

Critical Analysis of the Poem 'Good Timber' by Douglas Malloch

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Abstract



Motivation, self-sacrifice, hard work for a good life, and forbearance against difficulties are mirrored in Malloch's poem 'Good Timber. Certainly, Inspiration, sacrifice, industriousness for a decent life, and tolerance of teething troubles are echoed in Malloch's poem 'Good Timber'. It is the faith that decent results are followed by hard struggles. It is grounded on confidence, hopefulness, and the trust that hard work is never wasted. The study aimed to critically analyze the poem in terms of Motivation, self-sacrifice, hard work for a good life, and forbearance of difficulties. This study asks what the main message of Good Timber is for learners. The process is ordinary. The sample is Malloch's poem Good Timber. A critical discourse analysis was selected as an analysis tool. It turns out that the poem Good Timber is a declaration of the powers of hard work to things of frustration and sluggishness, almost vulnerable to negative forces-discouragement, self-defeatism, and social effects. It is also mentioned that one should not show despondency entirely. He must have persistent conviction in the power of hard work - that God grants those for which you make hard work and hard worker is the friend of God.

Keywords: Hard work, motivation, self-sacrifice, Good Timber, English lyrics

Introduction

Malloch visited this world in 1877 and kicked the bucket in 1938. He was a poet and lived in the USA. He was writing short stories. He was a Lumberman poet. He was trading in a paper in the city of Chicago USA. He was famous for Lumberman's poetry at the local and national levels. He wrote many poems. Moreover, he became famous due to other masterpieces. The poem conveys the information that men are as trees nurture and touch their spot-on power by overpowering hardship and harsh conditions. When he suffers difficulties, he gets success because each ease lies hidden in difficulty. Similarly tree bears storms, floods, and strong winds and then becomes the queen of the jungle (Eaton, 2019).

He was a strange person. His abode was in Michigan City. He gained his puberty in that place of woods and logs. He was a young boy when he wrote his debut poem by which he gained popularity (Jaafar, 2014).

Meaning of Timber:

Timber means a house or building or material for a building. It also means lumbers, logs, and flanks. They are utilized for construction purposes.

Research questions

1. Does Douglas Malloch poem "Good Timber" reflect the message of motivation for readers?
2. What other values were presented in the poem of Douglas Malloch Good Timber?

Significance of the poem 'Good Timber':

The poem is important for the readers. Man must try hard for his/her success because, without hard efforts, victory is not possible. In the initial time, a man may make strenuous efforts; his/her remaining life will be victorious. If a person bears hardship in the first phase of life, he will become a shining star later on and vice versa. It depends upon the person who decides to lead a good and prosperous life or a bad life. The poet gives us hope and optimism and saves us from despondency and pessimism.

Methodology

Qualitative approach was applied in the paper. The textural critical analysis techniques were used to study the poem deeply for understanding the hidden message of the poem.

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Stanza Explanation:

1. The tree.....died a scrubby thing.

Explanation:

In this stanza, the poet says that the tree never struggled for sunshine, sky, and other things. It did not stand strong against the storms and floods, so was unable to become the head of the jungle. It is a common tree and passes away as a useless tree.

2. The man ... died as he began.

Explanation:

In this stanza, the poet compares men with trees those who do not make any effort to get the basic needs of life like land, sun, sky, light, and air rather than get everything without making effort. They never live a noble life. These people live a life without any cause and die without making any improvements.

3. Good timber.....men good timber grow,

Explanation:

In this stanza, the poet describes how trees became good timber. He said that good timbers do not grow easily. They survive in the face of stormy weather cold, rain, and snow. By facing such adversity a difficulties men and trees come out to be good and successful.

4. Where..... the common law of life

Explanation:

In this stanza the poet tells us about the trees that grow in the thickest part of the forest became the leader of rest, and so are the men. The men who face hardship and difficulties become leaders and beneficial to society. Such trees and men hold their heads high and talk to stars. Their broken branches and wounded bodies show that they have come out successful after passing through hard times. And it is the common law of life that sweats are the use of adversity (Kordus & Krzmarcik, 1996; Bizzack & Kemble, 2024).

Theme:

The poet is talking about a speaker comparing trees and human beings and their life struggles. Also, we learn from mistakes, we either win or learn more. It also encouraged humans to be better people and not give up on dreams (MacDonald & Cruickshank, 2017).

Idea of the poem:

In this poem, the poet Douglas Malloch stresses the need for struggles and strife in one's life. Those who live through adversity and face storms become good timber and good men. Some people are born with a silver spoon in their mouths and they live a life of ease. They only depend upon fortune and never struggle to improve their lives and make valuable differences. Such as men are good for nothing but a scrubby thing because prosperity makes a man more lethargic and lazy. Adversity thing because brings true power to man and makes him more polished. The poet means to say that what man earns by the sweat of his brow gives him a greater degree of satisfaction and makes him more perfect and seasoned than what he gets by a stroke of fortune (Malloch, 1922; Monson, 2013).

