

Chapter 8

Father to Son

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Question:

Does the poem talk of an exclusively personal experience or is it fairly universal?

Answer :

The poem does talk of an exclusively personal experience. However, we can also call it fairly universal because a conflict like this is quite common in many households. It is also known as generation gap where children parents are protective and try to guard them from making mistakes and children find their values too overbearing.

Question:

How is the father's helplessness brought out in the poem?

Answer :

The helplessness of the father is highlighted through the depiction of the emotional struggle that he undergoes. He is aware of the problem and is willing to resolve it, but is



unable to do so. He laments how his son has become a stranger to him. He regrets the lack of a strong emotional bond and proper communication with his son who has alienated him and wishes to start afresh and rebuild their relationship.

Question:

Identify the phrases and lines that indicate distance between father and son.

Answer :

Phrases/lines that indicate distance between the father and the son are:

1. 'I do not understand this child'
2. 'I know / Nothing of him'
3. 'We speak like strangers'
4. 'there's no sign/ Of understanding in the air'
5. 'Silence surrounds us.'
6. He speaks: I cannot understand
7. We each put out an empty hand.

Question:

Does the poem have a consistent rhyme scheme?

Answer :

Yes, the poem follows a consistent rhyme scheme. **abbab**

