COURSE MANUAL

English Poetry III

ENG315

University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre
Open and Distance Learning Course Series Development
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Vice Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.

Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka

Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

As part of its vision of providing education for "Liberty and Development" for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

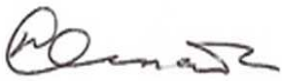
Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre's provide and put these into use.

In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.



Professor Bayo Okunade

Director

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Contents

About this course manual

English Poetry III ENG315 has been produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. All course manuals produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centreare structured in the same way, as outlined below.

How this course manual is structured

The course overview

The course overview gives you a general introduction to the course. Information contained in the course overview will help you determine:

- If the course is suitable for you.
- What you will already need to know.
- What you can expect from the course.
- How much time you will need to invest to complete the course.

The overview also provides guidance on:

- Study skills.
- Where to get help.
- Course assignments and assessments.
- Margin icons.

We strongly recommend that you read the overview *carefully* before starting your study.

The course content

The course is broken down into Study Sessions. Each Study Session comprises:

- An introduction to the Study Session content.
- Study Session outcomes.
- Core content of the Study Session with a variety of learning activities.
- A Study Session summary.
- Assignments and/or assessments, as applicable.
- Bibliography

Your comments

After completing English Poetry III we would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to give us your feedback on any aspect of this course. Your feedback might include comments on:

- Course content and structure.
- Course reading materials and resources.
- Course assignments.
- Course assessments.
- Course duration.
- Course support (assigned tutors, technical help, etc.)

Your constructive feedback will help us to improve and enhance this course.

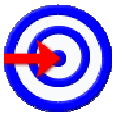
Course Overview

Welcome to English Poetry III ENG202

This course is a stylistic and thematic study of English non- heroic poetry, its characteristic techniques, concerns, and major practitioners.

Diverse types of poems have been presented in different parts of the manual, keeping in view their forms, themes and dates of composition so as to make the studying of this manual enjoyable and rewarding experience for students. The latter sessions serves as anthology of English poetry since Shakespeare's times. Diverse methods of literary criticism are employed, such as historical, biographical, and gender criticism.

Course outcomes



Outcomes

Upon completion of English Poetry III ENG315, you will be able to:

- *analyse* the nature and characteristics of English poetry.
- *discuss* figures of speech and rudiments of literary appreciation.
- *discuss* modes and trends in English poetry.
- *highlight* important poets and their contributions to English poetry.
- *explain* forms of poetry and their sub –genres.
- *review* English poems.

Timeframe

How long?

This is a 15 week course. It requires a formal study time of 45 hours. The formal study times are scheduled around online discussions / chats with your course facilitator / academic advisor to facilitate your learning. Kindly see course calendar on your course website for scheduled dates. You will still require independent/personal study time particularly in studying your course materials.

How to be successful in this course

As an open and distance learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days, where you had onsite education. You will now choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

We recommend that you take time now—before starting your self-study—to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web. A few suggested links are:

- http://www.dlc.ui.edu.ng/resources/studyskill.pdf

  This is a resource of the UIDLC pilot course module. You will find sections on building study skills, time scheduling, basic concentration techniques, control of the study environment, note taking, how to read essays for analysis and memory skills ("remembering").
- http://www.ivywise.com/newsletter_march13_how_to_self_study.html

  This site provides how to master self-studying, with bias to emerging technologies.
- http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php

  Another "How to study" web site with useful links to time management, efficient reading, questioning/listening/observing skills, getting the most out of doing ("hands-on" learning), memory building, tips for staying motivated, developing a learning plan.

The above links are our suggestions to start you on your way. At the time of writing these web links were active. If you want to look for more, go to www.google.com and type "self-study basics", "self-study tips", "self-study skills" or similar phrases.

Need help?

Help

As earlier noted, this course manual complements and supplements ENG315at UI Mobile Class as an online course, which is domiciled at www.dlc.ui.edu.ng/mc.

You may contact any of the following units for information, learning resources and library services.

Distance Learning Centre (DLC)
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Tel: (+234) 08077593551 – 55
(Student Support Officers)
Email: ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng

Head Office
Morohundiya Complex, Ibadan-Ilorin Expressway, Idi-Ose, Ibadan.

Information Centre
20 Awolowo Road, Bodija, Ibadan.