The message of the poem:

The poem encourages the readers. To read between the lines is essential to understand the real message of the poem. It gives a strong impression to the minds of the readers. Message or advice is captured by readers as an impression after reading the poem. It gives the spirit of struggle, the commitment to fulfillment, and the nature of hard work. Those who struggle with worn-out instruments become triumphant (Mustika, 2014; Sitio & Rangkuti, 2023).

Rhyme Scheme of the poem 'Good Timber'

This poem of Malloch is one of his finest creations. It has consistency. The rhyme scheme is well-structured. It follows a pattern of aabbcc.

The tone of the poem:

The tone of the poem is optimistic. One should not be disappointed by despondency and disaster because the time will come to reach the height of success. The poet believes in diversity, effort, commitment, devotion, hard work, and optimism (Smout, 2019).

The tree grows into Good timber:

Good timber is a tree that lives a long and successful life. It is also via more tempests and an indeterminate quantity of light, ice, vapor, and snowstorms.

Summary of the poem:

The poet describes the bifurcation of trees and men. Those who face difficulties in their life span are crowned with victory and happiness. But those who are prey to lethargy and laziness are doomed to despondency and failure (Varner, 2011).

Findings

1. Douglas Malloch was a simple ordinary poet but he was the actual motivator for learners.
2. The Message of hard work was given for a good life
3. Good Timber is a poem of motivation for new learners.
4. It was found in the text of the verses that those who bear hardships and difficulties in their lives and struggle for the best achieve success.
5. This poem is a creative work of simple words for the readers.
6. This poem is a source of encouragement for the readers.
7. The central idea of the poem is effort, self-actualization, and countryside.
8. Those who face difficulties in their lifespan are crowned with victory and happiness. But those who are prey to lethargy and laziness are doomed to despondency and failure.
9. It is a source of strength and resilience in time of difficulties.
10. It builds character of individuals.
11. It creates perseverance among the readers.
12. It conveys the message of gradual growth and continuous progress.
13. It creates adoptability in different situations.
14. It creates a sense of flexibility.
15. It presents unique beauty due to experiences.
16. Wisdom and motivation is the soul of this poem.
17. It offers hope and optimism.
18. Self-improvement is focused in this poem.
19. It also teaches how to learn wisdom from nature.

Discussion

The finding of the study was that Douglas Malloch was a simple ordinary poet but he was the actual motivator for learners. The Message of hard work was given for a good life in this poem. Good Timber is a poem of motivation for new learners. These findings are supported by the studies of (Smout, 2019; Mustika, 2014; Sitio & Rangkuti, 2023).

It was found in the text of the verses that those who bear hardships and difficulties in their lives and struggle for the best achieve success. This poem is a creative work of simple words for the readers. This poem is a source of encouragement for the readers. The central idea of the poem is effort, self-actualization, and countryside. Those who face difficulties in their lifespan are crowned with victory and happiness. But those who are prey to lethargy and laziness are doomed to despondency and failure. It is a source of strength and resilience in time of difficulties. The studies of Monson (2013); MacDonald and Cruickshank (2017); Kordus and Krzmarcik (1996); Bizzack and Kemble, (2024) favor these findings of this study.

It builds character of individuals. It creates perseverance among the readers. It conveys the message of gradual growth and continuous progress. It creates adoptability in different situations. It creates a sense of flexibility. It presents unique beauty due to experiences. Wisdom and motivation is the soul of this poem. It offers hope and optimism. Self-improvement is focused in this poem. It also teaches how to learn wisdom from nature. These findings are backed by the research works of (Eaton, 2019); (Jaafar, 2014)

Conclusion

It was concluded that Malloch was a simple poet of common people. He was the real source of inspiration for the readers. He believed in industriousness and hard work. He contended that to achieve a peaceful and better life, hard work is necessary. He thought that hardships and difficulties were the elements of life. These ups and downs guarantee life; otherwise, if there are no ups and downs in life, it becomes death for men. Therefore, struggling for a better life is the spice of men's efforts. He believes in originality and inventiveness. He is talking about simple woods and logs but conveys a huge message of strong determination and robust hard work for men to live happily and strong like tall trees that struggle for their survival against storms and floods.

It is also concluded from this poem that all poets are real and actual motivators for humans to

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save from despondency and frustration; and prepare them for the battle of life through struggle and hard work.

It is a famous and motivational piece of writing that offers a metaphorical comparison between the strength, force and power; and growth of trees and people. It gives us a message of facing challenges and difficulties in order to grow and become powerful just like a tree which requires strong winds to grow deeper roots and becomes tough.

The poet compares good men to good timber in this popular metaphorical poem. The real message of this piece of writing is that individuals like trees, grow and reach their true potential by overcoming poverty and adversity. It is only through struggle like a tree fighting through forest growth to reach the sun that we grow and discover our true potential. Another message from this poem is perseverance that this poem emphasizes the need to strive, hard work and struggle to achieve goals and become powerful and worthy person. The poem highlights the importance of hard work facing difficulties and hardships to grow stronger. Just like trees that withstand harsh weather conditions. It also gave a message of character development that character is shaped by overcoming obstacles and difficulties, just as a tree's strength is tested by the forces of nature. Another message from the poem is that perseverance in adversity leads to excellence as this poem encourages readers to embrace adversity as an opportunity for growth, just as a tree grows stronger in the face of harsh winds. The poem implies that only through perseverance and struggle can one achieve greatness, just as the strongest trees are those that have weathered many storms. It also suggests nature wisdom that nature has much to teach us about living a good life, and that we can learn valuable lessons from observing the natural world.

