

## The Importance of Words

When readers read, they tend to be lost in the moment for a second or two. Of course, longer books create more time while short ones seem to swallow the occasion in an instant. With this, words are processed and thoughts are produced. “The Red Wheelbarrow” by William Carlos Williams is text that indeed carries this out, with the author’s use of effective elements of poetry/literary devices, and most importantly, a simple goal for his not so simple writing. Williams gives way to a reader and showcases the text as it is. As an ideal reader, however, more analyzing must be done. As a poet himself, he makes it hard to pinpoint an exact intended meaning, but that’s a given. With a brief set of words, sometimes it’s hard to understand when it’s just that short. Through the practice of applying a critical reader-response approach, the text, along with a prime personal reaction, is brought to life and further questioned.

As the reader is drawn to the last couplet, an image seems to shine through like never before. A bright red embeds a reader’s mind as the words fall through, creating and preserving this colorful, vivid scene. As nimble as the poem is, Williams’s use of imagery and enhancing word choice seems to play part in painting the whole picture. The ideal reader can be quick to notice the difference between the “red” wheelbarrow and the “white” chickens as contrasting but unifying colors. This average-sized object also seems to be needed in a sense, while everything surrounding it, plays their principal part.

Along with the elements of imagery and word choice, Williams makes the reader feel like the wheelbarrow ironically is being personified. Why does he do this? What for? Maybe to reflect on its very importance and role in day-to-day life? “So much *depends* upon...” (Williams 1-2). This couplet can make the ideal reader feel sympathy for the object in terms of something important but not truly seen through. Maybe a reader feels like this short lyric pertains to them or

an experience. It's hard to grasp a finger around the meaning as a whole. Through valid assumptions, however, maybe its briefness is intended for something more to be figured out. It's like Williams wants the reader to come up with an analogy themselves... The goal is very unclear, but the words themselves seem to be the exact opposite.

There are many things in life that are important. The big and small, the short and fast, they all have use for this world. Whether it be words or a wheelbarrow, an ideal reader knows that the use of effective elements in Williams's "The Red Wheelbarrow," is brief text that indeed makes you lost in seconds to make you think for your own. Even if someone is an ideal reader or not, even if someone does not know the intended meaning, William Carlos Williams makes words of special importance to reflect the possibility of anything, everything, and maybe nothing.

## Works Cited

“The Red Wheelbarrow by William Carlos Williams - Poems | Academy of American Poets.”

*Poets.org*, Academy of American Poets, 2019, [poets.org/poem/red-wheelbarrow](https://www.poets.org/poem/red-wheelbarrow).