Lagos Office
Speedwriting House, No. 16 Ajanaku Street, Off Salvation Bus Stop, Awuse Estate, Opebi, Ikeja, Lagos.

For technical issues (computer problems, web access, and etcetera), please visit: www.learnersupport.dlc.ui.edu.ng for live support; or send mail to webmaster@dlc.ui.edu.ng.

Academic Support

Help

A course facilitator is commissioned for this course. You have also been assigned an academic advisor to provide learning support. The contacts of your course facilitator and academic advisor for this course are available at the course website: www.dlc.ui.edu.ng/mc

Activities

Activities

This manual features "Activities", which may present material that is NOT extensively covered in the Study Sessions. You will be provided with answers to every activity question. Therefore, your emphasis when working the activities should be on understanding your answers. It is more important that you understand why every answer is correct.

There are different forms of activities in this manual, ranging from reading activities, case studies, discussion activities. The use of activities is particularly based on learning outcomes and nature of content. Some Study Sessions comes with discussion topics. You may discuss the Study Sessions at respective discussion boards on course website.

You may see dates for active discussion with tutor on course schedule. This course schedule is available on the course website.

Assignment

Assignment

This manual also comes with tutor marked assignments (TMA). Assignments are expected to be turned-in on course website. You may also receive TMAs as part of online class activities. Feedbacks to TMAs will be provided by your tutor in not more than 2-week expected duration.

Schedule dates for submitting assignments and engaging in course / class activities is available on the course website. Kindly visit your course website often for updates.

Assessments

Assessments

There are two basic forms of self assessment in this course: in-text questions (ITQs) and self assessment questions (SAQs). Feedbacks to the ITQs are placed immediately after the questions, while the feedbacks to SAQs are at the back of manual.

Bibliography

Reading

For those interested in learning more on this subject, we provide you with a list of additional resources at the end of each Study Session; these may be books, articles or websites.

Getting around this course manual

Margin icons

While working through this course manual you will notice the frequent use of margin icons. These icons serve to "signpost" a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help you to find your way around this course manual.

A complete icon set is shown below. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the icons and their meaning before starting your study.

 Activity	 Assessment	 Assignment	 Case study
 Discussion	 Group Activity	 Help	 Outcomes
 Note	 Reflection	 Reading	 Study skills
 Summary	 Terminology	 Time	 Tip

Study Session 1

Beginning of English Poetry

Introduction

An understanding of the beginning of English poetry will provide you with insight into the contributions of pioneer English poets. It will also help you to underscore their influences on later English poetic forms.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1.1 *define* and *use correctly* the term poetry.

1.2 *discuss* the history of English poetry.

Terminology

Poetry	A rhythmical composition designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way; and characterized by the use of language and literary techniques.
Poem	A piece of writing in lines where the expression of feelings and ideas is given intensity by particular attention to diction (sometimes involving rhyme), rhythm, and imagery.

1.1 Definition of Poetry

Hint

We will commence this session by reviewing different definitions of poetry in order to expound your prior knowledge of the definition, nature and characteristics of poetry.

Poetry A genre of literature in which the expression of feelings and ideas is given intensity by the use of distinctive style and rhythm.

One of the important, yet less patronized genres of literature is **poetry**. It is important in the sense that it permeates most natural endeavors and is produced by all things in nature such as rivers, mountains, hills, wind and human experiences. Whereas Dasylva & Jegede (2005:1) trace its sources to the orderliness of nature: such as the sound of the birds, the movement of the waters and the trees, the whistling of the wind which they said are poetic and equally served as a source of inspiration for its creation; Aristotle attributed its origin to the natural instinct to imitate and also to take pleasure in imitation. It is less patronized because its deep conventions of language make its meaning elusive to many readers who do not have the patience to investigate its different levels of meaning.

Poetry is said to have derived from a Greek word which means "to make or create". The idea is that it is created from artifacts, a structure that develops from human imagination and is expressed rhythmically in words. The best way to understand it is to experience it, read it, study it, memorize it, question it and talk about it.

Several attempts have been made by scholars at defining poetry. These attempts show that poetry means different things to different people. Let us examine some of these definitions so that you can attempt to define poetry in your own words.

Discussion Activity

Task

Study the set of quoted definitions of poetry by .J. Kennedy & Dana Gioia (Appendix A), linked here.

Can you give an expression of poetry? How will you define poetry in your own words?

