

Text 1 is a passage from a lecture scripted by William Morris in 1877 to address an audience of artisans and skilled workers at the Trades' Guild of Learning, an organization formed for workers to pursue their vocation and further education. Being a lecture, it serves to promote the ideas of the speaker, and acts as a suitable form for the speaker to achieve his purpose in what is a formal environment. Set in the 19th century, when England was in the middle of its industrial revolution, Morris questions the worth of growing the economy at the cost of the environment and criticizes the priorities given to certain goods and services. He also persuades his audience of the importance of preserving art, conveying the positive impact that art has on one's well being. By establishing that art is not only for the wealthiest individuals, he urges artisans and skilled workers to preserve their talent, and not be lured by monotonous factory labour. In order to explore how the author achieves these purposes, context, audience, tone, language and structure will be explored in this essay.

In the opening lines of the text, Morris criticizes his country's priorities in the way it uses its knowledge of the sciences, despite the immense contribution that the field had to the development of the nation's key industries. He personifies the field of science, claiming that "she is so much in the pay of the counting-house, the counting-house and the drill sergeant, that she is too busy. And will for the present do nothing". These lines, along with the fact that society had "loved her well" and "followed her diligently" treats the field of science like a woman. This personification, along with the fact that she "will for the present do nothing" is Morris' way of conveying to his predominantly male audience that science (a woman) is far too distracted in the development of the financial and military industries for the future, and is not being used appropriately enough to tackle issues of the present. He alludes to the rapid industrialization that England experienced in the 19th century, and the impacts this had on the country. This criticism continues, when Morris argues that he would have expected some of these negative impacts to be "easy for her", given the success of the sciences in promoting other industries. Referring to the pollution caused by production around the country, he emphasizes his message by conveying the negative environmental impacts of such growth, suggesting that he would have expected science to teach "Manchester how to consume its own smoke" or "Leeds how to get rid of its superfluous black dye without turning it to the river". Using vivid descriptions of these effects of rapid growth, Morris questions his country's priorities, urging that these environmental concerns should be "as much worth her attention as the production of the heaviest of the heavy black silks or the biggest of useless guns." Again, he asks if it is really worth investing so much time and effort into such products at the cost of individual satisfaction and environmental destruction. Therefore, at the outset of this extract from his speech, Morris urges his audience to consider if the country has really experienced developments, given that some industries have been developed at the cost of the environment.

Morris then shifts to describing the effects of these institutional changes on the role of Art in 19th century England. He questions how people could "care about Art" without caring about "carrying on their business without making the world hideous". He contextualizes the situation to his audience, one full of artisans and skilled workers, suggesting that Art may have possibly been relegated to the bottom of the priority list for many in the country, given that there are other pressing issues that need to be resolved. In Morris' opinion, the country's "time and effort" are required to be directed towards "making life cheerful and

honorable” and “bettering the decency of our big towns” before artists can even expect to see “matters hopeful” and hope for any “endeavours for the bettering of the arts”. Through his use of such persuasive language, he emphasizes to his highly skilled audience that it is crucial for the nation to understand the negative impacts that industrialization is having before the group can even start to think about the betterment of the arts.

As the lecture progresses, Morris suggests that one of the central reasons for the condition that country and, therefore, art has been left in is the vast disparity between the rich and poor. In a sarcastic tone that chastises the wealthiest individuals, Morris claims that “arts must be mainly kept in the hands of few highly cultivated men” until the “contrast is less disgraceful between the fields where the beasts live and the streets where men live”. Through vivid imagery and satire, Morris highlights the vast differences between the lifestyles of the rich and poor, what effect this has on who can access the wonders of art. Describing the rich as “beasts” living in “fields” and the poor as “men” living in “streets” emphasizes that the rich do not face the same struggles as others, and this contrast is “disgraceful”. He reinforces the significant inequality in opportunities for the poor, highlighting that only the wealthiest individuals can “shut out from their view the everyday squalors that most men move in”. Speaking these lines to his audience is effective, for he addresses an audience comprising mainly men from low-income families, for they perhaps too feel the burden of this inequality in society. They can relate to these “squalors” that Morris refers to, and are able to understand better from this lecture that the wealthiest don’t face such difficulties. Lost in these struggles, the poorest men are unable to find time to appreciate things like art, whereas those at the top of the social ladder are living luxurious lives. Demonstrating this disparity to his audience enables him to convey the key social flaw that restricts free access to art for all.

Having demonstrated the growing inequality in English society, Morris proceeds to question whether the value of art itself is diminished due to such class divisions. From Morris’ point of view, “art has such sympathy with cheerful freedom, open-heartedness and reality”, further promoting the idea that art is for everybody to enjoy. Unfortunately, unequal income distribution causes art to sicken “under selfishness and luxury, that she will not live thus isolated and exclusive”. Morris returns to personify art, giving the field a human like quality, intending to demonstrate its worth. Furthermore, he laments on what art has degraded to as a result of the country’s industrialization and wealth gap. For these reasons, he claims that “on such terms I do not wish her to live”. This is a strong statement, given that he is addressing the creators of art themselves. However, he swiftly regurgitates that the survival of “good” art is still possible. Likening the image of “an honest artist to enjoy such art” to that of a “rich man to sit and eat dainty food amongst starving soldiers in beleaguered fort”, Morris conveys that such “exclusive” art must not be allowed to exist. He does not want “art for a few, any more than education for a few, or freedom for a few”. These powerful last lines suggest that art is just as important as education and freedom, and stripping people the right to enjoy art can have effects as grave as stripping them of their rights to education and freedom. These messages, therefore, urge his audience to remain hopeful, and not be lured into giving up their talents and work in a factory job. Instead, he inspires them to remain perseverant, and join him to preserve art that is free for all to view.

Other key features of Morris' speech include the use of pronouns and a structure that enables the speaker to persuade his audience into considering his messages. Repeated use of the pronoun "I" together with a blend of imperative and pensive statements offer opportunities to both reflect as well as act upon the issues prevalent in society during the time. These, together with the use of long, complex sentences enable the speaker to develop his points to form a strong and convincing argument, helping him to persuade his target audience to stay hopeful, and believe that change is necessary, and still possible.

To conclude, the use of various literary devices in conjunction with the key aspects of a formal speech enable Morris to successfully address his audience, for he manages to convey his central messages. He persuades the audience to reflect on the effects that industrialization has had on their country, and also makes them consider art as a means to find pleasure for individuals from all walks of life. This allows him to succeed in urging his audience of artisans and skilled workers to help preserve their talent in an increasingly mechanical world, and not be lured into becoming industrialized themselves.