



And

Relationships

Poetry Revision Workbook



Poetry Examination:

Key themes

Love and Relationships

	Romantic Love – Longing	Romantic Love – Fulfilment	Romantic Love – Loss	Family Relationships – Independence	Family Relationships – Strong Bonds	Family Relationships – Admiration	Family Relationships – Rebellion	Distance	Desire and Longing	Getting Older	Death	Memory	Nature
When we two parted													
Love’s Philosophy													
Porphyria’s Lover													
Sonnet 29													
Neutral Tones													
Letters from Yorkshire													
The Farmer’s Bride													
Walking Away													
Eden Rock													
Follower													
Mother, any distance													
Before You Were Mine													
Winter Swans													
Singh Song!													
Climbing my Grandfather													

The TSMILE checklist – Comparing Poetry

English Literature is one of the few exams where you are actually asked what they think, so making your own personal and informed response is crucial. It is a good way of ending an essay too, summing up everything you think about the texts.

T *Title*

What is the title of the poem? Is it a title that links to the main character/persona or a specific event?

Is the title clear or abstract? What could be an alternative interpretation of the title?

How can it link to context (background information on the poem)?

S *Structure*

Is the poem in a particular style, e.g. sonnet/dramatic monologue?

Is there any rhyme scheme? Is there any reason you can think of for the specific words being rhymed? If there is no rhyme why do you think that may be?

Read the extract to yourself – is punctuation used to help add meaning created? Are different types of sentences used to create effects? Do sentences run on (enjambment) or stop (end stopped)? What does this tell us about the mentality of the persona/narrator/poet?

M *Meaning*

What is the poem about? Are there any hidden messages?

What is the attitude or tone of the poem or speaker?

Serious, angry, sad, regretful, amused, bored, cynical, objective, passionate... Choose your own word!
Can this link to context?

I *Imagery*

What word pictures or images are used in the extract? Imagery is about **language choices**, not just techniques. This is why they are planned together on the dead fish plan.

Are there any similes – comparisons using 'like' or 'as'?

Are there any metaphors – comparisons which say something *is* something else?

Is there any use of personification?

L *Language*

What are the key words or phrases which stand out in this text? Does it use imperatives (commands) or hyperbole (exaggeration) or litotes (understatement)? Are there any other writing techniques which stand out, such as rhetorical questions, emotive language, alliteration, or anything interesting about punctuation used, e.g. pauses instead of full stops?

E *Effects*

How did you respond to this extract? What did it make you think about or feel? How do you think the writer wanted you to respond? Was he successful?

This is where you can consider the impact of the different sections on the reader. Poetry is designed to have an impact. Try to analyse what it could be. This needs to be covered within EVERY section.

When we two parted

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Love's Philosophy

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Porphyria's Lover

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Sonnet 29

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Neutral Tones

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

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Links to other poems

Letters from Yorkshire

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

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Links to other poems

The Farmer's Bride

Title:

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Links to other poems

Walking Away

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Eden Rock

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Links to other poems

Follower

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Links to other poems

Mother, any distance

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Links to other poems

Before You Were Mine

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Links to other poems

Winter Swans

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Singh Song!

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

Climbing my Grandfather

Title:

Structure:

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Links to other poems

AMAZING GLOSSARY OF LITERARY TERMS

alliteration – repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words, e.g.

‘funny face’ or ‘cowardly custard’. Note that sound, not spelling, is what matters: ‘philosophical fish’ is still an example of alliteration. The similar sounds do not have to be right next to each other.

assonance – repetition of the similar vowel sounds. These could be the same vowel sounds with different consonants, e.g. ‘blue moon’, ‘funny tummy’.

context – something outside the text that affects its meaning, e.g. its historical context and/or its social context.

dialect words – a dialect is a form of language spoken in a particular area or by a particular social group. ‘dialect words’ are examples of words or meanings that distinguish a dialect from standard English or from other dialects.

direct address – when a poem talks to us!

dramatic monologue – an imaginary speaker addressing an imaginary audience, e.g. ‘My Last Duchess’ by Robert Browning. Usually in iambic pentameter in a single stanza, i.e. no breaks. The person just will not stop talking!

end-stopping – when there is a pause at the end of a line, usually a full stop.

enjambment – when a sentence runs over from one line of verse into the next.

form – the shape of the poem. Some shapes have names, e.g. sonnet, ballad, dramatic monologue. Others do not, but there will always be something that binds the poem together: a particular rhythm, rhymes and so on.

free verse – a poem with no regular rhythm or line length.

