

ENGLISH STANDARD: MODULE A

Distinctive Voices: 'Voices in the Park' and 'In Defense of the Bush'

Distinctive voices are essential for conveying distinctive experiences and creating character through the manipulation of language. A distinctive voice can be expressed through the use of language techniques such as idioms, colloquialism or similes. Distinctive voices are vital for the communication of a distinctive experience and allow the audience to understand the experience of the character through the text. This is evident in the poems of AB Paterson, in particular, 'In Defense of the Bush' and in 'Clancy of the Overflow'. A similar characteristic also exists in the Picture book, Voices in the Park, by Anthony Browne.

In Defence of the Bush by A.B Paterson is a satirical reply to Lawson's poem 'Up Country', a harsh portrayal of bush life describing it as a place 'where the gaunt and haggard women live alone and work like men', establishing the critical voice of Lawson. Through the use of similes and hyperbole Lawson creates a distasteful depiction of the bush life **experience**. Paterson's patronizing reply uses a sarcastic voice to address Lawson, "So you're back from **up the country**, Mister Lawson..." incorporating the title of Lawson's poem to emphasize that this poem was simply in 'defense of the bush'. The first stanza is dedicated to introducing the audience to the character of Mister Lawson through Paterson's voice, sarcastically stating that the bush folk 'grieve to disappoint' Lawson that 'it wasn't cool and shady' and 'there wasn't plenty beer'. This generates a false concern toward Mister Lawson's distinctive experience in the bush, purposely using the plural 'we' to imply that Paterson's view has been supported by everyone residing in the bush, rather than simply stating the personal pronoun, 'I'. These statements also imply that Lawson is simply complaining that the conditions of the bush did not comply with his high city living standards. He then explains that even the 'loony bullock snorted' when it first laid eyes on Lawson, using onomatopoeia to suggest that even an animal that is not in their right mind would view Lawson distastefully. Paterson confirms the animal's reaction using a colloquial **voice** through the statement 'well, you know, it's not often that he sees a swell like you...' creating a conversational tone of a friendly nature to encourage the audience to believe that this is usual for bush folk.

Stanza two incorporates characteristics typical of Paterson's poems, featuring his distinctive romanticizing descriptions of the bush. He contrasts Lawson's **distinctive experiences** with Paterson's affirmative opinions. He describes the earth as 'gasping like a creature in its pain', using onomatopoeia and personification to accentuate the dryness and dullness of the bush, suggesting that the bush is definitely not a pleasant place to be. In the following line Paterson responds with quite the opposite, stating that 'you would find the grasses waving like a field of summer grain', once again using personification and imagery to depict a welcoming and friendly image of the **distinctive bush experience**. Also evident in 'Clancy of the Overflow, the use of contrast and imagery explain the diversity of the bush's climatic experiences, 'moods and changes', compared to the 'rain and drought and sunshine' which 'make no changes in the street...'

The voice of the passionate, devoted bushman is continued through a collaboration of rhetorical questions which introduce the cultural, friendly and traditional **experiences** in the bush, asking Lawson if he got a 'chance to hear a chorus in the shearers' huts at night?' suggesting that Lawson's hasty return to the city deprived him of just some of the distinctive experiences of the bush life. The poem ends with a final statement by Paterson confirming Lawson's displacement in the bush, firmly stating that 'the bush will never suit you (Mr. Lawson), and you'll never suit the bush.'

Clancy of the Overflow is another poem typical in nature of Patterson, laden with opinions which thoroughly praise the bush. Paterson has used juxtaposition throughout the poem to create the voice of the despondent urban worker, comparing the 'splendid' bush image to the busy, 'dusty, dirt city', using alliteration to further emphasize his compassion for the bush. Paterson has also used the **distinctive voice** of the persona to reinforce his outstanding opinions of the outback **experience**.

In the second stanza it is clear that Clancy's shearer friend is quite uneducated and carefree, this seen through his reply to the persona, "Clancy's gone to Queensland droving and we don't know where he are." Similarly to 'In Defence of the Bush' Paterson uses colloquial language to contrast his voice to the 'proper', higher class structure of the persona, distinguishing the differing stereotypical language used in both the country and the city, contributing to the distinctive experiences of each.

Stanza 3 begins with the persona's 'wild, erratic fantasy visions' of Clancy as he goes droving. This fantasizing vision prompts the audience to visualize his distinctive experience and become more involved with the personas life. In addition this statement references the spontaneous nature of the bush experience, reinforced by the 'unexpected' reply to the personas letter.

