Analysis Of The Theme And Poetic Techniques In The Poems

Poetry is a form of literacy that evokes imaginative mindfulness of either an experience or an emotional response. It’s a chosen language arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm. Both writing and reading poetry's strength lies in its ability to shed light on the world as it serves people's desires to explain. Poetry is a way to grow emotionally and intellectually as language articulates knowledge symbolically. Additionally, it is a mode for expressing altruistic morals and logical explorations about the meaning of life. This argumentative essay will examine, analyze and explain the theme and poetic techniques in the poems ‘My Country,’ ‘The Road Not Taken,’ ‘The New True Anthem,’ and ‘The Boxer.’

‘My Country’ by Isobel Marion Dorothea Mackellar, examines the theme of the sunburnt land of Australia. It’s a rhyming poem, six stanzas in length. The simple, descriptive language is evocative for all. The opening stanza describes landscape; however, Dorothea Mackellar yearns for the Australian bush that calls to her heart, and the remaining stanzas are an anthem to her homeland. The poet recalls the physical geography of the land through imagery and uses adjectival phrases such as ‘opal-hearted country’ and ‘sapphire-misted mountains’ to emphasize her gratification with it. Alliteration such as ‘lithe lianas and ‘flood, fire and famine’ is utilized to emphasize the characteristics of Australian rural life. Personification is utilized to personalize Australia, and in gendering her country, she can further strengthen her connection. She invites Australians to impart and harmonize with her feelings by saying that those who are not Australian wouldn’t comprehend the ardor she feels. By doing so, she has created a poem that speaks to our national identity.

The critical response poem, ‘’The New True Anthem’’ by Kevin Gilbert challenges the Australian public about our lack of patriotism. This poem acknowledges the fact of various opinions of what happened to the land that was once home to the Indigenous and Aboriginals people. Gilbert uses his poem to challenge and question the sense of pride and admiration that was declared ‘’My Country’’ by Dorothea Mackellar. Uses of Imagery such as ‘pollute all the rivers,’ ‘a tyranny now rules our soul’ and ‘humanity locked in chains’ displays Gilbert's passionate feelings for Aboriginal rights and dignity through poems. Alliteration is used in the line ‘’the scared black bodies writhing’’ to further emphasize and portray the anger and pain they underwent. The line, ‘the beaches and the mountains are covered with your shame,’’ personifies the use of ‘your’ in a personal attack on the public and focuses on what was once beautiful, which is now tarnished. Repetition in ‘’Australia oh Australia you could stand tall and free’’ effectively expresses his need for the society’s understanding of the land of this heritage. Gilbert's effective use of poetic techniques opposes Dorothea and expresses our lack of apathy and patriotism for our country.

‘’The Road Not Taken’’ by Robert Frost examines the theme of ambiguous choices in life that is often impossible to see where the life-altering decision will lead. Ambiguity forms from the question of free will versus determinism. It’s whether the speaker in the poem chooses their path to follow. They are destined to follow one, as they regret not taking both, they sacrifice one for the other. The poem compromises of four stanzas, each with five lines in length, steadily producing a rhyme scheme of a four-beat first-person narrative. Frost's speeches are a

combination of iambs and anapaests; ‘’two roads diverged in a yellow wood, And sorry I could not travel both. This is a monosyllabic poem that consists of enjambment which keeps the understanding flowing. The road is used as a metaphor of life in which our lives are portrayed walking towards an undetermined destination. When the arrival of the fork appears, it symbolizes a metaphor for a life-altering decision in which negotiating is impossible. Imagery is used to produce feelings to the reader through the five senses, such as grassy, leaves, and yellow wood. This, in turn, aids readers in perceiving the road providing a navigation route to the traveler. There is a simile used in the second stanza, ‘’as just as fair’’, which shows how the road less taken and the easy way through life are linked together. Assonance is used in ‘’through as far that the passing’’ and in ‘’somewhere ages and ages hence.’’ Consonance is utilized in ‘’two roads diverging in a yellow wood’’ and ‘’through as far as the passing there.’’ In the third line of the second stanza, ‘’because it was grassy and wanted wear’’ is stated as if the road is human which wants to wear and tear.

‘’The Boxer’’ by Emma Payne focuses on the theme of persistence and courage; we may refuse to give in because we may get back up again. The poem is written in short lines with three to four beats on each line. There is a regular scheme in each stanza in which the second- and fourth lines rhyme. She utilizes powerful words to paint pictures of a boxer after he has lost a match. The boxer is described through images from nature to show that he is like a natural force, robust and steady. Similes also aid in the reader's imagination as the poet describes ‘’scabs like flowers on his knees’’. By surprising the reader with this starting simile, the poet challenges us to see the connection and awareness of the contrast. The comparison between unpleasant, aching scabs and gorgeous soft flowers makes us imagine red symbols of his courage and perseverance. In the second stanza, a juxtaposition expresses his struggle between the calm and gentle action of “a cherub” spouting water in a fountain and the uncouth, fierce action of spitting blood. Repetition is utilized to emphasize the character's feeling of pain inflicted upon him, ‘’bleeding me, bleeding’’ which in turn set him up for ‘’I am leaving, I am leaving’’, expressing he has finally had enough and desires to resign.

Throughout my study of poetry this term, I have personally gained a greater understanding of not only literature and language but also myself and the world I live in. Poetry has increased my literacy and linguistic awareness through the use of rhythms, imagery, and connotations. My critical analysis skills have further developed while completing tasks delegated to identifying poetic techniques such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, and personification. In addition, I have a deeper view of the complexities of the world and have developed empathy and understanding for a different point of view.