It can make you wonder: why do we call this a poem at all? Well, free verse can seem like that at first. Read it aloud, though, or hear it in your head, and you can start to enjoy the way the poem’s movement suits what it describes.

half-rhyme – words that almost rhyme but not quite: very similar to assonance. The effect can be unsettling.

hyperbole – deliberate exaggeration for effect. ‘I’ve told you a thousand times!’ is one annoying example.

iambic pentameter – a line of verse with five beats, which fall on the second syllable of each pair:

ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM ti TUM

Note: ‘iamb’ = ti TUM ‘pente’ = five in Greek.

imagery – language that describes something using at least one of the five senses. Often this will be a mental image, but imagery can also describe a sound, a smell, a taste &c. It is a very broad term indeed, and is also applied to figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

literal and figurative language – Literal language means directly what it states. ‘I laughed a lot’ is literal. **Figurative language does not mean directly what it states**. ‘I laughed my head off’ is figurative.

litotes – understatement – the opposite of exaggeration

Where the poet suggests something is not as good or bad as it seems. “I manage,” for someone very wealthy. “It’s a scratch,” for someone who is about to bleed to death.

metaphor – an image which implies a comparison by stating that something is the thing it resembles. ‘The sea was woman; the woman was the sea.’

non-standard English – a variety of English other than standard, e.g. Caribbean, Cockney, Scouse. See ‘dialect’ above.

onomatopoeia – when the words sound like what they mean, e.g. ‘buzz,’ ‘crash’. Movement may also be imitated, e.g. ‘splishy-splashy fish’.

In poetry, the words often behave like what they describe.

personification – describing something non-human as if it has human characteristics such as feelings. This could be an inanimate (non-living) object:

‘the broken toaster spat crumbs at me’. Or it could be an abstract idea, like love or truth, given a human form, e.g. ‘I laugh in the face of Danger and throw ice-cubes down the vest of Fear’ – ‘Blackadder’.

refrain – a recurring phrase or lines at the end of each stanza of poetry, like a one-line chorus. Can you think of a song you like that has a refrain?

rhyme scheme – the way rhymes within a poem are organised. You write about this by using aabb, abab and so on. Each new letter represents a new sound.

rhyming couplets – two lines following each other which rhyme. In a play, a rhyming couplet is often said by a character who is very certain of something. This may be a bad decision he or she has just made!

rhythm – the arrangement of words to form a regular beat through a pattern of stresses. Rhythm is to poetry what the beat is to music.

sibilance - alliteration of the ‘s’ sound, e.g. ‘serious snakes stay sober’.

simile – a comparison between two things, using ‘like’ or ‘as’.

sonnet – a poem of fourteen lines, usually in iambic pentameter.

Shakespearean sonnet – has a rhyming couplet at the end.

Petrarchan sonnet – has no rhyming couplet at the end. Instead, there is a turn or ‘volta’ in the argument, around the eighth line. E.g. Shelley’s ‘Ozymandias’.

speaker – the ‘voice’ that is speaking in a poem written in the first person.

Note: take care when deciding whether to write ‘speaker’ or ‘poet’. The poet is the actual person who wrote the poem. The speaker is the character within it: the one whom the poem is pretending to be!

stanza – a clearly demarcated part of a poem. Another word for ‘verse’, really!

structure – how the poet has organised his or her work into patterns, e.g. the number of stanzas/verses and their length; the line lengths; the rhymes and the rhythms. E.g. ‘This poem tells a story in three verses. The first two are the same length but the third is very short, reflecting the sudden death of the fish.’

symbol – something used to stand for or represent something else.

Note: a symbol is like a heavy-duty metaphor. It stands for something bigger than itself. E.g. the rose is often a symbol of love; the cross is a symbol of Christianity.

tone – the overall feeling or mood of a poem.

Note: look out for any changes of tone and see how precise you can be about which word or phrase creates that change.