Analysis Of The Ugly Tourist By Jamaica Kincaid

Jamaica Kincaid, born in St. John, Antigua grew up in relative poverty. Antigua is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world because of its beautiful beaches and coral reefs, but 35% of its native people live below the poverty line. Although, thousands of tourists come to visit Antigua each year none of the tourists seem to notice or care that the people of Antigua struggle each day to have food to eat. Jamaica Kincaid's essay "The Ugly Tourist" reveals the appalling nature of the tourist industry by vividly and angrily describing how a tourist is an ugly human being.

"The Ugly Tourist" piqued my interest at first because of how brutally honest Jamaica Kincaid is in the first line that it took me by surprise. Honestly, I found the first line quite hilarious and assumed that the rest of the passage would be light-hearted, but I assumed wrong. The rest of the passage focused on the horribleness of the tourism industry and how oblivious tourists are to their surroundings which causes them to be disrespectful to native culture and life. The passage intrigued me greatly because it showed me a different perspective that I had never considered before. Furthermore, it opened my eyes to how disrespectful tourists act and have zero disregard for their actions.

Jamaica Kincaid uses simple and common words throughout her passage, but she occasionally throws in a more complex word that sticks out and grabs the reader's attention. Kincaid wants the readers to notice this word because it holds significance to the passage, such as banality, displacedness, and dismayed. Furthermore, Kincaid repeats the word banality multiple times drawing the eyes of the reader to the word even more. The main point of the passage is easy to understand and identify because Kincaid uses simple and common words. Moreover, Kincaid uses modern language and slang which allows the reader to effortlessly understand the passage, especially if the reader is a teenager. Because the passage is extremely easy to grasp it allows the reader to look for a deeper meaning in the passage and be able to fully comprehend Kincaid's arguments. Kincaid uses mean and aggressive language such as, "..an ugly, empty thing, a stupid thing... and it will never occur to you that the people who inhabit this place... cannot stand you." This type of language hints to a bit of resentment from Kincaid because she makes it obvious that the natives hate the tourists and that the tourists are oblivious to everything.

Kincaid meticulously uses a variety of simple, short, complex, and long sentences throughout the passage to emphasize certain ideas. The brevity of multiple phrases in the passage isolates it to the reader which further solidifies the message. Some of the longer sentences seem like Kincaid is ranting about her own experiences with oblivious tourists which highlights the reality of the situation. In numerous sentences, Kincaid varies the sentence length to emphasize a particular idea more than another. Which she executes in this sentence, "The thing you have always suspected about yourself the minute you become a tourist is true: A tourist is an ugly human being," by using a colon to emphasize the vulgarity of tourists. Also, Kincaid creates a beat or rhythm for the reader through even balanced clauses allowing the reader to easily follow the passage. Kincaid uses an abundant amount of parenthesizes in the passage which causes parts of the passage to be confusing. Which draws away from the argument because the reader focuses more on understanding what is in the parenthesizes rather than the main idea of the

sentence or paragraph. Although, in a few instances the parenthesizes help clarify the main idea of the sentence or paragraph.

Kincaid’s two main arguments are that tourism is a disgusting industry that only benefits first-world citizens and that tourists are extremely disrespectful and oblivious to the native’s feelings and culture. Kincaid uses pathos to generate many strong emotions in the readers to convince them that her point is valid and important. Furthermore, Kincaid is extremely straightforward and to the point with her arguments allowing the reader to easily understand her arguments. The way Kincaid presents her arguments evoked anger, disgust, and sadness in me and made me not only believe her arguments but also agree with them. Kincaid’s argument is trying to persuade the reader that tourism only benefits first-world citizens, but research shows that tourism actually boosts the economy of countries all around the world, not just first world countries. Kincaid neglects to add this to her passage because she wants to persuade the reader to believe her argument.

Kincaid uses syntax in this sentence, “But some natives- most natives in the world cannot go anywhere.” to emphasize the point that the majority of natives do not have the luxury of leaving their lives for a few weeks. This simile, “you make a leap from being that nice blob just sitting like a boob in your amniotic sac of a modern experience to being a person visiting heaps of death and ruin” compares first-world citizens ordinary boring lives to a blob just sitting like a boob in an amniotic sac. “From day to day, you are a nice person. From day to day, all the people who are supposed to love you on the whole do. From day to day, as you walk down..” This anaphora enhances her point that a tourist is only ugly while they are a tourist and when you are not a tourist then you are not ugly. Repeating herself allows the sentences to run smoother and allows the point to become more clear.

Jamaica Kincaid wrote this passage with a great deal of passion and resentment. Due to this Kincaid arguments are easily understandable because the passion and resentment shine through the passage making the main arguments obvious. Kincaid's main goal is to persuade readers that tourism is a disgusting industry, through her sentence structure, diction, and use of rhetorical devices.