# Seamus Heaney Poems

Digging -         Snug as a gun - Gives us a sense of the power and control Heaney has when writing and his ability to put across his thoughts and feelings using strong powerful language and vivid sensual imagery. Trying to describe how comfortable Heaney feels and the pen fits naturally and flows easily. -          Gravelly ground -          The squelch and slap/ Of soggy peat -
          I'll dig with it   ?         Basic metaphor = the pen as a spade ?         Uses specific agricultural application ?
         Tells us about Heaney's work when translated into a view of poetry through archaeology: cultural and historical retrieval ?         I.e. it's like digging for culture and for yourself ?
         Also uses agricultural terms to feel closer to ancestors since is veering away from usual path   Death of a Naturalist -          warm thick slobber/ Of frogspawn that grew like clotted water -          jellied/ specks -          fattening dots -          "daddy frog" "mammy frog" -
          thick with a bass chorus -
          loose necks pulsed like sails -
          The slap and plop were obscene threats -
          Poised like mud grenades -
          I sickened, turned, and ran   ?
         The Death of a Naturalist is also the birth of the poet ?
         Describes the relationship between the early [general] experiences and his first experiences with poetry (i.e. Digging, Diviner, etc.) ?         Views his own poetry continuous with the rural experiences he describes   The Barn -          musty dark hoarded an armoury -
          Of gilded motes -          All summer when the zinc burned like an oven -          A scythe's edge, a clean spade, a pitch-fork's prongs: -          The two lugged sacks moved in like great blind rats -
          I was chaff/ To be pecked up [?]/ I lay face-down to shun the fear above   ?
         Starts with "threshed" which is a harsh word. To get our attention and settle some uneasiness   An Advancement of Learning -          (As always, deferring/ The bridge) -
          My throat sickened -          Incredibly then/ I established a dreaded/ Bridgehead -          This terror, cold, wet-furred, small-clawed/ Retreated up a pipe for sewage -          Then I walked on and crossed the bridge   ?         Important metaphor of crossing the bridge. Symbolizes that he is growing and is starting to be able to overcome his fears. At the beginning of the poem, he states that he 'defers the bridge' because he is not yet ready to go into adulthood, not yet ready to cross the frontier.   Blackberry - Picking -          a glossy purple clot -          hard as a knot -
          flesh was sweet/ Like thickened wine -
          summer's blood -          red ones inked up -          big dark blobs burned/ Like a plate of eyes -
          peppered/ With thorn pricks -
          fur,/ A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache -
          I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair/ [?] Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not   ?         Same format as Death of a Naturalist ?
         About a loss of innocence. Is still na?ve at the twisted ways of life ?
         Key quotes rhyme to make them stand out   Churning Day -
          coarse-grained as limestone -
          large pottery bombs -          echoed daintily -          heavy lip of cream -
          like a great whisky muddler-fashioned in deal wood -
          flabby milk -          gold flecks began to dance -          corrugated butter spades -
          Coagulated sunlight -          that they fished -          gilded gravel -
          acrid as a sulphur mine -

          Our brains turned crystals full of clean deal churns/ the plash and gurgle of the sour-breathed milk/ the pat and slap of small spades on wet lumps   ?         'Heaney is ultimately all language' - Tony Curtis ?         not empty                                                             , words which contain all the 5 senses ?         not polite or academic, is not afraid to use the rough and simple to convey emotions and feel ?         deeply conscious of environment in the poetry, but a sense of himself as well whilst writing (own powers and interests are also responsible)   Follower -          His shoulder globed like a full sail strung (DOAN) -          But today/ it is my father who keeps stumbling/ Behind me, and will not go away   ?         Father is old but will not admit it so keeps trying to do things, so Heaney must always keep an eye out for him   Ancestral Photograph -           Jaws puff round and solid as a turnip -           The upper lip/ Bullies the heavy mouth down to a droop -           His silver watch girds him like a hoop -           Faded patch [?]/ As if a bandage has been ripped from skin -           Penned in a fram -          Farmers shopped/ Like housewives at an auction ring -          Closing this chapter of our chronicle,/ I take your uncle's portrait to the attic   ?         Moving onwards from the fair days and putting the past behind him   For the Commander of the Eliza -          Bursting the sockets like spring onions in drills -          Six wrecks of bon and pallid, tautened skin -           Whines and snarls -          Desperation/ Rose and fell like a flock of starving gulls -          They cursed and howled/ Like dogs that had been kicked hard in the privates -          Like six bad smells, those living skulls   ?         A historical poem about the potato famine. Says how their was lack of action from England and everyone. Based on a memoir from Cecil Woodham-Smith. A real experience   The Diviner -           pluck/ Of water -          The pluck came sharp as a sting -          It lay dead in their grasp -           Spring water suddenly broadcasting/ Through a green hazel its secret stations   ?         Heaney states that both poet and diviner seem to have 'a gift for mediating between the latent resource and the community that wants its currents released' ?         Tries to show through the analogy that a Diviner and a Poet are similar in the way that a poet serves its community with words and the Diviner with water ?          The central metaphor is not in the first layer (the diviner) or the second layer (analogy with the poet), but in the third layer when comparing it to a radio station. ?         It shows that both the poet and the diviner seizing out the air a reality that seems invisible or inaudible. Water is hidden in the ground, what Heaney conveys is hidden in the unconscious. Both are similar in the function of making contact with what lies hidden.  ?         Agricultural terms put to use since 'broadcasting' use to mean to cast seed over the land   Turkeys Observed -           Blue breasted in their indifferent mortuary -           In immodest underwear frills of feather -           A skin bag plumped with inky putty -           He once complained extravagantly   ?          Theme: that he does not really like them in the sense that he has a mocking dislike to them. He finds them pathetic and without majesty. He doesn't like them so mocks them. Contempt   Trout -           a fat gun barrel -          depths smooth-skinned as plums -          white belly reporting -           darts like a tracer-bullet -           A volley of cold blood ramrodding the current   ?          use of war weapons to describe trout (as a metaphor) to show its power   Waterfall -           The burn drowns -          A helter-skelter of muslin and glass <p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt 0.5in; text-indent: -0.25in;" cl

## About the Author

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