

Variations on a Theme

We have considered a number of poems that draw inspiration from the bible. Moreover, these poems reflected on three specific stories or characters in the text. Choose two poems that interpret the same story/character differently and discuss how the two authors compare and contrast in their reading of the bible.

You MAY choose two poems we've covered already, but if you'd like some variety, please feel free to use any of the attached poems as well.

Parameters

- 3-5 pages (NO MORE THAN 5)
- Double spaced
- Times New Roman
- Turned in via Turnitin by 3 pm Monday 11/3
- Writing goals listed at the top of page

Things We've Covered that Your Paper Should Demonstrate

Grammar/Usage

- Effective manipulation of clauses and phrases in a variety of sentence structures
- Strong, clear sentences that highlight (rather than bury) your point
- Sentences that have a point, rather than just say words
- Paper reflects a thorough editing – words are used correctly, spelled correctly, and punctuation is accurate

Analysis

- Paper finds an original, thoughtful angle from which you compare/contrast
- Points are provable by the texts
- Tone, theme, literary devices are all addressed
- AT LEAST six direct quotes from the poems (remember, even one word counts – poetry is about details!)
- The conclusion arrives somewhere new (“so what”)

Writing Strategies

- Individual goals are listed at the top of paper and are addressed with intention and effort
- The paper makes its claim without using “I” or “You”
- Sentences and paragraphs have logical links between them to help your paper “flow” and prove its points gracefully
- If I asked you to, you used a template
- Quotes are integrated smoothly into the text

Content Knowledge

- Paper demonstrates clear understanding of the biblical allusions in the poem
- Paper demonstrates clear understanding of literary devices & the ways in which they help the poet create meaning

WHAT THE SERPENT SAID TO ADAM

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Which is you, old two-in-one?
Which is which, old one of two?
When the doubling is undone
Which one is you?

Is it you that so delights
By that woman in her bed?
Or you the glimmering sky afrights,
Vast overhead?

Are you body, are you ghost?
Were you got or had no father?
Is this you—the guest?—the host?
Who then's the other?

That woman says, old one-of-two,
In body was the soul begun:
Now two are one and one is you:—
Which one? Which one?

The Animals

By Edwin Muir

They do not live in the world,
Are not in time and space.
From birth to death hurled
No word do they have, not one
To plant a foot upon,
Were never in any place.

For with names the world was called
Out of the empty air,
With names was built and walled,
Line and circle and square,
Dust and emerald;
Snatched from deceiving death
By the articulate breath.

But these have never trod
Twice the familiar track,
Never never turned back
Into the memoried day.
All is new and near
In the unchanging Here
Of the fifth great day of God,
That shall remain the same,
Never shall pass away.

The Follies of Adam
By Theodore Roethke

Read me Euripides,
Or some old lout who can
Remember what it was
To jump out of his skin.
Things speak to me, I swear;
But why am I groaning here,
Not even out of breath?

What are scepter and crown?
No more than what is raised
By a naked stem:
The rose leaps to this girl;
The earthly lives in her;
A thorn does well in the wind,
At ease with all that flows.

I talked to a shrunken root;
Ah, how she laughed to see
Me staring past my foot,
One toe in eternity;
But when the root replied,
She shivered in her skin,
And looked away.

Father and son of this death,
The soul dies every night;
In the wide white, the known
Reaches of common day,
What eagle needs a tree?
The flesh fathers a dream;
All true bones sing alone.

Poseidon's only a horse,
Laughed a master of hump and snort;
He cared so much for the sport,
He rode all night, and came
Back on the sea-foam;
And when he got to the shore,
He laughed, once more.

FILL AND ILLUMINED

God created his image.
I love him like the door.
Speak to me now.
Without god there is no god.
Forget everything!
Lie down and be circumscribed
and circumcised.
Yet there is no pain.
Yet there is no joy.

(By Joseph Ceravolo)