Mid Stage 4 English – Selecting and Analysing Poems for an Anthology – Grade C

The poems I would recommend for the students to study are ‘A sad and lonely cyclops’ by Kenn Nesbitt, ‘I have to write poem’ by Kenn Nesbitt and ‘Milking before dawn’ by Ruth Dallas.

The first poem I will discuss is “A sand and lonely Cyclops” by Kenn Nesbitt. This poem shows depression and discrimination. The Cyclops is very misunderstood but he has a great heart. This is shown in the poem when he says “I'm as harmless as a kitten I wouldn’t hurt a fly”. The problem is that he is teased by humans. They discriminate against him because he has one eye. The Cyclops wants to join the Olympics but they won’t let him join. So he sits at home and cries.

A good example of imagery is “I sit at home and sniffle and sadly cry my eye out”. This makes you think of a giant big Cyclops monster sitting on a sofa and holding a tissue to its eye. The rhyme also makes it funny. I recommend this poem to students because it makes the point that you shouldn’t be mean to people that are different.

The next poem I’m going to discuss is “Milking before dawn” by Ruth Dallas. This poem is about a person who has to get up early in the morning to milk cows. The person is compared to a city person. He describes everything from the smell of the soil to the warmth from the shed. The person works at a dairy on an island and is at work just about as the sun rises. The first verse is about him describing the cows, the weather and sky. The second verse is describing the shed, the equipment and how tired he is. The third verse is about the sun rising, how he thinks the earth is young again and letting the city man sleep. Some of the poetic techniques in this poem are metaphor like when the poem goes “the night was water cold”. The poet describes everything well such as when the poem includes “the moon monotonous beat and heat of the smooth machines”. I would recommend this poem to students because it is a good example of poetry.

The last poem I am going to discuss is “I have to write a poem” by Kenn Nesbitt. This poem is about a boy who has to write a poem but he doesn’t know how. The poem the boy writes is about a cow. The idea of a cow is very good because every one knows what a cow is and that means there is no misunderstanding. Then because cows are so common place he makes it a cow from outer space. Then he describes a cow as a space cowboy. The space cow has a helmet, a ship, a suit and blaster in a holster on its hip. Then the cow flies round the Galaxy and has huge karate fights with evil monkey aliens. He will also duel with laser sabres to vanquish evil emperors and save the day.

The techniques used in this poem are humour and rhyme. The humour is in there to make us laugh and feel good. The rhyme strengthens the humour. The poet also makes allusions to movies like “star wars” and TV shows like “Power Puffs”. I recommend this poem to students because it is smart and funny and I like it.

Grade Commentary

Haley has demonstrated a sound understanding of the selected poems. The coherent response displays a sense of personal engagement with the poems and adequately justifies their inclusion in the anthology. An understanding of the thematic ideas in the poems is apparent. The identification of poetic devices shows a developing awareness of their effects but greater depth of analysis and more detail are required.

Haley’s response demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at a grade C standard midway through Stage 4.