Discussion

These definitions and many others show that poetry is the expression of ideas and experience; and the arrangement of words in verse and rhyme. It is one of the oldest forms of expression which appeal to the mind and arouse the reader's feelings. It exploits the modes of rhythm, imagery and experience to transform feelings and thoughts into artistic forms of expression.

Post your response on Study Session One forum page on course website.

Indeed, the essence of poetry is found in the compression, economy or force of words. Its selective use of words, and specific forms, or modes of being differentiate it from other genres of literature such as drama and prose. The first is that in poetry, attention is paid to sound and connotations. The second is that the poets make greater use of resources of meaning such as figurative language, allusion symbol and imagery than the novelist or playwright. Its function is to please and entertain. No matter which of the senses poetry appeals to, its main aim is to give pleasure, to inform and instruct its reader.

F.B.O. Akporobaro (2003:91) states further that poetry can be defined in terms of the nature of form that it puts on its material. According to him:

> the most important of these formal features (or aspects) are (1) the physical form or appearance of the poem,(2) the figurative use of language, and (3) the pattern of sound….Each of these elements is given a pronounced emphasis and predominance over the others according to either the prevailing concept of poetry of a given period or culture or by a given individual poet. It is, however, necessary that for a species of composition to be significantly described as poetry, it must give full expression to one or more combinations of these aspects.

Hint

These key aspects of poetry: the physical form, the figurative use of language and patterns of sound will be discussed in subsequent Study Sessions.

1.2 History of English Poetry

Anglo Saxon The period of Anglo-Saxon (Germanic tribes) dominance in Britain, starting from 499 and ending with the Norman Conquest in 1066.

Roland Carter and John McRae (1997:35) argued that the history of English poetry is traced from Geoffrey Chaucer, since most of the poems written before him, in the Anglo-Saxon period were by anonymous authors and published as survivors. Major manuscripts of the period included Caedmon's Hymn on creation which is taken to be the beginning of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Others were Vercelli Book, Exeter Book and Beowulf manuscript. While others survived as fragments, Beowulf was the only one that survived in its entirety. There were also religious and alliterative verses; and elegies like The Wanderer, and The Seafarers.

Major works of English Literature appeared in the fourteenth century after the Norman Conquest of England in 1111. These include Pier's Plowman, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and Chaucer's poems which were considered to be comparable to the works of Virgil and Dante. They include Troilus and Criseyde, The Legend of Good Women and The Canterbury Tales. They were some of the most unique poetry collections of the medieval period.

Chaucer exhibits his descriptive power in the poems and through The Legend of Good Women, he introduces the use of heroic couplets for the first time, into English poetry while in The Canterbury Tales, he gives a wide background of the people and society of 14th century England; and through the characters, ridicules manners and behaviours that were affected, materialistic and corrupt. According to Margaret Drabble (2000), Chaucer's writings "developed though his career from a period of French influence in the late 1360s through the middle period of both French and Italian influences to the last period of most of The Canterbury Tales and his short lyrics".

The tradition of poetry in the medieval period was continued in the Renaissance and Sir Phillip Sydney who was considered to be the true representative of the age "embodied the medieval virtues of a knight, the lover and the scholar" (Carter & McRae, 1997:57). His text, Astrophel (lover of a star) & Stella (star) published posthumously in 1591contained 108 sonnets and 11 songs. It popularized the sonnet which was introduced into English poetry by Thomas Wyatt and indeed started the love for sonnet sequences.

Early renaissance poetry was concerned with the idealization of women on the one hand and love sonnets on the other .The earliest of the sonnets were said to be written by Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard. Both poets translated Italian (Petrarch) sonnets directly into English poetry. They were patronized by members of the upper class and concerned with subjects of love, impermanence of life, loss, change and loneliness.

Alex Preminger & T.V.O Brogan (1993:340) wrote that English poetry emerged in the Renaissance period with the publication of a pastoral poem by Edmund Spenser titled The Shepherd's Calendar (1579) The pastoral genre is an important renaissance form which idealizes rustic life

and celebrates a Golden Age of simplicity and leisure .In the Faerie Queene(1590), ,he brings together English myths and eulogy of kings to write his praise poem. Roland Carter and John McRae (2001:58) described Chaucer as Spenser's favourite "English poet and in constructing his allegory…Spenser was acutely alive to the traditions on which he was building" However, apart from Chaucer, Spenser was also influenced by Malory and classical epic writers like Homer and Virgil.

