

## Q1 Rewrite

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As children grow up, the teachings provided by adults are significant to learn. These facts that adults teach may be true or false, but it is all in the process to not only help attain the children's knowledge but to protect them from the world we are living in. In the two poems: A Barred Owl by Richard Wilbur and The History Teacher by Bill Collins, the two poets write about these adult experiences and emphasise the importance of educating and protecting children from the outside world. Although Wilbur and Collins have a different approach to reach out their message, through connotation, rhetorical questions, and imagery, they are able to portray the common theme of fear in order to protect these children of ever finding the truth.

The reader is first introduced with the authors setting the scene, and what characters they choose to represent the adult to protect these children using connotation. As represented in the title, Wilbur symbolises the owl to protect this child under the parents wing. Such a magnificent and mysterious animal, the owl represents wisdom of the parent that looks after and protects the child from the outside world. This imagination that the child uses informed by the owl, deforms the truth told by the adult. Also stated in the title, Collins represents the history teacher as the adult who reports these lies in order to protect his students. The connotation the teacher teaches in his lesson are in fact false, but he does this to protect the students innocence to find the truth of what actually happened during those time periods. "Trying to protect his students' innocence he told them the Ice Age was really just the Chilly Age, a period of a million years when everyone had to wear sweaters" (1-4).

As we continue into the middle of the poems, both authors use a similar technique of placing a rhetorical question to ease the children from knowing any further knowledge about the truth. In A Barred Owl we recognise Wilbur's rhetorical question, "Who cooks for you?" and then "Who cooks for you?" (6) The owl's voice personifies the child not becoming so frightened and to understand where the parental figure is coming from. "Who cooks for you?" asks about who prepares for you, who provides for you, who takes care of you? This realisation from the child knows that the adult prepares, provides and takes care. This repetition represents the adult's reassurance to confirm the child's choice of the adult that protects. Collins doesn't use repetition in his question. Instead, the history teacher tells another lie to ignore the reality of the Spanish Inquisition. He substitutes his knowledge of the Spanish Inquisition, and humours the students just like his lie about the

Chilly Age, gives examples to the students of just the "Inquisition." "How far is it from here to Madrid?" "What do you call the matador's hat?" (9-10) The teacher does this to protect the children from ever furthering their own questions about what really happened during this time period.

In the last stanzas of the poetry, Wilbur and Collins set the scene using imagery of the result that the adult has given after protecting the children. In the beginning of A Barred Owl, the imagery talked about how the child was in "her darkened room." From this we can understand that the parents are quite overprotective and shelter her from the outside world. Towards the end of the poem, the imagery Wilbur uses then wants to warn the child from having any fear. "And send a small child back to sleep at night not listening for the sound of stealthy flight or dreaming of some small thing in a claw borne up to some dark branch and eaten raw." (9-12) This mysterious but happy ending has a different story than portrayed in The History Teacher. Although the teacher wants to protect the children as best as he can, he finds out that even after his false information the children will never be innocent since they are all bullies. "While he gathered up his notes and walked home past flower beds and white picket fences, wondering if they would believe that soldiers in the Boer War told long, rambling stories designed to make the enemy nod off." (18-22) Even though his plans of protecting them never went according to plan, the teacher still shows signs of hope for the children to grow up and live away from all the misery that history had and to finally gain freedom.

In both poems, Wilbur and Collins clarify their points to the reader for adults to guide and protect these children safely. While both poets describe their stories in different ways, through connotation, rhetorical questions, and imagery, they provide the importance that adults have to raise these children to protect them from the truth.