Poetry analysis Essay Outline Chart

Introduction

Essay opener: Residential schools have caused irreparable harm to the first nations peoples in Canada, harm that is still felt to this day. Many aboriginal authors and poets have written about the experiences of those who went to residential schools but perhaps one of the most successful literary works has to be that of “Monster”, a spoken word poem written by Dennis Saddleman, a residential school survivor who shared this poem at the Truth and Reconciliation hearings.

Background information: (what poem was about) The poem “Monster” is about Saddleman’s experiences at residential school, how he felt during that time and the impact his experiences have had on him. It is a journey of remembrance, healing and forgiveness.

Thesis statement: The poem “Monster” by Dennis Saddleman explores his experience at residential school

in order to demonstrate the negative effects the residential school system had on first nations peoples then, and now.

The poet uses many methods to accomplish this task.

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| Main Idea #1 | -he uses strong figurative language to help the reader relate to his experience |
| Main Idea #2 | -he makes use of various literary elements to help us understand his message |
| Main Idea #3 | -he uses specific examples of his experience to help us understand his emotions during his ordeal. |

Conclusion sentence- Overall, Saddleman, uses these methods to effectively convey his message about the harmful effects of residential school, and the need for survivors to forgive, in order to allow the healing process to begin, so that they can move on with their lives with hope, dreams and dignity.

Body paragraph #1

Topic sentence: One method Saddleman uses to convey the negative impacts of residential school in his poetry is through the use of figurative language.

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| Technique | Example | Explanation |
| Extended metaphor | Comparing residential school to a monster and how it chewed the Indian out of him.  Line 32-36YOUR WIDE MOUTH TOOK ME  YOUR YELLOW STAINED TEETH CHEWED  THE INDIAN OUT OF ME  YOUR TEETH CRUNCHED MY LANGUAGE 35  GRINDED MY RITUALS AND MY TRADITIONS | Makes it easier for the reader to understand how his language, culture and traditions were taken away |
| Personification | Giving human characterisitics to the monster’s throat to show how it took away his language, hopes and dreams46-48 YOUR THROAT MUSCLES SQUEEZED MY HAPPINESS  SQUEEZED MY DREAMS  SQUEEZED MY NATIVE VOICE | Helps reader imagine how hi language, culture and traditions were taken away-squeezed out of him |
| Pun | Stories being used as stories of the building but also as stories being told  135-139 I was looking at a tall building with four stories 135  stories of hope  stories of dreams  stories of renewal  and stories of tomorrow | helps us experience the weight of his anger being lifted off his shoulder which allows him to start anew on his journey in which he will be able to create positive stories about hopes and dreams of the future, and find renewal and transformation |

Body paragraph #2

Topic sentence: (main idea # 2 to support thesis) A second method utilized by the poet to help the reader understand his message is through use of literary elements.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Reason/Idea | Example | Explanation |
| repetition | Repetition of “I hate you, residential school I hate you” | Helps reader understand the strength of his feelings |
| tone | Goes from angriness, to sorrow to forgiveness | Helps take the reader on a story through his experience- helps us relive his journey, and better understand the emotions he has experienced, as his perspective changes. |
| Point of view | Beginning told from his point of view- then switches to the monster | Helps reader to relate to the experience of the poet and how they are able to come to terms with what happen and forgive |

Body paragraph #3

Topic sentence: (main idea # 3 to support thesis) A third way in which Dennis Saddleman helps us understand his theme is through sharing specific examples of his experience with us so we can understand his emotions.

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| Reason/Idea | Example | Explanation |
| Fear | 17-20 MONSTER EYES SO EVIL  MONSTER EYES WATCHING  TERRIFIED CHILDREN  COWER WITH SHAME | Helps us understand how scared he was |
| Hate | 65-69 I hate you Residential School I hate you  You’re a monster  Your veins clotted with cruelty and torture  Your blood poisoned with loneliness and despair  Your heart was cold it pumped fear into me | Helps us understand how much he hated residential school and the depth of his anger |
| Resilience | 132-134This is where I earned my diploma of survival  I was looking at an old Residential School who  became my elder of my memories | Helps us understand how strong he had to be to go through all of those experiences and survive and move on.-helps us empathize |

Conclusion

Restate thesis statement in new way: As one can see residential schools were horrible and inflicted the vilest atrocities on the children who were forced to attend. Dennis Saddleman’s poem “Monster” helps us get a glimpse into the evil that was residential school.

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| Restate Main Idea #1 | -he uses strong figurative language to help the reader relate to his experience |  |
| Restate Main Idea #2 | -he makes use of various literary elements to help us understand his message |  |
| Restate Main Idea #3 | -he uses specific examples of his experience to help us understand his emotions during his ordeal. |  |

Conclusion statement By using these methods, Saddleman masterfully delivers his message about the devastating, long lasting, consequences of residential school, and the necessity for survivors to find a way to forgive, so that the healing process can begin, and they can move on with their lives with hope, dreams and dignity, steadfast in their resilience.