

Date 9 / 22 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / Lyric

Title "One Train May Hide Another"

Author / Director / Kenneth Koch

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

A hard copy of "One Train Hides Another" was given to the entire class by Mr. Shakely because it is his favorite poem, and he deems it significantly "poetic" and relevant to everyday life.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc? )

"One Train May Hide Another" was inspired by a railroad crossing sign by the same name in the country of Kenya. The author was thus inspired to write a poem that describes various instances in which appearances may be deceiving. The poem accentuates the fact that there is oftentimes something quite different or even more important below the surface of what one expects. For instance, one very literal reference to this concealment is mentioned in the following line: "One colonial may hide another / One blaring red uniform another, and another; a whole column" (1). This is an obvious reference to the Redcoats of the British army and their strategy in war. They line up in such an ordered fashion that doesn't allow their enemies to determine how many soldiers there actually are or how many are left. A more abstract allusion to the biblical story of Adam and Eve is also present in the poem as it states, "In the / Garden of Eden / Adam and Eve may hide the real Adam and Eve" (2). Perhaps the story of how humans turned to evil may be hiding another story or may be representing something entirely different than how it is interpreted. Discerning what is real from what is unreal or what is actually present is quite difficult and that is why "It can be / important / To have waited at least a moment to see what was already there" (2).

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

"One Train May Hide Another" is a spin off of the cliché phrases, "Things are not always what they seem," or "God works in mysterious ways." It focuses on perception and the ways in which people perceive particular circumstances and situations. Obviously, the poem illustrates that the cover or appearance of something may and will most likely not be the same thing someone receives, comes into, or encounters. In other words, things tend to hide or conceal realities that may not even appear to be there. Most importantly, however, the poem is trying to convey the fact that the most valuable and critical things are oftentimes simply overlooked or cast in the shadows due to one dimensional perceptions. Covers hide those things that are more important than they may seem. A search for meaning is also clearly visible in this poem, as the genuine meaning of things may not always be identifiable. Meaning is often difficult to discover, and humans need to be conscientious and diligent if they are to succeed in this quest for understanding.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

The repeated usage of "may hide another" throughout the poem continuously stresses the main point of the piece of work, which may even be hidden in itself. The phrase serves as a mechanism by which the author many times gives examples of things that hide another, even though they are not readily apparent or obvious. Moreover, the poem uses the most basic example of concealment, a train hiding another behind it at a railroad crossing, as a symbol to guide and facilitate the understanding of other instances of the same concept. This is in some way comparable to a window curtain, which ultimately disguises the window when it is closed and doing its job. Finally, the constant switching of ideas and examples keeps the reader engaged and interested.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

"One Train May Hide Another" was quite an interesting yet realistic portrayal of life in general. Although some of the references were vague or unclear due to a lack of previous knowledge, it provoked a reevaluation of how to approach life. The poem, though quite similar to the Parable of the Rabbi and Elijah in *The Once and Future King* by T.H. White, was actually quite skeptical in nature and presented a display that nothing can be known for certain. The parable, on the other hand, did explain that surface appearances may be deceiving, but it also added that people must trust that God will ultimately make the eventual outcome of a situation righteous and just. This is much more comforting than the idea that everything is hidden or in disguise; nevertheless, both are surprisingly relevant. For instance, there is not one day that goes by that I do question what is real or not, especially with regards to human actions and behaviors. The poem, however, is in fact poetic. It seems that the author is trying to explain the importance of searching beyond the exterior in order to find something that is more meaningful and perhaps even more important. If things are always hidden like this, then there is always some greater reasoning or rationale behind situations. Thus, the word poetic characterizes a search for this deeper meaning and an examination of the world in a closer and unique way. Someone who lives in this way and is constantly searching for the good or some better understanding of things is definitely poetic. The way of life presented in this poem is a valuable life lesson.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)