Poetry Questions: Model Answers

1. What is the overall mood created by the poem and visual? Provide **TWO** examples from each work to show how this mood is created.

 The poem “Troll” by Shayne Koyczan and the accompanying visual, both create a similar mood that is serious and upsetting. This mood becomes evident through the use of violent and deceitful diction and powerful imagery created through figurative language. The use of these techniques allows the poet to give the poem’s speaker a voice through which he expresses a critical commentary on the practice of internet trolling (harassing people online to make the lives of others painful/difficult). Examples of violent diction can be found in the metaphor which states “you learned to knit pain into a kind of camouflage”, and the simile which states you “who crept into our lives, with tongues like knives stabbing your words into our skin”. The first example captures the deceptive nature of trolling through the notion of using pain to hide oneself, while the second example expresses the violent nature of the activity through conveying the painful affect words can have on our self-esteem. This is shown specifically through the word “stabbing”. Similarly, the mood is created in the visual through the use of emotionally symbolic color, and the juxtaposition of the “evil” troller against the innocent victim. To be more specific, the effective choice of coloring the hurtful words blood red, and choosing to extend this color into the splatters on the wall, the artist is able to capture the pain and suffering that is created as trollers intentionally attempt to *wound* others in order to make themselves feel better. Similarly, this mood is created through the juxtaposition of the sinister and mal-intentioned troller who is infecting the world with her negativity (as shown through the spread of the black through the computer screen in the form of the grasping hands), against the young girl whose youthful innocence is being destroyed. This innocence is symbolized by the fact that she is drawn all in white. From these examples it is obvious that the mood created is one that is serious and upsetting to the audience.

2. What is the main message/theme developed through the poem and the visual?

Both the poem “Troll” by Shayne Koyczan and the accompanying visual develop the message that, in this world, people can influence our lives in traumatically negative ways. In the visual it is evident that the young girl is being victimized by the troller as the curved lines of the grasping hands, and the black mass from which they are originating seem to envelope/consume her. The effect it is having on her emotional state and self-esteem is extremely negative, and this is seen through the curved lines emphasizing her hunched and therefore defeated posture, as well as emphasizing her head in her hands. However, while the visual is only successful in conveying this message, the poem is able to take it one step further. Similarly the poem creates the message that people can negatively influence our lives in traumatically negative ways. This is shown in the quote “you have coaxed the sober back into bars, handed our cigars at memorials, offered nooses, cliffs, and pills to those who unfortunately found you before they found help”. The quote focuses on the extreme results of such harassment which can end in suicide. However, at the very end of the poem the message is slightly modified through the line “we will not let you make your dinners out of the things we feel.” Through this line, the poet alters the message and suggests that, though people can influence our lives in traumatically negative ways, there is still hope of escape if we can learn to stand up for ourselves. In this way, the message of the poem and the visual differ slightly.

5. Identify **TWO** examples of imagery throughout the poem. State how the imagery is effective.

The poem “Troll” by Shayne Koyczan relies on the use of effective imagery throughout his poem to express the seriousness of the phenomenon of ‘trolling’. These images are created through the diction and figurative language of the piece. One such image is shown when it states “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”. This image is effective because it contributes to developing the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the poem. Another effective image is shown where it says “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”. This image is also effective because it contributes to the development of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Without such imagery, this poem would not have left such a lasting impression on the audience.

6. Discuss the significance of the title. Use **TWO** references to the text to support your answer.

The poem title, “Troll”, is significant because it allows the poet to bridge the fictional world with reality. Through the use of this figurative metaphor, Shayne Koyczan transforms the fairytale monster who plagues the nightmares of children, and modernizes this figure into one that unfortunately is relevant to today’s technological reality. The monster is still lurking beneath the surface waiting to strike fear into one’s heart, however, instead of living “underneath bridges” they have “migrated … to living underneath information superhighways” (meaning the internet and by extension social media). The reality is that, yes “the world changed”; it changed into a place where monsters are real, and they thrive on “waltz[ing] in between tragedies” where they unleash their cruelty. This double meaning which turns fiction into reality is therefore the reason why the title is so significant.

Visual Question: Model Answer

7. State a title for this visual. Defend, using **TWO** specific references to the visual, why this title is appropriate.

In considering the negative subject matter of this visual, as it has to do with harassment over the internet, an appropriate title for this piece could be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. First of all, this title is appropriate because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Additionally, this title could also be considered appropriate because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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