

- Somebody's Mother Summary
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Somebody's Mother Summary

"Somebody's Mother" is a touching poem by Mary Dow Brine that tells the story of an elderly woman struggling to cross a snowy street. The poem highlights themes of kindness, empathy, and respect for the elderly. It describes how most people ignore the old woman, but one young boy stops to help her cross safely. The poem emphasizes the importance of helping others, especially those who are vulnerable, and reminds us that everyone is somebody's mother or son, deserving of care and compassion.

Key Elements

- **Theme:** Kindness and empathy towards the elderly.
- **Setting:** A snowy street on a cold winter day.
- **Characters:** The old woman and the young boy who helps her.
- **Message:** Encourages helping those in need and recognizing the humanity in everyone.

Textual Evidence

Lines such as "She's somebody's mother, boys, you know," remind readers that the elderly woman is loved and valued by someone, urging compassion. The boy's words, "I'll help you cross, if you wish to go," show his willingness to assist.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is the main character in the poem?
- What is the weather like in the poem?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Why do the other boys not help the old woman?
- Explain the significance of the line "She's somebody's mother, boys, you know."

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss the theme of empathy as portrayed in the poem.
- How does the poem encourage readers to treat elderly people?

Answer Key

- The main character is the elderly woman trying to cross the street.
- The weather is cold and snowy, indicating winter.
- The other boys are busy playing and do not notice or choose to ignore the old woman.
- The line reminds us that the old woman is loved and cared for by someone, so she deserves respect and help.
- The poem shows empathy through the boy's kind action of helping the woman, teaching readers to be compassionate.
- It encourages readers to be kind, patient, and helpful to elderly people, especially in difficult situations.

Quick Reference

- **Poet:** Mary Dow Brine
- **Theme:** Kindness, empathy, respect for elders
- **Setting:** Snowy street in winter
- **Characters:** Old woman, young boy

Glossary

- **Ragged:** Old and torn clothing
- **Meek:** Quiet, gentle, and easily imposed on
- **Throngs:** Large crowds of people
- **Timid:** Showing a lack of courage or confidence

Literary Devices in Somebody's Mother

The poem uses several literary devices to enhance its message and emotional impact.

Key Devices

- **Imagery:** Vivid descriptions like "bent with the chill of the Winter's day" and "snow piled white and deep" create a clear picture of the cold, harsh environment.
- **Alliteration:** Repetition of consonant sounds, e.g., "school let out," "feet were aged and slow," adds rhythm.
- **Personification:** The poem gives human qualities to the "anxious eyes" of the woman, showing her fear and loneliness.
- **Symbolism:** The old woman symbolizes vulnerability and the boy represents kindness and hope.
- **Rhyme Scheme:** The poem follows a consistent rhyme pattern that makes it easy to read and remember.

Examples from the Poem

- **Imagery:** "The street was wet with a recent snow" helps readers visualize the setting.
- **Alliteration:** "Glad in the freedom of 'school let out'" emphasizes the boys' excitement.

- Personification: "Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eyes" shows the woman's silent plea for help.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Identify one example of imagery in the poem.
- What does the old woman symbolize?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain the use of alliteration in the poem with an example.
- How does personification help convey the woman's feelings?

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss how symbolism is used to enhance the poem's message.
- Analyze the rhyme scheme and its effect on the poem's tone.

Answer Key

- Imagery example: "The street was wet with a recent snow." It helps visualize the cold setting.
- The old woman symbolizes vulnerability and the need for compassion.
- Alliteration example: "school let out" repeats the 's' sound, adding rhythm.
- Personification shows the woman's anxiety and loneliness, making readers empathize.
- Symbolism contrasts the old woman's weakness with the boy's strength, highlighting kindness.
- The rhyme scheme creates a gentle, flowing tone that supports the poem's message of care.

Quick Reference

- **Imagery:** Descriptive language to create pictures
- **Alliteration:** Repetition of consonant sounds
- **Personification:** Giving human traits to non-human things
- **Symbolism:** Using symbols to represent ideas
- **Rhyme Scheme:** Pattern of rhymes in a poem

Glossary

- **Imagery:** Language that appeals to the senses
- **Alliteration:** Repetition of initial consonant sounds
- **Personification:** Attributing human qualities to objects or animals
- **Symbolism:** Use of symbols to signify ideas
- **Rhyme Scheme:** The ordered pattern of rhymes at the ends of lines

Theme and Moral of Somebody's Mother

The central theme of "Somebody's Mother" is compassion and respect for the elderly. The poem teaches that every person, no matter how old or poor, deserves kindness and help. It also highlights the importance of empathy – understanding and sharing the feelings of others.

Key Themes

- **Kindness:** Helping others without expecting anything in return.
- **Empathy:** Recognizing the feelings and needs of others.
- **Respect for elders:** Valuing and caring for older people.
- **Social responsibility:** Encouraging people to act kindly in their communities.

Moral Lesson

The poem's moral is that small acts of kindness, like helping an elderly person cross the street, are valuable and meaningful. It reminds readers that everyone is connected through family and humanity, and we should treat others as we would want to be treated.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- What is the main moral of the poem?
- Why should we help elderly people?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain how the poem shows the importance of empathy.
- Describe the social responsibility highlighted in the poem.

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss how the theme of kindness is developed through the characters.
- Analyze the poem's message in the context of modern society.

Answer Key

- The main moral is to be kind and helpful to others, especially the elderly.
- We should help elderly people because they may be weak and need support.
- The poem shows empathy by portraying the boy understanding the woman's difficulty and offering help.
- It highlights social responsibility by encouraging people to care for vulnerable members of society.
- The boy's kindness contrasts with the others' indifference, showing how individual actions matter.

- In modern society, the poem reminds us to be considerate and supportive despite busy lives.

Quick Reference

- **Theme:** Kindness, empathy, respect
- **Moral:** Help others, especially the elderly

Glossary

- **Compassion:** Sympathy and concern for others
- **Empathy:** Understanding another's feelings
- **Responsibility:** Duty to act correctly

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