

TP-CASTT Analysis: “Identity” by Julio Noboa Polanco

Read the poem “Identity.” Use the TP-CASTT strategy and the questions below to examine it carefully. Mark up your copy of the poem, making notes for each of the following:

T-Title: Think about the title before you read the poem. What do you think the poem might be about?

P-Paraphrase: Put into your own words parts of the poem you find difficult. Examine punctuation for clues about who is speaking and the ideas expressed.

C-Connotation: Highlight words you see as significant, even if you don’t know them. What ideas or feelings are associated with the words or phrases you have chosen?

A-Attitude: What is the speaker’s attitude toward the situation (tone)?

S-Shifts: Are there shifts in speaker? Shifts in attitude? Draw a line where you see a shift.

T-Title: Look at the title again. How have your ideas about the meaning of the title changed?

T-Theme: What is the author saying? What is his comment on his subject? What is the overall message or theme of the poem?

Drawing Prompt: In your Writer’s Notebook, draw a picture of what you visualize as you read the poem.

Writing Prompt: In your Writer’s Notebook, write a personal response to “Identity.” Can you relate personally to the metaphor and /or possible theme? Why or why not? Explain using words and phrases from the poem.

Identity

by Julio Noboa Polanco

Let them be as flowers,
always watered, fed, guarded, and
admired,
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,
clinging on cliffs, like an eagle
wind-wavering above high, jagged rocks.

To have broken through the surface of
stone,
to live, to feel exposed to the madness
of the vast, eternal sky.

To be swayed by the breezes of an
ancient sea,
carrying my soul, my seed, beyond
the mountains of time
or into the abyss of the bizarre.

I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters in the fertile valley,
where they're praised, handled, and
plucked
by greedy, human hands.

I'd rather smell of musty, green stench
than of sweet, fragrant lilac.
If I could stand alone, strong and free,
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

My Notes

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