

Carl Nixon's Short Stories

Take from his book of stories: *Fish 'n' chip shop song and other stories* pub by Vintage 2006

Weight pg 151

1. Describe two meanings of the title.
2. What is the father's object of desire?
3. What is his obstacle?
4. What is the son's object of desire?
5. What is his obstacle?
6. Describe the relationship between father and son from the father's perspective; the son's perspective.
7. Comment of the different views.
8. Discuss the significance of the following:
 - a. The pear tree
 - b. The concrete in the garage
 - c. The weight belt
 - d. The light bulb(s)
9. What is Nixon wanting us to learn about father/son relationship from this story?
10. What advice would you give to the father? The son?

My father running with a dead boy pg 229

1. Write down your first impressions of the story.
2. There are two stories in one here but each have the same central character. Give a brief summary of both the stories.
3. From the details revealed in the short story, describe the narrator's father.
4. List the similarities and differences of the descriptions from the old man speaking of, and the narrator remembering, his father.
5. What is the implication of the observation the old man's nose is Roman?
6. What does the description of the coloured light tell us about the narrator?

7. What is the significance of the "I see a young man with blond wavy hair standing under a tree. He is not wearing a shirt."
8. And the significance of "In his arms he holds a dead boy. He cradles him gently as though the boy weighs nothing, a baby."

Like Wallpaper pg 63

1. What happens in the imagined scenario?
2. What has happened to the narrator?
3. What does the narrator use "you" as the subject?
4. Analyse the structure and style of Like Wallpaper in terms of impact and effectiveness.
5. Discuss the affect of the repeated image of photographs.
6. Explain the significance of the details described in the imagined story (mention the labels of cans and the contents of the supermarket trolley for example)
7. Discuss the idea that this story **looks at the impact** of a father who leaves his child and a mother who attempts to erase all traces of the father.

Comparison Study

Make a list of the similarities and differences in each of the three stories under the following sections:

THEME (father/son relationship)

STYLE (word use, sentence structure, narrative point of view, etc)

CHARACTERISATION (the construction of characters)

PLOT (what happens and how is it told)

	My father...	Like Wallpaper	Weight	Similar?	Effect
Theme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> obsession 			
Style			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> symbol of the pear tree 		
Plot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two stories about the same man 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we don't really know our parents
Character				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> father/son who don't relate well 	