

## CONTEXTUALIZATION 4 (Set 3)

### Analysis: Lit - Baca. Always Here

#### SUMMARY/ABSTRACT:

While papers on poetry require less framing than other literary papers, this paper still wants for slightly stronger framing. The reader does not have a clear sense of the poem's progression other than the pieces of evidence selected, which feel isolated. The subject, general tone, and speaker of this poem are unclear to a reader of this paper. Because this information is not quite *sufficient* for the reader, it cannot score a 5.

#### CRITERION 1: FRAMING

As stated in the summary, the framing of this paper could be stronger, both in terms of general ideas about love, but also in terms of the scope of the general theme or progression of the poem.

The framing in the introduction is slightly confusing: "For many humans love is a deeper connection that we are all looking for in life. In I Am Offering This Poem, by Jimmy Santiago Baca, the poet is giving the idea that love is providing you with all that you need, for example guidance and comfort." This presentation of the argument is shallow at best (love is a deeper connection leads to love giving you all that you need? How do these ideas feed into each other?) and does not give the thesis statement the weight that it needs. Better contextualization in the introduction might have led this writer to a stronger thesis statement.

#### CRITERION 2: CONTEXT

There is accurate background information about the evidence when necessary. For example, in the first body paragraph: "Throughout the poem, the poet helps express the idea of feeling safe by letting us see, taste, and smell what satisfies us." This leads to a specific piece of evidence that supports this contextualization. These examples are appropriately blended into the paragraphs and aren't particularly clunky.

The above example is also an attempt at hinting at interpretation in context. The writer puts the idea of "safety" and "see, taste, and smell" before the evidence selection; he then follows the evidence with the interpretation that "The comforting smell of corn helps to create the thought of feeling calm, warm, and replete [sic]." The connection of "safety" before the evidence and "feeling calm [and] warm" in the interpretation is an attempt at previewing interpretation. However, these attempts are weak at best and not common. For example:

Love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to protect and care for you is illustrated by the poet's use of sound devices. At some point in the poem, the artist provokes the idea of feeling protected by using alliteration. Baca states in the first stanza, "the cold cannot bite through" (6). The hard "c" sound is putting an end to something. It's showing that every bad thing that is being done to them will not bring them down.

Consider instead (corrected for this criteria only):

Love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to protect and care for you is illustrated by the poet's use of sound devices. At some point in the poem, the artist *strengthens* the

idea of feeling protected by using *hard* alliteration. Baca states in the first stanza, “the cold cannot bite through” (6). The hard “c” sound is putting an end to something. It’s showing that every bad thing that is being done to them will not bring them down.

The added words in bold hint at the interpretation that the “hard” sound of the “c” is conclusive and strong, which symbolizes a sense of protection.

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## **Essay: Lit - Baca. Always Here**

*Essay #2*

*Prompt: How does the author use poetic devices to illuminate the theme of the poem?*

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### Always Here

Love is knowing someone cares and will always be there. Moreover, it is that warm feeling you get when your loved one embraces you. However, it doesn’t have to be based on a relationship, it can be based on a mother and daughter connection. For many humans love is a deeper connection that we are all looking for in life. In [I Am Offering This Poem](#), by Jimmy Santiago Baca, the poet is giving the idea that love is providing you with all that you need, for example guidance and comfort. When in love, humans tend to feel safe and as if they belong, knowing there is someone that’s always there that cares for them. Love is not something humans can just dispose of: it most likely will always be there.

The idea that love makes you feel safe and as if you belong is conveyed by the author’s use of imagery. Throughout the poem, the poet helps express the idea of feeling safe by letting us see, taste, and smell what satisfies us. Baca states in the third stanza, “it is a pot full of yellow corn/ to warm your belly in the winter” (9-10). The comforting smell of corn helps to create the thought of feeling calm, warm, and replete. Moreover, when the composer talks about the bright color he is comparing it to the dull white outside. This image is purposely created to help the reader feel that tender, secure sensation of protection. This is illustrating how love makes you feel safe and comfortable. In the fifth stanza, the author portrays the idea that love makes you aware that you belong. He does this by allowing us to feel, see, hear, and smell what soothes us. Baca states, “and let you warm yourself by this fire/rest by this fire, and make you feel safe” (21-22). The warmth of the fire makes you want to be there. The image of the fire, hearing it cracking, and smelling the wood burning lets you know how safe you are, and how much you belong there. The author intentionally placed this image in the poem to help the individual reading experience that warm sensation. This is exhibiting how love places you out of harm’s way and makes you want to stay, as if you belong. All in all, this portrays the idea that the author’s use of imagery conveys that love makes you feel safe and as if you belong.

Love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to protect and care for you is illustrated by the poet’s use of sound devices. At some point in the poem, the artist provokes the idea of feeling protected by using alliteration. Baca states in the first stanza, “the cold cannot bite through” (6).

The hard “c” sound is putting an end to something. It’s showing that every bad thing that is being done to them will not bring them down. The composer purposely created this use of the alliteration because he wants to express to the reader that he will protect them from everything that’s trying to bring them down. This is showing how love can protect you from oppression. In the seventh stanza, the author perpetuates the idea that love is also knowing that there is someone that always cares for you. He suggests this by using a rhyme scheme. Baca states, “and to go on living inside/ when the world outside/ no longer cares if you live or die” (26-28). The rhyme scheme was intentionally placed in this poem to show how harsh reality really is, but knowing there is someone you can always count on to be there for you. This is displaying the idea that love is being aware that somebody until the end of time will care for you. In conclusion, this conveys the idea that the author’s use of sound devices illustrates that love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to guard you and care for you.

The speaker’s employment of figurative language produces the idea that love is feeling sheltered, and not something that you can just dispose of. In the third stanza, the poet conveys his idea that love’s warmth makes you feel protected by the use of a metaphor. Baca states, “it is a scarf for your head, to wear/over your hair, to tie up around your face” (11-12). The author is comparing the scarf’s intensity to his love, and power to make you feel protected. His love is warmhearted, which means he can make you feel sheltered. In the fifth stanza, the author is expressing the idea that love is not something you can throw away by the use of a simile. Baca states, “tucked away like a cabin or a hogan.” (6) The artist is contrasting a hidden cabin in the forest to how his love is not something that will just go away. The author intended this simile to show how much he cares, and to let the reader know he is always there. This is showing that love is something you can save but not something you can dispose of. All in all, this illustrates the idea that the author’s use of figurative language shows that love creates a feeling of being sheltered, and not something that you can just toss away.

Throughout the poem, the poet continues to illustrate the idea of humans tending to feel secure and as if you belong, knowing there is someone that always cares. The composer demonstrates this by employing imagery, sound devices and figurative language. Having realized this about life, humans learned that without knowing that there is someone that’s always there to pick you up when you’re down. In conclusion, humans may realize how deep and important love really is.