The friendly and inviting nature of the bush, is reinforced in the fourth stanza, mentioning their 'kindly voices', once again highlight Paterson's stereotypical view of people who reside in the bush. Through the use of aural imagery Paterson explains the 'murmur of the breezes', describing the pleasant, gentle surroundings, and adding to the **distinctive experience** created in the bush.

The persona finally ends his imaginative journey and returns to reality in the fifth stanza, describing his 'dingy little office, where a stingy ray of sunlight struggles feebly down between the houses tall', Using assonance to emphasize the undersized and dull office in which she sits. This contrasts to the previous stanza where, back in the bush, 'he (the drover) sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended' and 'the glory of the everlasting stars.' Using alliteration and imagery, Paterson has created a strong voice which romanticizes the bush.

Stanza 6 and 7 are dedicated to explain the unpleasant nature of the city from the perspective of the persona. Through the use of a strong voice he explains his situation, conveying an unpleasant and uninviting environment. Using phrases such as 'fiendish rattle', 'ceaseless tramp' and 'language uninviting', Paterson uses onomatopoeia to convey the harsh and continuous nature of the noises in the city. Assonance is used to emphasize the city dwellers' expressions and the reactions of the persona-when they 'haunt' and 'daunt' him, expressing the persona's distinctive experience. In the final stanza, the persona finally returns to reality, resigning himself to the fact that he will be forever be in the city.

Differing from Paterson's poems, the children's book Voices in the Park takes advantage of primarily visual techniques as opposed to language techniques to present four distinct voices, which collaboratively, create the distinctive experience of going to the park. The first voice, the mother is introduced primarily through the visual illustration. She is positioned in the foreground of her large, clean, 'perfect' home, with the clichéd 'white picket fence', indicating the mother portrays a particular and an almost obsessive attitude. The mother is pictured walking their dog, almost completely covering her son from the audience, and appears to be overdressed, for this active activity. This indicates that she is arrogant, reinforcing the idea of perfection and symbolizes her dominant role over her son. Meanwhile 'Pedigree Labrador...Victoria' proudly marches in front, the choice of name referencing Queen Victoria, suggesting her priority is firmly towards the dog, always mentioning the dog before her son Charles. This is reinforced while she orders Charles to "Sit", a common phrase used to discipline a dog. This is accompanied by the relating image which depicts the dog running around freely while the mother and Charles sit patiently with their backs facing toward each other, indicating their relationship is quite impartial. They are then pictured leaving the park, which is lined with trees covered in flames and showing large black, confirmative style fences, symbolizing her anger and emphasizing her overpowering voice.

The second Voice, the father is introduced slouching on a couch, with a depressed and bored looking facial expression, reinforced with the limited colour palette, of dull shades of green and blue. His dirty clothing proves his low self esteem and motivation to maintain his appearance, and also contrasts with the clean, elegant clothing of the mother. His voice is portrayed as strong, masculine, yet simple through the choice of font used by Browne. His feelings of hopelessness are conveyed through the use of the rhetorical question "you've got to have some hope, haven't you?"

Voice is strongly conveyed through the use of visual symbolism, particularly in the image of the walk to the park, which provides an insight to life from the father's perspective, and then, similarly a contradicting image from Smudge's perspective. The father's voice is interpreted from, again the dull colour palette and the use of depressing symbolism, such as the broken heart and the strategically placed puddle which surrounds the sad looking paintings. The beggar holding the poster labeled "wife and millions of kids to support" references his struggle to provide for his child, and contributes to his depressed voice, and his experience.

From Smudge's perspective the same image is portrayed in quite an opposite fashion. The image features a wide array of bright and 'cheerful' colours, contrasting to the muted colour palette which aids the establishment of the father's voice. The image includes a complete heart, contrasting to the broken one and ultimately a surreal environment. The father, while smiling, appears to be listening intently to Smudge, who seems to have a very positive influence on the father's experience in life. Smudge's voice has been portrayed using a bold and child-like font, reminiscent of her playful voice.

As shown through these three texts, distinctive voices are essential for conveying distinctive experiences through language, or in the case of 'Voices in the Park', through images and even the style of font. Paterson uses language features such as contrast, colloquialism and symbolism to express distinctive experiences intended in his poems. Language has proved to be vital for the creation of distinctive experiences.