This poem encourages readers to strive for personal growth and self-improvement, just as a tree continually grows and develops throughout its life. This poem implies that growth and strength come from facing and overcoming challenges, rather than from ease and comfort such as no pain, no gain. This poem inspires readers embrace the difficulties of life such as to view life's struggles as opportunities for growth, rather than as obstacles to be avoided. This poem suggests that growth and strength take time, and that patience is necessary to weather life's storms. This poem highlights the power of nature that the majesty and wisdom of nature, encourages readers to respect and learn from it. Another most important message from this poem is that just as a tree's roots are crucial to its strength, the poem suggests that our foundations and roots such as our values, beliefs, and experiences are essential to our development and resilience. The poem implies the interconnection of life that we are all connected, like the trees in a forest, and that our individual growth and strength are linked to the growth and strength of those around us. These messages make "Good Timber" a powerful and stirring poem that inspires readers to hold challenges and attempt for excellence.

The poem "Good Timber" is a powerful allegory for the importance of mental health and self-care. It implies that together the majestic qualities of trees and the human experience, producing wisdom and motivation. Like the strong trees that have weathered countless storms, we too can nurture the strength and spirit to face life's storms, our roots of character digging deep into the earth of our souls. The poem's clever use of arboreal imagery invites us to reflect on the seasons of our lives, just as the tree stands tall through summer's warmth and winter's cold, so too can we embrace the cycles of growth, decay, and renewal that shape our journeys. The tree's ability to adapt and thrive in diverse environments serves as a powerful reminder of our own capacity for transformation and the importance of flexing our roots to provide places and turns of luck.

Furthermore, the poem's stress on the tree's slow and steady growth which encourage us to embrace the gradual, incremental progress that defines our own paths to self-actualization, urging us to stay the course, even when the winds of adversity howl and the rains of doubt pour down. By illuminating the parallels between the natural world and our inner lives, this poem inspires us to tap into our own inner strength, to weather the storms of life with grace and courage, and to emerge, like the majestic tree, as a testament to the enduring power of resilience and determination. The "good timber" represents a strong and resilient mind, one that has been weathered by the storms of life but remains unbroken. The "winds" and "rains" symbolize the challenges and hardships that we face, while the "roots" represent our inner strength and resilience. The poem suggests that just as a tree must be nurtured and cared for to grow strong, our minds must also be tended to and prioritized in order to thrive. By acknowledging and addressing our emotional pain and trauma, we can cultivate a sense of inner peace and stability, just like the sturdy tree that has weathered many storms. Through

this lens, the poem offers a profound message of hope and healing, encouraging us to prioritize our mental well-being and embrace our own unique journey towards growth and self-discovery.

This poem determines that hope and inspiration is universal, making it relatable to people from all walks of life. Its timeless wisdom transcends cultural and personal boundaries, encouraging us to strive for greatness and never give up. It also leaves us with a sense of determination and purpose, inspiring us to become the best version of ourselves and make a positive impact on the world around us. By emphasizing that true strength and resilience are not merely inherent traits, but are forged through the fires of adversity, much like the process of tempering steel. Just as trees weather storms and emerge stronger, our own growth and excellence require us to embrace challenges and persevere through difficulties, cultivating a sense of grit and determination. By doing so, we develop deep roots of strength, anchoring us firmly in the face of life's tempests, and enabling us to weather the storms of uncertainty and change. Moreover, the poem suggests that our individual growth is inextricably linked with the growth of those around us, forming a vast network of support and encouragement, akin to the interconnected roots of a forest ecosystem. As we strive to become strong and resilient, we inspire others to do the same, creating a ripple effect of positivity and growth, and fostering a culture of collective upliftment.

Furthermore, the poem presents a vision of human flourishing, where we rise above our struggles, like towering trees that have weathered many storms, and emerge stronger, wiser, and more compassionate, our roots of strength intertwined with those of our community. This vision is rooted in the understanding that our individual success is tied to the success of those around us, and that by lifting each other up, we can create a world that is more just, equitable, and peaceful. In addition, the poem highlights the importance of self-reflection and introspection, encouraging us to examine our own values, beliefs, and motivations, and to align them with our highest aspirations. To do so, we can cultivate a sense of purpose and direction, and become the architects of our own destiny, rather than mere passengers on the journey of life.

Eventually, this poem offers a powerful vision of human potential, one that is rooted in the principles of resilience, growth, and collective upliftment. By embracing these principles, we can become the best version of ourselves, and create a world that is more just, compassionate, and peaceful for all. Through its elegant metaphors, it reminds us that our experiences, like the tree's rings, shape our character and wisdom. Just as the tree's beauty lies in its imperfections, our scars and struggles make us unique and strong. The poem's timeless wisdom inspires us to embrace our journey, flaws and all, and to stand tall like the majestic tree, proud of our own growth and resilience.

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