

Jake Gilbert  
QPA 4

How does Toni Morrison use word choice to relate past problems of oppression to current ones, forming a new type of social slavery? For example, Sethe's present day actions are described using words with a primarily negative connotation such as heap and sighing. The word choice is important for Sethe because it can show us what she may be thinking or feeling whilst she may not be directly divulging such information. Morrison's use of word choice shows us that despite having escaped slavery, Sethe feels like she has simply been put in a new type of situational slavery. Her attempted fleeing and acceptance of the past proves to be much more complex than it previously seemed.

Elizabeth Hilmon

Section 4 QPA

Period 3 AP Literature

Mr. Olio

How does comparison function in this passage? After discovering the truth behind the circumstances of Sethe's baby's death, Paul D tells her, "You got two feet, Sethe, not four. In this comparison, Paul D compares Sethe to an animal, condemning her crime and reminding her of a painful event in their shared history - Paul D helplessly watched as Sethe was raped at Sweet Home, unable to protect her because he was restricted with a bit in his mouth. At that moment, Paul D was reduced to something less than human, an animal. In telling Sethe she has "two feet, not four", he delivers a cutting insult based on the circumstances of their pasts and how they have come to know what it means to be human.

Haley Stramel

*Beloved* Section 4 QPA

AP Literature

Mr. Olio

Why does Morrison choose to use figurative language to portray Denver's feelings?

Instead of saying she feels upset or scared, Morrison uses sentences like "the panic that is creeping over her like hairs" and "she feels like an ice cake torn away from the solid surface of the stream" after Beloved disappears. Sethe never tells Denver how she feels, so Denver isn't used to words to describe them, she's used to symbols and subtle cues to feelings, which is what Morrison is trying to show using figurative language. They're also placed at only the beginning and end of this long paragraph, with no other metaphors or similes used elsewhere, letting the reader start and end with how Denver feels once she realizes Beloved is missing. Symbols and cues to feelings can sometimes be more telling than actual words when it comes to emotions.

Beloved QPA

Why does Morrison characterize Sethe with gloomy diction and the two girls with hopeful diction. For example, in the passage it reads, " Sethe was alone and weak, but alive and so was her baby." and " She began to sweat from a fever she thanked God for since it would certainly keep her baby warm." Morrison's diversified diction juxtaposes the bleak future for the mother and the bright future of the girls. Morrison creates a cause and effect as Sethe's suffering is the cause of the youngsters future. In other words, Morrison alludes to how a mother demonstrates her love for her offspring by making sacrifices. In the earlier part of the novel, when Sethe's milk was taken, she complained that she could not give herself to her baby, because of others.

QPA  
Section 3 Passage 1

In this passage, Morrison foreshadows Baby Suggs coming over Sethe with a motif of defenselessness. Sethe's internal conflict is reflected by the fact that Morrison refers to Baby Suggs telling Sethe to "Lay em down, Sethe. Sword and shield. Down. Down. Both of em down. Down by the riverside. Sword and shield. Don't study war no more. Lay all that mess down. Sword and shield." This is contrasted by the earlier use of the line "IT WAS TIME to lay it all down." In this earlier instance, Baby Suggs isn't the one speaking (or being quoted); Sethe takes the dominant point of view, which shows us that these thoughts are not completely Baby Suggs, but partially her own too. The narrator then goes on to say "under the pressing fingers and the quiet instructive voice, she would." The word choice of "pressing" further develops this motif by demonstrating that Baby Suggs' fingers are literally urging Sethe to do as she pleases. Perhaps this seems to come from a positive place because of Baby Suggs' reputation of openness and her ability to relieve others of their stress. We inevitably see that when we let something inside us, it has the ability to consume our thoughts.

Bridget Gerrity

Mr. Olio

Period 6 AP Literature and Composition

2/25/14

*Beloved* QPA #3

How does a physical environment description characterize Sethe's inability to move forward from her past? The author's inclusion of, "it took her no time to find the path", displayed that she had spent a many years in that area with her husband; and she knew the location like the back of her hand. Although the path seemed familiar, it was now surrounded by, "food-laden tables" and "tent[s]" from the "big-city revivals" that distracted from the trail. This change in environment indicated that although time has passed and new responsibilities are in place for her, Sethe's feelings for her husband have not been altered. Despite years passing, the feelings that Sethe holds in her heart for Halle are more powerful than a change in nature, and are likely to stay.

Tony Valente

AP Literature

*Beloved* Section 3 QPA

How does Morrison's use of point of view reveal Denver's true relationship with Beloved? For example, Denver was "mildly accusatory" while talking to Beloved, but goes on to say, "she doesn't want to offend and she doesn't want to betray." Our narrator's harsh emotional words contradicted by an instant thought of not wanting to offend Beloved, all point to a strong emotional tie that Denver feels towards Beloved. Fitzgerald matter-of-factly submerges the reader into Denver's mind where Denver's love for Beloved is masked by a thick outside shell. The capability to express ones love consistently is hindered by the other negative emotions, which suppress this.