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AP English Literature and Composition

September 26, 2011

Araby

An analysis of the story “Araby” by James Joyce, can be easily achieved with the Historical/Cultural approach. One can find themes, references, certain characteristics and patterns by reviewing and researching the time period in which the piece was written.

This story was written at the same time as the Industrial Revolution. Joyce describes the town as “blind”, referencing the effects of the Industrial Revolution. Joyce also incorporates biblical allusions, comparing the bicycle pump and the central apple tree to the Snake, the Forbidden Fruit and the Garden of Eden. The narrator’s obsession is also depicted as an angel, clothed in white and an aurora of light around her.

Using the historical/cultural approach gives one the ability to interpret trends and themes and the effects of the Industrial Revolution on society, as well as expand one’s knowledge in history and/or culture.