

Checking out me History by Agard & The Emigree by Rumens

Looking at Identity

AOs

AO1 – 12 Marks

AO2 – 12 Marks

AO3 – 6 Marks

Total: 30 Marks

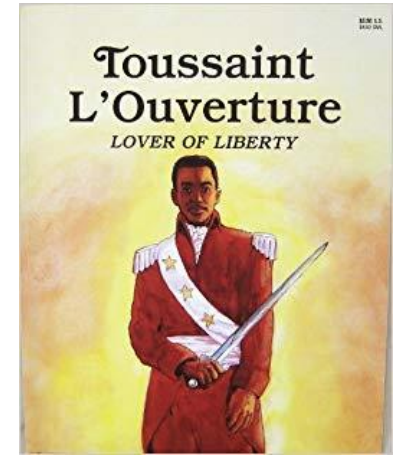
FLIRTSC - Analysis

- **F**orm and Structure (AO2, AO1)
- **L**anguage (AO2 , AO1)
- **I**magery (AO2, AO1)
- **R**eader's Response (AO1)
- **T**heme and Tone (AO1)
- **S**ubject (AO1)
- **C**ontext (AO3)

The poet looks at the inconsistencies in history and how that distorts our identity

Conflict between fact and myths about indigenous people

- Powerful black figures from history, often involved in conflicts and struggle are ignored



Repetition – emphasises the repetitive control that white people have had over the curriculum that is taught to students schools.

The **childish rhyme** shows how he feels about what he has been told about the past – this is why he mentions characters from nursery rhymes and myth – he is mocking what he has been told

Some Free verse (shorter lines) – outbursts of anger and controversial ideas

Form and Structure AO2

These **longer verses** serve to concentrate on famous in black history – gives more importance to Black people who have been ignored and disregarded

No punctuation – Agard chooses to reject the rules of punctuation – the poem is therefore purposefully full of enjambment – this represents how he is rejecting white history too

Form and Structure



Agard cleverly uses **two types of stanzas** to show the differences between ‘**official**’ and ‘**non-official**’ history

Shows that without a history and without a distinctive voice we may have no identity



- The poem is cleverly constructed **to reclaim black identity**
- Makes the reader aware that **British history is only a point of view**
- **Introduces** the reader to **famous black people**
- Reminds us that **whoever controls the past, controls the present**



Shaka = an influential leader of the Zulu nation. He united the Zulu people against other tribes and the increasing presence of the white settlers

Caribs and Arawaks = the original inhabitants of the West Indies at the time when Columbus 'discovered' the islands. They were killed off by the war or through exposure to European diseases that they had no immunity to.

Florence Nightingale = a famous British nurse. Famous for her work in the Crimean War and her innovations in hygiene.

Robin Hood = legendary English hero made famous from supposedly stealing from the rich to give to the poor.

Mary Seacole was a Jamaican woman who looked after soldiers in the same way that Nightingale did – a black woman who made a unique contribution to our history but has been forgotten.

Crimean War = 1854-56 Russian Empire vs Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire. Lots of deaths occurred from fighting but also from outbreaks of disease.

Old King Cole and The Cow Jumped Over the Moon = nursery rhymes from England

Important things to know...

1066 = crucial to English history as it marked the take over of English society by the French.

Dick Whittington = a poor boy with nothing but a cat who became Lord Mayor of London – mentioned in fairy tales and pantomimes

Touissant L'Ouverture = the black leader of the Haitian revolution against French Colonial rule. He abolished slavery in Haiti and turned it into an independent republic

Nanny de Maroon = (Maroon is a general term used to describe black slaves who escaped from slavery and lived in remote places within the areas they had been transported to. Nanny de Maroon led the maroons to victory in Jamaica against British rule.

Lord Nelson = famous English admiral who inflicted a massive defeat on the French which meant the British Empire was strengthened.

The Battle of Waterloo 1815 = the final defeat of the French army led by Napoleon which made Britain a world super power

Language - A02

Local Dialect

Dem -

Me -

Bout -

Dat -

Lick back -

De –

See-far woman –

Standard English

Them

-My

-About

-That

-Defeated

-Of

-A woman who
has a vision of the
future

Language and Imagery - AO2

Bandage up me eye with me
own history
Blind me to me own identity

The alliteration on 'b' at the start of these lines shows that Agard believes that information has been deliberately distorted and hidden

The use of the 'b' creates a harsh and angry tone

The use of non-standard English is used to show his own culture and background which he feels is not acknowledged by the English Curriculum

Language and Imagery

Dem tell me bout 1066 and all dat
dem tell me bout Dick Whittington and he cat
But Toussaint L'Ouverture
no dem never tell me bout dat



Non – Standard English is used to diminish the importance of White imposed history and accentuate the importance of Black historical figures and **Black identity**

