

The following poem is by Rachel M. Harper. Read the poem carefully. Then, considering such elements as imagery, form and tone, write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the relationship between music and the speaker's complex memories of her family.

- Imagery
 - ~~Music as genetics—Family tradition~~
 - ~~Childhood memories~~
 - ~~Wall Art~~
 - ~~Record Player~~
 - ~~History etc.~~
 - ~~Environment~~
 - ~~Hardwood~~
 - ~~Damp~~
 - ~~November~~
 - Incomplete - Missing something within the family
 - Family Warmth
 - Time moving forward "memories fading"
 - "Saxophone's Blow" - Harshness of remembering
- Form
 - 2 Shifts/Movements
 - Warm type memories
 - Cold type memories
 - Solemn "But the music will remain."
- Tone
 - Hardwood, Damp, November, etc. - coldness
 - Incomplete - loneliness of loss
 - "Memories fading...words of a lullaby" - Tone of soft healing vs. harshness of saxophone
 - Healing vs. Remembering

The bonds between music and family can sometimes be a battle between highs and lows. Much like in music, with high and low elements, family dynamics can experience similar parallels. The poet engages her audience with sophisticated and moving language that transposes into a look through her childhood and adolescence moving the reader through a symphony of emotions and a glimpse into her adult world. Family dynamics can become extremely complex over the course of history, Harper incorporates images of her childhood memories, such as the lessons she learned from the record player and her family struggle over time, all of which convey the challenges that can come with a broken family.

Harper begins the poem with a very distinct image, that serves to establish the connection between her love and admiration of music and that of her family. She employs words such as, "Passed on" and "Inheritance" to make this establishment. These words serve to offer a tone of love, and comfort of a family lineage. She includes the line "This melody is my inheritance." with the word melody, offering a sweet and soft connotation to establish her early feelings of her family dynamic, which is juxtaposed with her love of music and the role that music has played throughout her life.

Through symbols such as the record player, the album wall art, and the "history" that was subsequently taught to Harper, she captures the memories of growing listening and learning from music. Through her incorporation of these symbols, Harper transports the reader to her childhood, implying the lessons learned from the music. However, she offers a doubt to this effect "This is the only myth I know." The word myth serves to offer doubt within the poet's life, which can be a resemblance of situations that may have occurred as a child or young adult. She goes on to describe an event sitting on hardwood floors playing cards. Words such as "Hardwood floors", "damp", and "November" paint a grimly picture of a family in struggle. The word November can symbolize a time of transition and complexity that is mirrored within her family dynamic.

Harper describes the image of her brother dealing cards from an incomplete deck. The word "incomplete" offers insight into the family's economic situation, it also mirrors and parallels the family dynamic. There is a shift within the poem that reinforces the incompleteness of the family, Harper states "...my mother is 2,000 miles away, deciding if she wants to come home..."