**Poem Analysis**

 "Last Trip to the Island" by Erin Belieu effectively displays the theme that even though one never expects to encounter chaotic situations, one has to deal with them in a certain way. Being in a place of calm demeanor is relaxing, considering today’s reality; having many reasons not to love something is acceptable. This theme is demonstrated through Belieu's many phrases given throughout the selection such as "You're mad I can't love the ocean..." in which Belieu expresses her thoughts on why situations make you feel so stressed out, which then relates back to how calm demeanors make you feel relaxed. Furthermore, Belieu's description of "The unnerving presence of families" is yet another reason of why she has not been persuaded to love the ocean. In this case, the ocean is symbolic and stands for a place of craziness and anxiousness in which people don't usually care for. All in all, the theme is demonstrated through the use of diction, detail, structure, shift and so on.

 Secondly, as mentioned above, quite briefly, symbolism is another element which reveals the theme effectively. An example of a significant symbol is the "ocean" which can be described as a busy place, which is sneaky and you never know what may happen second to second. This analysis can be proven using the line "Unlike your ocean, there's nothing sneaky about a field", which relates back to my response because the quote shows that the ocean is representing your final destination, and you taking advantage of life, as the poem is not literally about "Your last trip to the island" but rather your last trip to a specific spot, which is chaotic. This can be inferred through Belieu's multiple descriptions given in this poem.

 Moreover, the theme of the poem can be demonstrated through the author's attitude or tone, leaving the reader to believe how the author feels when constructing this piece of poetry. In the 6th stanza, the description "How can anyone relax, near something so worked up all the time?" reveals the tones of hopelessness and stress demonstrated by the words "How, relax and worked up" in which you can feel the tension rising when hearing these words. The tone words above help to create the theme because when you feel stressed, being in a calm place will always make one individual hopeful in specific situations. Also, the words help to create the theme by showing that today's reality is stress-oriented, providing an individual with reasons not to love something, in this case, the ocean.

 Additionally, the title helps to create the meaning of the poem in various ways. First off, the title is standing for the overall summary of the poem and basically what the poem is about. Most of the time, in poems, the title doesn't relate directly to the meaning of the whole poem, but stands for something specific going on within the poem. The title of this poem helps to create the theme because when the reader analyzes the title, inferring it means your last trip to a specific destination, the reader can relate to being stressed and never expecting to encounter awful situations- which can tweak one's way of handling reality.

 Finally, the structure of the poem helps to construct the theme. Through the structure, the reader can analyze and explain why the speaker is feeling a certain way and whether or not the poem is serious or humorous. To support this analysis, at the beginning of the poem Belieu was consistent in her sentence length and also her stanzas were pretty even, but as she continued her line structure became longer. Additionally, Belieu's stanzas were also longer in length. The structure of this poem helps to develop the theme because depending on how the poet writes the poem differs the way in which one interprets the theme. For example, "You're mad I can't love the ocean," and "How can anyone" show the decrease of line length from beginning to center of the poem. In this way, Belieu seems sarcastic, relating to the theme of one being stressed due to situations. In these two lines, the reader can tell that Belieu is very serious and has an honest reason as to why she actually doesn't love the ocean (1).

 In conclusion, TP-FASTT and various other sources help to reveal the analysis of the poem, allowing the meaning of the text to "pop-out" and lead us in the direction of the theme and other literary elements.

(I give credit to the creator of <http://vtang.webs.com/poemanalysis1.htm> for helping me to construct a good analysis.)

1. Wilson, Chloe. "Erin Belieu." *Twenty-First-Century American Poets*. Ed. John Cusatis. Detroit: Gale, 2013. Dictionary of Literary Biography Vol. 372. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 24 Oct. 2014