

POETRY

a look at

Casey at the Bat

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Casey at the Bat

by Ernest Thayer

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

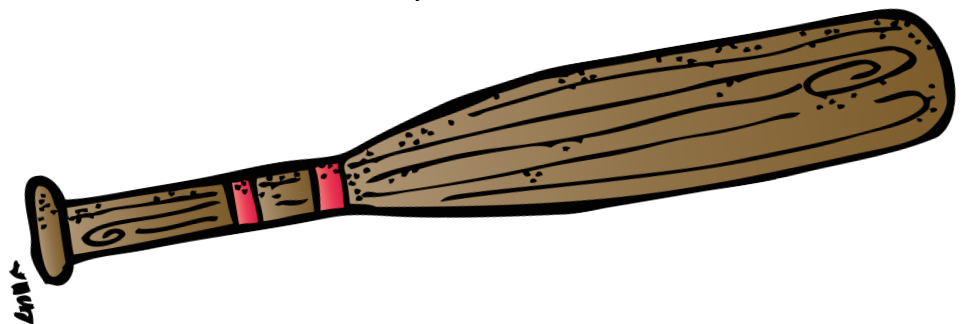
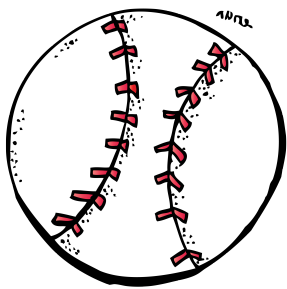
A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought if only Casey could but get a whack at that—
We'd put up even money now with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
There was Johnnie safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.



Casey at the Bat Continued

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance flashed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
“That ain't my style,” said Casey. “Strike one,” the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.
“Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted some one on the stand;
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, “Strike two.”

“Fraud!” cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered fraud;
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.

Summary of "Casey at the Bat"

The Mudville Nine was down to the visiting team four to two with only one inning left to play. Two players had already struck out, and the crowd was waiting for Casey to come to bat. They felt he was their only hope, but there were still two players in front of Casey. The two players, Blake and Flynn, weren't very good but they were able to each get on a base. Jimmy Blake landed at second base and Flynn made it to third base.

The crowd of 5,000 erupted with cheer as Casey approached the bat. They knew that Casey was the one who would be able to win this game for them! Casey walked up to bat confidently and calmly, smiling along the way.

Casey watched as the first ball was thrown but he didn't swing. He said, "That ain't my style" The umpire called strike and the crowd went mad. They started yelling to kill the umpire because they were angry about the strike, but Casey held up one hand and the crowd calmed down. Casey signaled to the pitcher and the second ball was thrown. Casey ignored this ball too and the umpire yelled "strike two" This time the crowd yelled "fraud" but stopped as soon as Casey gave them a scornful look. They watched his muscles tighten up and knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The crowd watched as the pitcher let the ball go. Casey swung his bat but all he hit was air. Casey struck out a third time! Somewhere men are laughing and somewhere bands are playing, but in Mudville there is not joy because Casey struck out at that bat.

Casey at the Bat

Poetry Element	Example from the Text
rhyme	nine that day; inning more to play
imagery	
tone (tense, anxious)	
personification	
simile	
other	

Poem vs. Prose Summary

Poem

Prose Summary

Poem vs. Visual Presentation

Poem

Visual Presentation

