

Questions

George Gray Is this the speaker?

Unknown vocab

by Edgar Lee Masters, "Spoon River Anthology"

figurative devices

I have studied many times

The marble which was chiseled for me

Carved into something particular, usually writing

What marble? tombstone

A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor

metaphor = life had no meaning, was boring

not carefully folded, hanging

In truth it pictures not my destination

But my life. maybe he's been one place his whole life

a formerly optimistic feeling changes to a pessimistic one

For love was offered me and I shrank from its disillusionment

Why? doesn't want to be in a relationship isolated

personification

Sorrow knocked at my door, but I was afraid

How does sorrow knock?

personification

Ambition called to me, but I dreaded the chances.

paradox

Yet all the while I hungered for meaning in my life.

SHIFT

And now I know that we must lift the sail

= take chances

And catch the winds of destiny

How do we do this?

metaphor

Wherever they drive the boat.

go with the flow, accept circumstances + make the best of them

Something is missing but you don't know what it is

To put meaning in one's life may end in madness,

But life without meaning is the torture

Of restlessness and vague desire

Unclear or uncertain

metaphor for heartbreak or troubles as a result of true feelings or risk

It is a boat longing for the sea and yet afraid.

metaphor for how GG lived his life "safely" but meaninglessly

Conclusion: Take chances. Don't neglect opportunities. Truly live even if you're scared.

Fiddler Jones
by Edgar Lee Masters, "Spoon River Anthology"

farmer

THE EARTH keeps some vibration going
There in your heart, and that is you.
And if the people find you can fiddle,
Why, fiddle you must, for all your life.
What do you see, a harvest of clover?
Or a meadow to walk through to the river?
The wind's in the corn; you rub your hands
For beeves hereafter ready for market;
Or else you hear the rustle of skirts
Like the girls when dancing at Little Grove.
To Cooney Potter a pillar of dust
Or whirling leaves meant ruinous drouth;
They looked to me like Red-Head Sammy
Stepping it off, to "Toor-a-Loor."

plays the fiddle

beef

Comparing viewpoints

THEY SEE vs. I SEE
harvest of clover (farmland) vs. meadow → river (leisure)

wind = time to take cows to market to make \$

reminds me of girls dancing

dry land - wind storms = drought -- no produce is growing

kick the dust up = dancing

How could I till my forty acres
Not to speak of getting more,
With a medley of horns, bassoons and piccolos
Stirred in my brain by crows and robins
And the creak of a wind-mill—only these?
And I never started to plow in my life
That some one did not stop in the road
And take me away to a dance or picnic.
I ended up with forty acres;
I ended up with a broken fiddle—
And a broken laugh, and a thousand memories,
And not a single regret.

How am I supposed to work when everything reminds me of what I actually love to do fiddle

Directions: Using the graphic organizer below, compare and contrast how the figurative language devices and specific diction choices work to create the persona and mood in Edgar Lee Masters' poems "Fiddler Jones" and "George Gray."

Words

Diction in "George Gray"

disillusionment
sorrow
furled sail
restlessness
torture
madness
afraid

Claim Statement

Both speakers, ^{after death} posthumously reflect on the quality of their life experiences; while "George Gray" relies on

sad diction and a depressed mood

Diction in "Fiddler Jones"

dancing
"Toor-a-loor"
heart
picnic
blossoms
clover
harvest
moby

Persona & Mood

George Gray: regretted his decisions, low self-esteem, he ~~sad~~ teaches readers how to avoid mistakes he made
sad, scared, inspired to live differently/take chances

Persona & Mood

Fiddler Jones: no regrets, light hearted, positive, enjoyed making other people happy, not ~~obsessed w/ work~~
cheerful, optimistic

Figurative Language in "George Gray"

Metaphor of GG's life as a "boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor" - he didn't live his life like he should have because boats are meant to sail and because he never took any chances (never "sailed"), he felt his life was meaningless

to express his regrets about missed opportunities, "Fiddler Jones" uses

cheerful diction and a positive mood

to demonstrate his satisfaction with honoring his heart's desires.

Figurative Language in "Fiddler Jones"