

The poem *Dog's Death*, written by John Updike, takes you through the emotions of the love and loss of a family dog. The author uses tone and diction to make you emotionally attached to what the family is going through.

“.. to bite my hand and died. I stroked her warm fur

and my wife called in a voice imperious with tears.

Though surrounded by love that would have upheld her,

Nevertheless she sank and, stiffening, disappeared.” (Lines 13-16).

The author uses rhymes at the end of each line. This, I believe, is to up the intensity of how the dog died. He also uses antithesis, opposing words, such as ‘upheld’ and ‘sank’. The love the family has for this dog is so immense that they thought the act of caring would hopefully keep their dog hanging on until they got to the vet. Little did they know that while they were roughhousing with their pet, she was slowly dying on the inside. The word choice the author uses really brings out an easier way to comprehend what is going on without actually saying it. “And her heart was learning how to lie down forever.” (Line 8). By using ‘lie down’ in this form, you then know that the dog is inevitably going to die because that’s a dog command you use on dog’s to get them to rest. To say the heart is going to lie down forever, you’re able to understand that she is slowly dying. The final four lines brings such power to what the author is trying to inform the reader on. To know that, even though the dog was deathly sick, she was still able to get to the newspaper to play. A dog will never let their loyalty to their owners down, even when it comes to circumstances such as being nearly dead.