

English I Honors

Literary Analysis Task #2

received: 12/12/13

due: 12/16/13

In this task you will analyze "Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson and "Death, be not proud" by John Donne. As you read these texts, you will gather information and answer questions to help you compare and contrast how the poets' use of figurative language impacts the meaning and tone of the two poems. At the end of the task, you will be asked to write an analytical essay.

Because I could not stop for Death
by Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality. 4

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility – 8

We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess – in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun – 12

Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle – 16

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground – 20

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity – 24

Briefly answer each of the following questions about "Because I could not stop for Death" in the space provided.

1. How is Death characterized in the poem? Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.
2. What is the meaning of the word "Civility" as it is used in line 8 and how does this meaning help establish the tone of the poem? Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.
3. Explain how the extended metaphor of the carriage ride supports a central idea of the poem. Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.

Death, be not proud
by John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me. 4
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery. 8
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then? 12
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Briefly answer each of the following questions about "Death, be not proud" in the space provided.

1. Analyze how the lines "Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,/ And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell" (lines 9-10) help establish the tone of the poem. Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.
2. Explain how the sleep metaphor supports a central idea of the poem. Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.
3. What is the meaning of "One short sleep past, we wake eternally" (line 13)? Use textual evidence from the passage to support your answer.

Literary Analysis Task:

Use what you have learned from reading "Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson and "Death, be not proud" by John Donne to write an essay that compares and contrasts the impact of figurative language on the meaning and tone of each poem.

Develop your essay by providing textual evidence from both texts. Be sure to follow the conventions of standard English.

Write your essay on a separate piece of paper. You may use the space below for planning.