

ELEMENTS OF: A SWIMMING LESSON

By Jewelle L. Gomez

NARRATIVE STYLE:

Narrative style refers to how a story is told, including elements like point of view, structure, tone, and language. In “A Swimming Lesson” by Jewelle Gomez, the narrative style is characterized by several key features:

- 1. First-person perspective:** The story is narrated from the protagonist’s point of view, offering intimate insight into her thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- 2. Reflective tone:** The narrator reflects on past events, allowing the reader to understand their significance and personal growth over time.
- 3. Descriptive language:** Vivid descriptions are used to paint a vivid picture of the setting, characters, and emotions, enhancing the reader’s immersion in the story.
- 4. Linear structure:** The narrative follows a chronological sequence, beginning with the protagonist’s childhood memories and progressing through significant moments in her relationship with her grandmother, Lydia.



SYMBOLISM AND CHARACTERIZATION

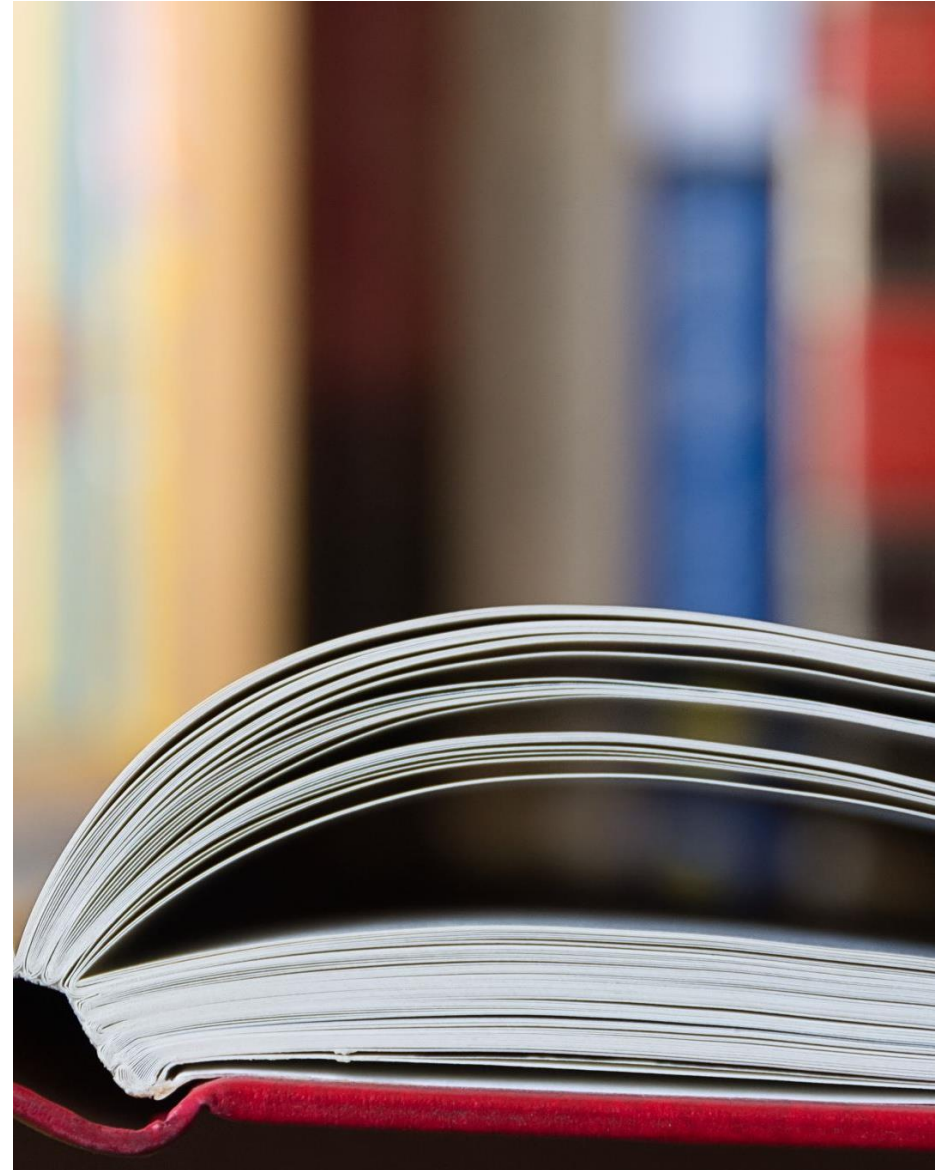
- The ocean symbolizes fear and strength, representing the protagonist's initial apprehension and eventual empowerment.
- Swimming symbolizes overcoming obstacles and gaining control over one's life, as the protagonist conquers her fear of the water.
- Lydia's actions symbolize bravery and resilience as she teaches her granddaughter to swim despite her limitations.
- Lydia is portrayed as a strong, fearless, and nurturing figure who guides the protagonist through her journey of self-discovery.
- The protagonist experiences growth and self-discovery through Lydia's mentorship, gaining confidence and overcoming her fears.

THEMES

Empowerment is a central theme, as the protagonist learns to swim and gains confidence in herself and her abilities.

Overcoming fear is another key theme, as the protagonist confronts her fear of the ocean with Lydia's guidance and support.

Identity plays a significant role, with swimming becoming a metaphor for embracing one's body and cultural heritage.



Personification
Figurative
Sensory Simile
Alliteration
Mood
Language
Stanza
Rhythm Imagery
Hyperbole Rhyme
metaphor
ONOMATOPOEIA

IMAGERY AND MOOD



The story is rich in vivid descriptions that create a strong sense of place, from the bustling subway to the vast expanse of the ocean.



Imagery of Lydia's athleticism and grace contrasts with the protagonist's initial fear, highlighting the transformative power of learning to swim.



Sensory details evoke the sights, sounds, and sensations of swimming and the beach, immersing the reader in the protagonist's experience.



The mood shifts from fear and uncertainty to empowerment and pride, mirroring the protagonist's emotional journey.



Initially, there is a sense of isolation and discomfort, but this transforms into confidence and belonging as the protagonist learns to swim and embraces her identity.