- Poetry can be a poem or class of poems, an instance of verbal art, a text that is set in verse, bound speech which conveys heightened form of perception, experience, meaning or consciousness in heightened language or mode of discourse.
- Rhythm, lineation and meter, figurative language, sound devices are significant features of poetry.
- History of poetry can be traced to Anglo Saxons.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we explored the meaning of poetry as propounded by different authors. We went further to note the significant features of poetry:

1. rhythm
2. lineation and meter
3. figurative language
4. sound devices

Lastly we outlined the history of English poetry.

Bibliography

Reading

Akporobaro, F.B.O. *Introduction to Poetry*. Lagos: Princeton, 2008.

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http://poetinthecity.wordpress.com/2011/03/16/what-is-poetry-50-definitions-and-counting/ retrieved May, 2014.

Study Session 2

Poetry and Meaning

Introduction

In this Study Session, you will explore how to find meaning in poetry. Specifically, this attempt will be through diction and sounds in poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
2.1 *derive* the meaning of a poem.

2.1 Meaning in Poetry

Euphony The use of words and phrases that are distinguished as having a wide range of noteworthy melody or loveliness in the sounds they create.

Cacophony The use of words with sharp, harsh and unmelodious sounds to achieve desired results.

To understand a poem's organization, you must observe the presence and absence of punctuation marks. Where there is a comma, it is necessary to pause a little and where there is a full stop, to pause for a longer period of time; where an enjambment exists, the lines should run on. When a poem is read as it ought to, it will yield its meaning. However, a good poem will not yield all its meaning at one reading. It should not be glossed over.

A poem should be read slowly and carefully. It can also be read silently; and with an open mind. Sound the word out in your mind. Attention must be paid to all the words and sound. The first reading of a poem should be done with an open mind; a desire to enjoy its sound. When the sounds in a poem are mild and pleasing to the ear; if they work towards the attainment of meaning, they are called **euphony** and when the effect of sound is harsh to the mind and ear, it is called **cacophony** as in Alexander Pope's poem "True Ease in Writing comes from Art not Chance"

Activity 2.1

Time required:
15 minutes

Task
What can you say about the poem below?

Soft is the strain when Zephyr *gently blows*
And the *smooth* stream in *smoother Numbers flows*
But when *loud surges lash* the sounding shore,
The *hoarse, rough verse* should like the *Torrent roar*
(Kennedy&Gioia, 154)

Discussion

It is easy on first observation to see that the effect of sounds in the lines differs: the first two lines are instances of **euphony** while the last two are **cacophony**. The sounds combine with the words to produce meaning. Thus, the use of alliteration, assonance, repetition and

onomatopoeia appeal to the reader's mind while the words make the reader imagine the ideas in the poem.

The second reading can prompt a reader towards the meaning. At such a time, as X.J Kennedy and Dana Gioia(2007:4) put it, read for the "exact sense of all the words" . For example, in John Donne's "Batter my Heart", (poem 1), understand the figurative sense of words like "**o'erthrow me, enthrall me, make me, imprison me**" etc. As you read through, identify the difficult words and check for their meanings in the dictionary.

After this, *spend time on the difficult words by reading them again in the context in which you find them in the poem.* Think about it and consider it, line by line as you read through the poem. Then, try to summarize or paraphrase it. Summarizing the poem can help identify the theme and subject matter.

Attempts have been made by scholars such as Kennedy and Gioia (1995:586), and Dasylva & Jegede (2003:17) to discuss the difference between theme and subject matter. They argued that the theme of a poem is its central idea while its subject matter is its main topic.

Meaning in poetry comes from both sound and words. It could be denotative or connotative. **Denotative meaning** refers to the ordinary level of meaning while the **connotative meaning** refers to the figurative use of language. The meaning of a poem is both the summary and the interpretation of the main ideas that are derivable from it. It is concerned with both the personal and universal experiences in the poem, thus, it is concerned with both its denotative and connotative levels of meaning. *Meaning is "bound up with the mode of communication, the potency or the intensity and vividness with which felt ideas have been presented through the use of metaphor and symbol".*

Activity 2.2

Time required:
15 minutes

Task

Read the poem below by A.E Housman titled "To An Athlete Dying Young". What meaning can you derive from it?

