

Writing from the perspective of a character - empathy

**REVEREND JOHNSON**

**ENTRIES 76-80**

**Entry 76, February 1660:**

‘Goody Johnson is dead. She died last week. The second week in February. She died in childbirth.’

Reverend Johnson seems very hard and harsh in his actions and behaviour. He is a distant father.

Earlier, in entry 68, when his children were ill, he said: ‘see to the children. I do not want to hear them tonight.’

Later in entry 76 he is described as being ‘reluctant’ to enter his wife’s room despite Martha’s warning that, ‘if you want to see her in this life, you better come now.’

What might seem most shocking to a modern day reader, are his later actions:

**Entry 79:**

‘Reverend Johnson is casting about for a new wife before the grass on the grave of the old one has grown to a finger width. He wants someone to care for his brood of children and warm his bed, he makes no secret of it. ’

**Extended writing task**

You must choose a task and think about the appropriate style to write in. You will be writing as Reverend Johnson. Consider how he acts and behaves. Think about his actions and behaviour in the entries you have read. What kind of language would he use? How would he express himself?

- ☆ A prayer or monologue about his wife and her death. You might also mention the child that died.
- ☆ A diary or journal entry reflecting on his wife’s death and his hopes for the future - you might hint here at his plans for a new wife.
- ☆ His sermon at the funeral of his wife and child and his sermon at the mass described in Entry 79.

**Evaluating your writing**

- ✓Have you re-read your work thinking about the effect on the reader?
- ✓Have you written in a style that is appropriate to the character?
- ✓Have you shown that you have thought about the formality of the text?
- ✓Does your work show you understand what motivates Reverend Johnson?