

Response 1

- i) Through the poem, I have formed two impressions of the woman and her family life.

Commented [LPY1]: Make clear from the start what these impressions are.

Firstly, I have formed an impression of the woman as being rather listless. The woman seems to be very weary from her work life. By “count[ing] the hours down till the alarm-clock rings” effectively shows that the woman’s attention has wavered from her previous doings, and that she was anticipating when she could finally take a break. Thus, evidently pointing that she was sick and tired of her life which was filled with much to do. The “alarm-clock” symbolizes the beginning of a new day, marking the start and repetition of her duties. Her constant “twenty-four-hour tour of duty” also highlights that she is very busy tending to the needs of her children. By referring to herself as a “mother-ship” it prominently shows that she has lived her life not for herself, but rather for her kids, as she tends to their needs and constantly chauffeurs them from one place to another. Her inability to live a life as she wishes, as she is constrained by her mother duties, places her in a very weary position. Moreover, she sees few joys in her life, as she recounts her previous days doing with a monotonous tone, making her out to be lethargic. Hence, the impression of her as being rather listless is formed.

Commented [LPY2]: How do you think this makes her feel?

Commented [LPY3]: Good close engagement with specific portions of the text in this paragraph—here, you can also explain what you understand by the term “mother-ship” to make this point even clearer.

Commented [LPY4]: How do you know this? Cite textual evidence to support your idea.

Commented [LPY5]: What are some examples of the monotonous tone used? Point to specific textual evidence to justify your point. Otherwise, this idea is pretty insightful.

Commented [LPY6]: Her life at home is busy, as you have pointed out in the previous paragraph. How is it “chaotic”? Be very specific in your choice of words.

Commented [LPY7]: This point is very nicely stated here, but how is this a different idea from the previous paragraph?

Another impression I have formed of the woman’s family life is that it is oppressive. Due to the chaotic nature of the family life such as having to send her children to many different lessons in the “daytime”, and having many “unfinished things”, the woman is denied her own time and space to live her own life and do her own things. This forces her into a constrained position, as she has to deal with the hectic schedule of her children who are constantly busy. Her family life oppresses her into the cycle of always tending to the needs of the children. The woman also views herself as a part of space, something which is infinite and enormous with no limits, and when that is juxtaposed to her miniscule family life which only consists of her performing her mother-like duties, it poignantly highlights the large extent of oppressiveness of her family life. More so, by describing herself as a “tire astronaut” it is observed that the nature of the hectic life has left her extremely lethargic, denoting its oppressiveness.

Commented [LPY8]: This is an excellent idea that shows freshness of insight, but textual evidence is needed to make it well-substantiated.

Commented [LPY9]: Not too clear what it meant here.

- ii) By using the image of the galaxy, the poet has successfully captured my attention. The image of “star-fields leaping light years beyond time’s gravity” is particularly striking as it has beautifully encapsulated the burning hope that has been locked up in the woman as she tends to her daily chores. She refers to her current life as “dark”, portraying the gloomy aspect of it, and by longing to be “with start-fields leaping light-years beyond time gravity” points out that she still holds on to the passion for a better life. The use of the image of the galaxy to depict the woman’s hope has painstakingly captured my attention, making the poem particularly striking.

Commented [LPY10]: Beautifully expressed.

Commented [LPY11]: What effect does this have on you? The element of a sensitive, informed personal response could be clearer here.

The poet's description of the chores done by the woman also strikes me. The words "groans", "swish" and "roars" carry a painful element to doing the chores. These carefully chosen words by the poet has implanted the large degree of the suffering faced by the woman as she revolves her life around doing chores for the family, thus enhancing me with the agony of the woman. Next, the way the poet depicts the woman "wish[ing] she were in a vacuum" is also particularly striking, as it depicts her longing to be away from all her chores. This also shows that the woman wants to be alone and far away from the haunting of her chores, thus it thoroughly strikes me.

Commented [LPY12]: How do these words connote pain? Explain further to make your idea clear.

Commented [LPY13]: Good explanation of the quote mentioned in the previous sentence.

Overall comments:

- Good grasp of the subject matter of the poem, with some sparks of insight
- Answers the question directly with relevant detail from the text
- Some personal response evident, though not consistently: keep working on this!
- Generally coherent, though with some awkward expressions: improving this will help the reader of your essay understand your thoughts better

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