Language and Imagery

A02

These longer verses serve to concentrate on someone famous in black history

The use of occasional rhyme to highlight the importance of figures in Black History

*Toussaint
a slave
with vision
lick black
Napolean
battalion
and first Black
Republic born
Toussaint de thorn
to de French
Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution*

Italics and Free Verse mostly - The tone is serious They are italicised so that they stand out visually

These section are filled with metaphor and positive imagery to convince the reader about how amazing these people are

Language and Imagery

This language is unusual
and original

*Nanny
see-far woman
of mountain dream
fire-woman struggle
hopeful stream
to freedom river*

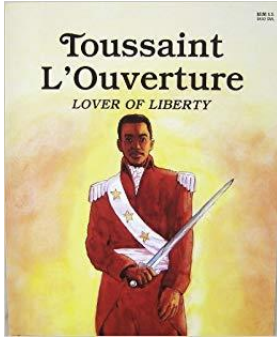


The metaphors
create a positive
image of Nanny –
she was revered as
for her knowledge
and insight

Language and Imagery

The lines are shorter and they are written in free verse – Agard is using an unconventional form to write about unconventional ideas

The use of occasional rhyme in these sections is irregular



*Toussaint
a slave
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Toussaint de thorn
to de French
Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution*

These longer verses serve to concentrate on someone famous in black history

The mocking tone is not apparent in these sections. They are italicised so that they stand out visually

These section are filled with metaphor and positive imagery to convince the reader about how amazing these people are



Subject

History is distorted to represent the lives of those in power- It was written by British people for white people

Controlling what people learn, leads to the controlling how people think of others and themselves

Theme and Tone

Tone

Angry, mocking Tone

The Emigree

by Carol Rumens



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CONTEXT

- Speaker's memories of childhood in another country
- Fascination with a place elsewhere
- Conflict between imagination and reality
- She is emotional and an outcast
- French word 'emigre'
- Not autobiographical

Context
A03



Form and Structure

- Narrative poem
- 3 stanza structure (8, 8, 9 lines)
- Flashback –memory of childhood
- Free verse – memories flood her mind and ack of power as she cannot go back
- Enjambment – flow of thoughts , back and forth to her childhood
- Repetition of ‘ Sunlight’ – recurring motif
- Repetition - ‘They’ – the oppressors
- Caesura – there are obstacles that prevent her from going back – makes her powerless

Subject

Power of place and Identity - Speaker is excluded from her own country – displaced- does not fit in her new country

Memory – creative lie – feels more true than reality



Theme and Tone

Tone

- Loss of Identity
- Nostalgia

The Emigree

There **once** was a country... I left it as a child
but my memory of it is **sunlight-clear**
for it seems I never saw it in that November
which, **I am told**, comes to the mildest city.
The worst news I receive of it cannot break
my original view, the **bright, filled paperweight**.
It may **be at war**, it may be **sick with tyrants**,
but I am **branded** by an **impression of sunlight**.

The **white streets** of that city, **the graceful slopes**
glow even clearer as time rolls its tanks
and the **frontiers** rise between us, **close like waves**.
That child's vocabulary I carried here
like a **hollow doll**, opens and spills a grammar.
Soon I shall have every **coloured molecule** of it.
It may by now be a lie, banned by the state
but I **can't get it off my tongue**. It tastes of sunlight.

I have **no passport**, there's **no way back** at all
but **my city** comes to me in its own white plane.
It lies down in front of me, **docile as paper**;
I comb its hair and love its shining eyes.
My city takes me dancing through the city
of walls. They accuse me of absence, they circle me.
They accuse me of being dark in their free city.
My city hides behind me. They mutter death,
and **my shadow** falls as **evidence of sunlight**.
.

Language and Imagery

Language
and Imagery
A02

What connotations do you associate with these words

Positive Imagery

- sunlight-clear
- impression of sunlight
- It tastes of sunlight.
- evidence of sunlight
- bright, filled paperweight – metaphor - embedded in her memory
- white streets - Hazy memory – childhood innocence and tranquillity associated with her country
- Graceful slopes –sibilance - beautiful images of her country that stays in her memory
- Close like waves – simile

Recurring motif- fondness

Longing for home country –

positive , happy memories

Negative Imagery

- sick with tyrants - dictatorship
- Branded – etched in her memory
- frontiers rise between us – barriers and conflict
- hollow doll – Sense of emptiness and longing
- banned by the state – cannot return
- no passport -
- They mutter death – violence and conflict at 'home'
- accuse me of being dark -
- no way back at all -

SENSE OF THREAT

HER CITY IS PLAGUED CONFLICT AND OPPRESSION

WAR TORN – DICTATORSHIP

Reader's Response ?

What is your viewpoint of the speaker's feelings?

Is there a conflict within the speaker?

What is the nature of the conflict that she experiences ?