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Literary Devices

1. SIMILE

* Line 3: This line compares the vitality of the earth to the shiny and reflectiveness of foil. It is trying to show that the world will burn out in a dazzling way.

***“It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;”***

* Line 4: When you think of how oil spreads over water, to take up all the visible surface at the top, the world is said to gather in the same way – to brilliance.

***“It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil”***

1. RHETORICAL QUESTION

The persona is questioning the purpose of human existence. This implies that we are going against his will and are incurring his wrath.

***“Why do men then now not reck his rod?”***

1. ALLUSION (biblical)

From 2 Samuel 7:14, the rod of God is actually the rod of correction. This could imply that God thinks destroying his creations (nature) is a sin.

***“****Why do men then now not reck* ***his rod?”***

1. REPITITION + PUN

By repeating “trod” three (3) times, the persona emphasizes the generations that have passed since the creation of the world and their impact on nature. This could also imply that mankind has trampled nature, downgrading and destroying it – hence the pun.

***“Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;”***

1. ALLITERATION

* Lines 10-11: “smudge”, “smell” and “soil” successively emphasize the negative effect man has had on the environment.

***“And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil”***

* Lines 14-15: This device shows the resilience of the Earth towards the violent nature of man.

***“There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;”***

* Lines 18-19: This device reaffirms the resilience of the Earth, showing that everything is in a cycle, iterating continuously.

***“at the brown brink eastward, springs—”***

1. PERSONIFICATION

The word brood is to think about something. The world ponders, but positively with warm breasts. The world is personified into a mother hen who cares for her children, or its inhabitants. By thinking about us, it can be implied that mother Earth cares about us.

***“World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”***