

Wordsworth - "Daffodils" (1804)

_ Wordsworth's theory of poetic creation

The daffodils also illustrates Wordsworth's theory of poetic creation. Wordsworth did not write poetry about the emotion being felt at the time of writing. According to him, a poem is the expression of an emotion 'recollected in tranquility'. He saw the daffodils in 1802 and must have often sought solace in recollecting them in his imagination in hour of weariness. But he wrote this poem only in 1804. Wordsworth perhaps felt that the elapse of a certain span of time was necessary for an emotion to get purged of undesirable frills and trappings and be fit for poetic creation

Figures of Speech Used in Daffodils

I wander'd lonely as a cloud - The first line makes nice use of personification and simile. The poet assumes himself to be a cloud (simile) floating in the sky. When Wordsworth says in the second line 'I' (poet as a cloud) look down at the valleys and mountains and appreciate the daffodils; it's the personification, where an inanimate object (cloud) possesses the quality of a human enabling it to see the daffodils. The line "Ten thousand saw I at a glance" is an exaggeration and a hyperbole, describing the scene of ten thousand daffodils, all together. Alliteration is the repetition of similar sounds, is applied for the word 'h', in the words - high and hills.

Symbolism in the poem

The breeze which makes the daffodils dance and flutter is symbolic of the poet's creative activity. The joy offered by the daffodils represents the joy, the harmony that abide in Nature and that can produce a tranquillizing effect on man's mind. The poet's heart dancing with the daffodils signifies the permanence of joy offered by Nature and the participation of human being in that joy.

Model Question:

1- According to Wordsworth, a poem is the expression of an emotion 'recollected in

- A- confusion
- B- madness
- C- disturbance
- D- tranquility

The correct answer is (D)

Wordsworth- THE RAINBOW

**MY heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,**

Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

My Heart Leaps Up, also known as **The Rainbow**, is a poem by the British Romantic Poet William Wordsworth. Noted for its simplicity of structure and language, it describes the joy that he feels when he sees a rainbow and notes that he has felt this way since his childhood. He concludes the poem by noting how his childhood has shaped his current views and stating that "the child is father of the man".

"My heart leaps up when I behold"

In this very short poem consisting of only 9 lines, the speaker begins by declaring that he is moved by nature, and especially by nature's beauty: "My heart leaps up when I behold / A Rainbow in the sky

" He goes on to say that he has always felt the impact of nature, even when he was an infant: "So was it when my life began; / So is it now I am a man." The speaker is so certain of his connection with nature that he says it will be constant until he becomes an old man, or else he would rather die: "So be it when I shall grow old, / Or let me die!"

In the next line he declares that children are superior to men because of their proximity to nature: "The Child is father of the Man." For this reason, he wishes to bind himself to his childhood self: "And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety."

Form

Rhyme scheme abccabed

Analysis

The speaker explains his connection to nature, stating that it has been strong throughout his life. He even goes so far as to say that if he ever loses his connection he would prefer to die.

The seventh line of the poem is the key line: "The Child is father of the Man." This line is often quoted because of its ability to express a complicated idea in so few words. The speaker believes that children are closer to heaven and God, and through God, nature, because they have recently come from the arms of God.

The speaker understands the importance of staying connected to one's own childhood, stating: "I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety."

For Wordsworth, Nature was his main source of spiritual comfort and escape from all the cares of this world. His association with life giving and life sustaining Nature began even when he was only a child and remained with him till his death.

In this short lyric, the 'rainbow' symbolizes the life sustaining and life nourishing goodness of Nature. The sight of the beautiful rainbow which he saw when he was only a child is deeply etched in his memory and the same joy that he experienced when he saw it as a child continues to remain with him through his adulthood.

He desires that this same childhood joy should continue to sustain him even in his old age. Wordsworth says that he would rather die than not being able to experience the same joy that he experienced when he saw the rainbow when he was a small boy after he becomes an old man.

The memory of the beautiful rainbow and its pleasant associations form the link between his childhood, adulthood and his old age: past, present and future. Wordsworth concludes the poem by expressing the desire that each day of his existence to be linked with the next by beautiful and simple natural sights like the rainbow.

Although it appears simplistic, this poem details many complex ideas. Wordsworth's opening lines explain how: "My heart leaps up when I behold / A rainbow in the sky" (1-2). Wordsworth is overjoyed at nature, a common theme in all of his work, but what's more is that he states: "So was it when my life began; / So it is now I am a man; / So be it when I shall grow old, / Or let me die!" (3-6).

The last three lines contain one of Wordsworth's most famous phrases: "The Child is father of the Man; / And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety" (7-10).

Wordsworth is happy enough to have kept his appreciation of nature and only wishes it will last him forever, in "natural piety."

"It is remarkable that many of Wordsworth's poems deal with the relationship of the child to the world, and consequently, with the relationship of the adult to the child, and through the child relationship of the adult to nature. Most simply this poem says that the poet is thrilled in his youth when he saw one; he will continue to be thrilled by a rainbow when he grows old; if it cannot be so then, he would prefer to be dead.

Model Questions

For Wordsworth, Nature was his main source of and escape from all the cares of this world.

A- spiritual comfort

B- sadness

C- disappointment

D- grief

The correct answer is (A)