

Model Literary Essay

William Carlos Williams was an award-winning poet who wrote 48 books of poetry and won prizes including the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. He was also named Consultant in Poetry to the Library of National Congress. This famous poet found the inspiration for his poems in an unusual place. William Carlos Williams was inspired by everyday objects and the lives of common people, and you can see this in his poetry.

William Carlos Williams wrote about the things he knew. In ***A River of Words***, a biography of Williams, Jen Bryant explains how at first “Willie” was inspired to write poetry by the sounds and rhythms of the work of the famous English poets read to him by his teacher Mr. Abbott. When he realized that he hadn’t seen a lot of the things he was writing about, he decided to write about ordinary things and people that he could see around him instead. He made notes about things he had heard, seen, or done, such as wheelbarrows and playing with toys, and wrote poems about them. He drew his inspiration from common objects and familiar people.

William Carlos Williams’s poems show us the beauty and importance of the people and objects in our everyday lives. For example, in “The Red Wheelbarrow,” Williams describes a red wheelbarrow, glazed with rain water, and how it is next to white chickens. This short poem helps us understand how beautiful and important the common wheelbarrow is. Another example is in the poem “This Is Just to Say,” where Williams describes some plums that he ate. In this poem, he says, “I have eaten the plums that were in the icebox” and explains how they tasted delicious, sweet, and cold. Williams was also inspired by the lives of common people. In the poem “Children’s Games II,” he describes little girls playing with pinwheels, hoops, and constructions made of bricks. William Carlos Williams’s poems help the reader appreciate how beautiful common things like wheelbarrows, plums, and little girls playing can be.

William Carlos Williams was inspired to write poetry about everyday people and things, and his work has also inspired others to write poetry. My favorite poem by William Carlos Williams is “The Woodthrush” because, like him, I like to watch birds in my garden. In the book ***Love That Dog*** by Sharon Creech, Jack writes his first poem about a blue car after reading “The Red Wheelbarrow” by William Carlos Williams.