



## Poetry Analysis Essay

Ballad of Birmingham is the author of the poem that revolves around a little girl who would like to go downtown to take part in a freedom protest. Her mother, however, says that she cannot go because of the dangerous conditions outside. Her mother instead tells her to go to church despite the little girl's constant explanations that she would not be alone. Defeated and in a show of respect for her mother, the little girl gets dressed and goes to church. Her mother is contented that she would be fine at the church. Sooner her mother hears of an explosion that sets her racing downtown in search of her daughter. Unfortunately, she finds her daughters dress and shoes in the piles and rubbles. She is left wondering where her daughter is.

The author employs the use of imagery in most parts of the poem to trigger the emotions of the readers concerning the innocence of the little girl and the gravity of the explosion. The imagery serves to create a memory in the readers' minds that are left forming the images after reading the whole poem.

The first use of imagery occurs in the second stanza, second and third lines. The little girl's mother describes the nature of the streets which are, in her opinion dangerous for a little girls life "...dogs are fierce and wild." The little girl's mother is worried that the girl could lose her life to the guns, or get arrested as a result of the march for freedom "...and clubs and hoses, guns and jails." The imagery used in the third line depicts how the government through the police dealt with protesters. The line shows that the police would use clubs, hoses, and guns to thwart the protests. The police also could arrest the protesters and take them to jail. The readers thus form the image of how the police dealt with the protesters that eventually appeals to their emotions.

Another instance of imagery is in the fifth stanza, particularly for emotive purposes. The poet writes that the little girl "...bathed rose petal sweet" to display the girl as young and innocent. Although the previous stanzas portray the little girl as mature, the quotation reminds the reader that the girl is little and innocent, vulnerable to march for freedom. The quotation moreover portrays the little girl as delicate and defenseless against the danger and evil that lie outside. The little girl also has "... drawn white gloves on her small brown hands" to display more innocence. The little girl's defencelessness and vulnerability add emotion to the poem.

Finally, another instance of imagery is found in the sixth stanza. We are told that the little girl's mother's eye "...grew wet and wild, as she raced through the streets of Birmingham" after hearing the explosion. Instantly the reader understands the tension that befalls the mother because of her conclusion of her daughter's death. The reader forms the image of the mother, with her eyes wet and wild. The line appeals to the readers' emotions in addition to giving them the memory of the traumatic events that followed the explosion. The poet moreover describes how the mother searched for her daughter in the rubbles frenetically "...through bits of glass and brick." In a moment the reader forms the image of the effects of the explosion thus concluding that the girl has lost her life.

The poet effectively employs the use of imagery to appeal to the memory and emotions of the readers. The reader has deliberately chosen and used descriptive words to present the imagery that instantly enables the reader to form the pictures with relative ease.