The time you won your *town* the race
We chaired you through the market place,
Man and boy stood cheering by
And *home* we brought you shoulder-high

Today, the road all runners come
Shoulder-high we bring you *home*
And set you at your threshold down
Townsman of a stiller *town*

Discussion

The above poem is not simply concerned with stating what happened when the athlete won medals; rather it deals with the universal experience of death and the graveyard. The words "*town*" and "*home*" mean different things in the first and second stanzas of the poem In the first, both words are used literally while in the second, they are used metaphorically. In stanza one, *town* refers to the athlete's place of birth while *home* stands for his place of abode or where he resides. In the second stanza, *town* metaphorically stands for burial ground and *home* is

his tomb and final resting place Thus, meaning in the poem moves from specific to general and from literal to metaphoric. It is only when attention is paid to the choice of words and how words are said that alongside other devices that poetry can be fully appreciated.

Tip

Do the following to understand a poem:

- Observe the presence and absence of punctuation marks.
- Sound the word out in your mind. Attention must be paid to all the words and sound.
- Analyse the difficult words in the context they are provided so as to get the poem's theme and subject matter.
- A good poem comes with hidden meaning; so read the poem over and over to obtain its hidden treasure.

Reflection

Meanings are locked up in the imageries of poetry. The mind of the poet is truly revealed through them.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we noted that a single poem can mean many things. Meaning is usually conveyed indirectly and yielded through appropriate reading. The most striking parts of a poem and its imageries are the parts that will lead to its meaning.

Bibliography

Reading

Akporobaro, F.B.O. *Introduction to Poetry* Lagos: Princeton, 2008.

Dasylva, A. O & Jegede, O.B .*Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Atlantis Books, 2003

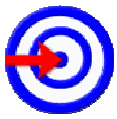
Kennedy, X.J &Gioia, Dana *An Introduction to Poetry* New York: Pearson Longman, 2007.

Study Session 3

Forms of Poetry

Introduction

In this Study Session, you will be exposed to formal classifications and backgrounds to different kinds of English poetry.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
3.1 *classify* different poems according to their formal organizations.

Terminology

Open form poetry	A type of poetry that has no specific patterns of rhyme, rhythm, meter, imagery, syntax, or stanzas.
Closed form poetry	A type of form or structure in poetry that exhibits regularity and consistency in such elements as rhyme, meter, line length, line groupings and number of lines.
Verse	This could mean any of: 1) a line of metrical writing, 2) a stanza, or 3) any composition written in meter.
Stanza	A division or unit of a poem that is repeated in the same form - either with similar or identical patterns or rhyme and meter, or with variations from one stanza to another.
Rhyme	A matching similarity of sounds in two or more words, especially when their accented vowels and all succeeding consonants are identical.
Rhythm	The recurrence of accent or stress in lines of verse.

3.1 Structure of Poems

The structure that poems take and the way their forms are organized is one of the distinctive characteristics of poems. These vary from writer to

writer. Poetry is written in lines which form stanzas. Each unit of stanza contains ideas that are linked to others after it. According to F.B.O. Akporobaro (2003:88), lines and stanzas provide a limited context, space or matrix within which the poet must convey his thought in a very concise form. Lines and stanzas help the poet to be concise, vivid and hence poetical. Lines in poetry may be long or short, rhythmical or non-rhythmical and the manner of their organization may be in various kinds of poetry and poetic types and styles. Poems are also written in free verse.

Reflection

Rhyme is not the identifying mark of poetry, but rather meter.

3.1.1 Classification of English Poems

Most English poems are versified and their classification sometimes overlaps. There are two main forms of poetry in English. They are

(i) **Open form**

(ii) **Closed form**

Open Form Poetry

Open form poetry A form in poetry characterized by freedom from regularity and consistency in such elements as rhyme, line length, metrical pattern, and overall poetic structure.

The **open form poetry** refers to poems whose structures are flexible and open to changes by the poet. It is a form that allows the poet opportunities for expansion variability, and creativity. There are no dominant meters or line lengths. Walt Whitman's poem titled "Reconciliation" is an example:

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,

Such poems do not have rime scheme or basic meter. The reader's attention is sustained through other means. Thus, the structure of the poem is not forced on it by tradition. Poetry in open form was called **free verse;** they are forms of irregular and unrhymed poetry that are not constrained by traditional demands of meter**.** One of such is the **Nonsense verse.** It is a form of verse that is humorous or whimsical. It shows resistance to any personal or allegorical interpretation. It uses comical, meaningless words. It makes the words sound purposeful.

