

Essay Outline- “The lockless Door” by Robert Frost

Introduction: In life there are many choices and opportunities to do something, and some take that opportunity, while others try to avoid them.

Intro of Topic: Robert Frost, the author of “The Lockless Door” creates a character that chooses to avoid and to miss opportunities when they present themselves.

Method of Development:

Robert Frost uses :

- 1- imagery to show that he is walking in darkness,
- 2- metaphor to describe how the narrator feels trapped, and
- 3- alliteration to emphasize the window as an escape route to hide from something the narrator fears.

Thesis: In the poem “The Lockless Door”, the theme of avoidance and missed opportunity is a reflection of the author’s life experiences, creating a fearful tone.

Body Paragraphs

Point #1- Imagery is used to show that he does not want to be seen, and is walking in darkness, resulting in a fearful tone.

Lead: Robert Frost sets the scene as he states:

Primary Source Quote: “I blew out the light/I tip-toed the floor” (Frost 5-6).

Exit: The use of imagery allows the reader to picture what the character is doing. Frost describes it as darkness because when it is dark, one cannot see, and therefore one cannot be seen. Since the character does not want to be seen then they are trying to avoid something as he blew out the light. Also, the character is trying to be quiet as he tiptoed the floor. All of these things allow for the reader to picture how frightened the character is as they try to avoid the opportunity that is knocking.

Lead: In a biography about Frost, the author noted:

Secondary Source Quotation: “Frost’s success was counter pointed by personal grief and loss. Several of his children were still born.” (Encyclopedia 128)

Exit: The dark, depressing, and sad feeling is a reflection of Robert Frost because he was depressed and it shows through in his work. This quote explains what was a driving force behind his unique poetry. Due to the fact that there was a lot of tragedy in his life, the fearful tone is displayed, while the character in the story is avoiding the opportunity that is knocking. It seems as if the character in the poem is Robert Frost himself as he uses grief and tragedy as an excuse for hiding himself from the world.

Summary: As you can see, Frost creates a fearful tone as he uses imagery to show the darkness that the character was tiptoeing around in.

Point # 2- Robert Frost creates a fearful tone by using a metaphor to describe how the narrator feels trapped and restrained.

Lead: He explains how his life is comparable to a cage, feeling trapped

Primary Source Quote: So at a knock/ I emptied my cage (Frost 17-18).

Exit: The word 'cage' is suitable because like a bird, the narrator feels contained, and not free. One can tell by the quote that he wants to escape. A fearful tone is present because he feels trapped, but he is afraid to be free and experience something he is not familiar with. He again is avoiding something by leaving and saying bye to his trapped lifestyle.

Lead: Not on a personal level but on a poetic and literary level is this metaphor a reflection of Frost's life:

Secondary Source Quote: "Robert Frost is a moralizing poet and his poems have a moral in intent" (Jennings 5).

Exit- The metaphor helps to develop the theme to the reader, as people can relate and understand how trapped and afraid the character in the poem is. Since his poems have a moral in intent therefore the reader can assume there is one, and the cage is a word that could help interpret one. Again, a fearful tone is associated with the word cage because if someone's cage is empty, there is something missing, which asks the reader to ponder on the thought of why is it empty, and why he is leaving.

Summary- It is evident that the metaphor relates to Frost's typical writing style, which creates a fearful tone.

Point # 3- An Alliteration is used to emphasize the window as a way to avoid the knock or opportunity, generating a fearful tone.

Lead: The alliteration is described by Frost as it is a way of escape:

Primary Source Quote: "My window was wide/I climbed on the sill/ and descended outside" (Frost 10-12).

Exit: Obviously if someone has an escape path they are trying to avoid or get by. The window in this case is used as a way to avoid the opportunity of something that has knocked. Again it makes the reader aware that there is an unknown obstacle that the narrator is trying to escape from, all of which creates a fearful tone. It is frightening to hear an unknown knock and it is even more frightening to see someone escape from it because they are afraid of it. Robert Frost uses this to create a fearful tone because if they are afraid of it, so should the reader. This alliteration helps the reader to develop an image that incorporates a wide window that can be used to escape from something. The alliteration slows one down so that one can get a full understanding of how wide it is and how significant it is to avoid opportunities

Lead: Also in a biography, Robert Frost has suffered from many things in his tragic life:

Secondary Source Quote: "Frost suffered from depression and continual self doubt," (famous poets and poems).

Exit: The use of alliteration in this part of the poem is a reflection of Robert Frost's life because he was depressed and this poem as a whole shows that his depression motivated him to write a story about escape.

Summary- In summary, emphasis is put on the window as an escape route through alliteration, creating a fearful tone.

Conclusion- In conclusion, a fearful tone is created as the theme of avoidance and missed opportunities are a reflection of Robert Frost's life.

Restate points- Frost uses:

- imagery to show the darkness in his life,
- a metaphor to compare his life to that of a birdcage,
- an alliteration to stress that window as a place for escape.

As one can see all these literary devices generate a fearful tone, which reflects Robert Frost's life.

Memorable statement- People should think that every day is an opportunity, and since one only lives once, make it the best it can be as every day could be your last.