us the ability to imagine how the cold weather has taken its toll on the character’s hands.

“My Father’s Hats” by Mark Irwin is a poem that seamlessly conveys happiness. It’s about a son that loves even the smallest details about his father. This child stands on a stool every Sunday and plays with his father's hats in a closet. From the unique smells that emanate from the clothing, to the memories they share, all this child wants is his father. “Where the

musky scent of rain clinging to damp earth was his scent I loved” (Irwin 1) openly displays that this poem is about happiness and caring. Mark Irwin used a number of references about the woods, such as “I was in the forest, wind hymning through pines” and “I was being held, or climbing a tree”. I could only imagine the boy desperately wanting to go hiking in the woods with his father.

In the final poem, “My Papa’s Waltz” by Theodore Roethke, it further adds detail through the use of imagery. In the third paragraph, “The hand that held my wrist was battered one knuckle; at every step you missed my right ear scraped a buckle” (Roethke 1), it clearly described a violent scene involving a young boy being beaten and abused by his father. The line, “The hand that held my wrist was battered on one knuckle” (Roethke 1) depicts the father that had recently been fist fighting. It left the reader to wonder if the man had been out late at a bar getting drunk and fighting with patrons, or if he had beaten his wife before taking out his additional rage on his son. In another line in the poem “We romped until the pans slid from the kitchen shelf” (Roethke 1) left the impression that the child was thrown against walls and cupboards. This poem expressed a number of emotions, such as fear, anger and sadness.

This poem also describes the father as a as a drunk without ever actually saying that he had been drinking. By saying “The whiskey on your breath could make a small boy dizzy” (Roethke 1) makes it easy to infer that the father had been drinking heavily. From the title of the poem, referring to this event as a Waltz, it makes the reader suspect that this is a usual custom within the home, so much so that it was given a name.

All three poems have demonstrated that through the use of metaphors, imagery, and mood, stories and poetry can be described by using descriptive words. In each poem, the reader can visualize a father’s involvement in his son’s life. Although not all the poems express a

loving relationship between a father and his son, the authors used words and expressions to allow the reader to visualize the scene. As much as the poems were descriptive, they left out just enough so each reader could view things a bit differently, such as the look of the home, the faces of the characters, etc.

Works Cited

Hayden, Robert. "*Those Winter Sundays*." Poetry Foundation, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2016.
<<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/guide/177415#poem>>.

Irwin, Mark. "My Father's Hats." Library of Congress, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2016.

<<http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/098.html>>.

Roethke, Theodore. "My Papa's Waltz." *Poetry Foundation*. Poetry Foundation, n.d. Web. 24

Feb. 2016. <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/172103>>.

	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		