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In Seamus Heaney's poem "Blackberry Picking," the use of juicy diction, clear and vivid imagery, slant rhyme and conversational rhythm, along with casual form, illustrate the poet's message that the childhood experience of picking berries holds a deeper metaphor for life. That is, childhood hopes continue to exist despite the continual slap of reality.

The casual and childish hopefulness in the poem is clearly evidenced in the conversational tone, formed by the irregular sentence structure found within the rhythm and the slant rhyme usage throughout the work. By organizing sentences in such a way that perpetuates variance of stressed and unstressed syllables, the narrative tone of being picking is seen in a casual light. The additional use of slant rhyme or off-rime ("sweet/if") also adds to the elimination of the sing-song feel that so often cause distraction of the reader in the poem. The poem form in an ABAB rhyme scheme separated into almost rhyming couplets keeps a sense of organized structure throughout.

The use of descriptive, consistent filled diction is as juicy as the blackberries in the story; this description adds
not only to the literal childish experience of berry-picking but also to the adult acknowledgment of the significance of the experience. The clear imagery of the "briar" "flesh" (5) smothered "like thickened wine" (6) brings vivid images and striking comparisons between the berry-flesh and human flesh filled with "Summer's blood" (6). The fact that the memory of the adult, reflecting back upon the childhood experience is so strong as to render all of the "pint cans; peat tins; lamb's jampots" (9) provides an additional link through repetitive diction to the metaphor that is to come. Imagery is also solidified through such literary elements as consonane "tinkled and picked" (12) alliteration "big dark blobs burned" (14) and personification as it is "hunger" (8) that sent the children out to gather all of the berries.

Through the childhood experience of gathering berries, the speaker uses literary elements to show the deeper metaphor for idealistic hope and its survival despite realistic confinements. The structure of the poem by separating the initial tale of the berry picking into 8 couplets and the reflection upon the fermentation and rot into four couplets indicates the
speaker's belief that the childish, innocent hope for sweetness and goodness continues. This is paradoxically established further in the speaker's description of "all the lovely carfuls smelt of rot" (23) as the hopes of sweet lovely blackberries are destroyed by the inevitable natural decay of what was sweet and good in the berries. This grim picture of the natural decay and destruction of the things we cherish enough to go search after even "where briars scattered" (10) and when "our hands were peppered with thorn pricks" (15-16), presents a depressing image of the world around us. We sacrifice for the "lust for picking" (7-8) and are yet denied the fruits of our labor. The destruction of what people materialistically search for, however, does offer hope. Although the human possessions do not keep forever, the hope that nature's goodness will continue on is mirrored in the childish hope that the berries will keep despite the knowledge that the berries themselves will not. More important than actually saving the berries then is the value placed on nature and the triumph in the berry-pick. The fact that the berries were picked every year despite the knowledge that they would spoil is the finishing
touch on the role that hope has in our society.

The ideals of natural preservation, although tainted by inevitable decay of what is worked for and perpetuated not by the physical salvation of nature's goods, but by the internal value that is placed on nature in "Blackberry Picking," the adult reflection upon the childhood innocence of that hope is reflected poignantly by the lush descriptions and imagery of a memory that in some way mirrors true to it all.
In T.S. Eliot's poem "Blackberry-Picking," a deeper understanding of life's ceaseless cycles is conveyed as the poem shifts from rapturous and unsatisfied to disappointed and destitute. The poem was divided into two sections. The first section physically described the fall's harvest of blackberries while it symbolically described life. The vigour and youthful air given to the poem was inherent through the poet's diction. The blackberries were vividly described using strong visual, and tactile images such as "glossy purple clot," (3) "red, green, hand as a knot," (4) and "big dark berries burned" (14). The repetition of 'b's in line 14 further emphasizes the importance of the chosen words, it strengthens the language. The poet's mindfulness is portrayed through similes and metaphors. Phrases such as "its flesh was sweet, like thickened wine; summer's blood was in it" (lines 5-6) make references to a physical body, the words 'flesh' and 'blood' in particularly. The simile "like thickened wine" draws images of drunkenness, almost an irresistible force creating a "lust for/ Picking" (lines 7-8). The tone of the poem remains unsatisfied.
The second section of the poem physically describes the decay of the blackberries, yet symbolically describes stands as an elaboration of death. The scene eighteenth-line intonates a surplus, "when the bath was filled." Strong visual descriptions of the decay were used such as "rat-grey flouresce" (19) and "eeto defacto" with "stinking" (20) and "lovely confine smell of rot" (23). The poet "always felt like crying" (22) and "hoped they'd keep, knew they would not" (24). He was trying to defy life's natural cycles while knowing he was powerless against them. The poem's second half was disappointing, destitute and full of false hope. The overall contrast between life and death of the blackberries, with the poet's powerlessness over natural cycles are what combine to convey a deeper understanding of the whole experience. A powerful, rhyming comparison was drawn through the wilyly "clot" (3) and "knot" (4) at the end of these lines, and the words "rot" (23) and "not" (24) at the end of the last two
'Rat' and 'not' are strong negative influences on the poem, whereas 'clot' and 'knot' are positive influences. A sharp contrast is drawn, further emphasizing and strengthening the overall understanding portrayed in the poem.
Seamus Heaney's poem "Blackberry-Picking" conveys more than just a literal description of the process of harvesting blackberries. Through the form and structure of the poem, and through the author's choice of words and metaphors, a deeper exploration of the experience is attained. The process of blackberry harvesting is shown as a deep psychological process of love and loss.

The poem is divided into two sections. This division separates the feelings of love in the first part from the feeling of loss in the second part. The poem describes the process of picking the blackberries in the first stanza. This is the longer of the two stanzas, illustrating the long, labor-intensive harvest driven by love. The second stanza is about the fermentation of the blackberries soon after picking them. This stanza is short because the berries rot quickly after they have been picked. This poem structure contrasts the long labors of love and the short time in which all can be lost.

The diction in the poem also contributes to its deeper meaning. While the author describes the picking, he uses certain words and phrases which demonstrate the love of blackberry harvesting, "like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it."
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for Picking
(lines 6-8). This statement describes the joy and fulfillment the author finds through the picking, because of the use of the words “lust” and “thickened wine.” The diction in the second stanza changes to show the loss felt when the berries ferment, words such as “gulping” (line 19) and “shrieking” (line 20), and the phrase, “I always felt like crying” (line 22) show this sad tone. The author’s words and phrases between the first and second stanza once again convey the deeper psychological feelings associated with picking black berries.

Finally, the metaphors of the poem also show the love and loss of the process. The author describes the taste of the first berry as “sweet like thickened wine” (lines 5-6). This metaphor is a clear statement of the love involved through the description of the taste. The loss involved is once again portrayed in the second stanza, through metaphors. The author compares the moldy blackberries to “rot-gly fungus” (line 19). This comparison shows the once delicious, wonderful berries, have been ruined.
The poem portrays blackberry-picking as more than just a simple labor. It has a deeper experience of love and anticipation followed by sadness and a sense of loss.