

Student Essay on "How to Eat an Ice-Cream Cone" Analysis

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Essay

In his essay, "How to Eat an Ice-Cream Cone", L. Rust Hills utilizes several literary devices. Through the use of these literary devices, Hills is able to present his audience with an ironic and humorous twist on the average how-to guide. He accomplishes his goals through his use of his ironic topic choice, format, and vocabulary. Hills uses topic choice, vocabulary, and format to present his audience with an ironic and humorous essay.

The irony of Hills' topic choice is humorous to many readers. Because most people are quite skilled in the simple act of ice cream consumption, they find the notion of a how-to guide on the subject quite humorous. Throughout the essay, Hills treats his topic as if it were a serious and essential part of any reader's knowledge. This seriousness seems sorely out of place in an essay describing frozen dairy product ingestion. Through this ironic treatment of his topic, Hills presents the reader with a humorous look at a usually overlooked aspect of American life.

Hills' ironic use of vocabulary also adds humor to his essay. By using formal vocabulary such as "quarantine", "rigmarole", "contingency" (Hills 159) in his description of eating ice cream, Hills creates an ironic discrepancy between essay and essay content. Readers would expect a description of eating ice cream to be filled with informal, even juvenile vocabulary. Hills' use of ironic vocabulary shows the reader humor in an unexpected manner.

The essay format utilized by Hills is also ironic and humorous. By presenting his essay in the form of a how-to guide, Hills ironically shows the reader how ridiculous the genre can be.