

Feedback for essay 'Stabat Mater' by Sam Hunt

Question:

How does Sam Hunt movingly convey family relationships in the poem, 'Stabat Mater'?

General comments:

- Most students are selecting appropriate quotes, HOWEVER, these are not always being used effectively. Remember, use quotes to prove your ideas and make sure you analyse their effect - think about the language, punctuation, images etc and what significance this has on the reader. Don't miss opportunities to discuss important elements of language and its effect.
- Quotes need to be integrated smoothly into your writing. Writing something to the effect of, 'This is a good quote to show this idea...' is not effective. Please see example.
- In poetry, write 'poet' not 'author,' 'stanza' not 'paragraph.'
- Be precise and thorough. Many of you write very generally. Whilst it is clear that you understand the poem, your ideas could be explained in much more detail.

Some examples of ideas about the poem which were effective:

- The evolution of family dynamics and relationships - In Hunt's family, each member changes and matures throughout their lives, this evolution can change the way people interact with each other, it may lessen the emotional distance felt between people, it may change the roles and responsibilities of an individual.
- Written from the perspective of the speaker, he is observing his family
- Ambivalence in the poem - on the one hand her address to 'Mr Hunt' connotes respect, on the other hand inferiority and timidity.
- The stages of life are explored in this poem as three generations are presented to us, a journey through the stages of life.
- The mother as sacrificing herself for her family, the presence of the silent pain and suffering that she endures and how this might link to the title.
- Family relationships are complex and love can be contradictory.
- The metaphorical significance of the final two lines.

Here is the beginning of two different paragraphs, exploring the same idea.

Note the following:

- The way in which the idea overall is more developed in example 1.
- The way in which the quotation is introduced in example 1: it forms part of the sentence and has been **contextualised**. In example 2 this has not been done effectively, “This quote shows this very well...” is awkward, you don’t need to use the word “quote” to introduce a quote.
- The topic sentence in example 1 expresses an idea that is linked to the question.

Example 1

In this poem, Hunt movingly explores the complex nature of his parents’ relationship and how this evolves over time. Initially we can identify an emotional distance between them. This idea is explored through the way in which Mrs Hunt addresses her husband, as “Mr Hunt.” Such an address is more likely to occur between people who are unfamiliar with each other, and thus this seems an odd way for a newly married couple to interact because it applies a sense of formality to a relationship which should be fun and relaxed.

Example 2

In the poem ‘Stabat Mater’ by Sam Hunt it appears that his mother feels emotionally detached from her husband. This quote shows this very well: “Mr Hunt.” This is the way you would refer to someone you don’t know very well.

For further study:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6i684XzMWpaVnv0dmcguwg>