Free verse A literary device that can be defined as poetry that is free from limitations of regular meter or rhythm; do not follow regular rhyme scheme rules and still provide artistic expression.

Twas a billing and the slithytoves

Did gyre and gumble in the wake;

All mime by were the borogroves and the momerathsoutgrabe.

Activity 3.1

Time required:
15 minutes

Analyze the poem by Walt Whitman below. What sort of verse did he employ?

A Noiseless Patient Spider

A noiseless patient spider,

I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,

Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,

It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,

Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,

Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,…….

Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,

Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

Discussion

This is a free verse poem; although only a simple metaphor is used without employing regular rhyme scheme or rhythm, we can see normal pauses in the poem unlike the typical limitations of metrical feet.

Tip

Features of Free Verse

1. Free verse poems have no regular meter and rhythm.
2. They do not follow a proper rhyme scheme as such; these poems do not have any set rules.
3. This type of poem is based on normal pauses and natural rhythmical phrases as compared to the artificial constraints of normal poetry.

Closed Form Poetry

Whereas the **closed form poetry** has a fixed structure with specific traditional rhyming patterns and attributes which make them memorable. An example is the sonnet which has fourteen lines and specific rhyme patterns. The English sonnet for example has a pattern of 3 quatrains and a couplet which rhymes as ababcdcdefefgg. This will be discussed in subsequent lectures. The structure of a sonnet cannot be changed; although varieties exist in the form. Edgar Roberts & Henry Jacobs (2007: 923) wrote: "over the centuries English and American poets have appropriated and evolved many closed forms. Among the most important of these are blank verse, the couplet, the tercet or triplet, terzarima, the villanelle the quatrain, the sonnet, the lyric, the ode, the ballad, the elegy,…together with other forms like haiku, the epigram, the epitaph, the limerick ...".

Limerick A five-line closed-form poem in which the first two lines consist of anapestic trimeter, which in turn are followed by lines of anapestic dimeter, and a final line in trimeter. They rhyme in an AABBA pattern.

Limerick is a short comic verse form of five anapestic lines rhyming aa b b a. Here is an example:

A flea and a fly in a flue	a	
Were caught, so what could they do?	a	
Said the fly, "Let us Flee"		b
"Let us fly", said the flea		b
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.	a	

- Anonymous Poet

and

There was an old man of Khartoum a
Who kept a tame sheep in his room a
"To remind me" he said b
"Of someone who's dead, b
But I never can recollect whom" a

-W.R. Inge

Epigram A short, humorous poem, often written in couplets, that makes a satiric point.

Epitaph is a short poem that is witty and also satirical about the death of an individual. It is also a short comment about someone's death.

Epigram is a terse, pointed statement, or a short poem, often written in couplets, which ends in a humorous or satirical way to which the rest of the composition is intended to lead. S.T. Coleridge in "What is an epigram"?, tries to define it thus: A dwarfish whole / Its body, brevity, and wit, its soul.

I am His Highness' dog at Kew;

Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

Its pattern is brief-couplet, and its tone is sarcastic.

Tercet A three-line unit or stanza of poetry. It typically rhymes in an AAA or ABA pattern.

Besides, other closed forms include a **Tercet also called triplet,** which is three line unit of poem rhyming [aaa] and thereby keeping to one sound as in the example below:

Julius Caesar

The Roman geeza

Squashed his wife with a lemon squeezer.

A variation of the tercet is **terzarima.** According to Roberts & Jacobs, stanzas are interlocked through a pattern that requires the centre termination in one tercet to be rhymed twice in the next: aba, bcb, cdc, ded and so on.

Yet another variation of tercet is the **villanelle**. The villanelle was originally an Italian peasant song. It developed in France in the middle ages.

The Waking by Theodore Roethke

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow

I feel my fate in what I cannot fear

I learn by going where I have to go.

We think by feeling. What is there to know?

I hear my being dance from ear to ear.

I wake to sleep and make my walking slow

Of those close beside me, which are you?
God bless the ground! I shall walk softly there
And learn by going where I have to go.

Light takes the Tree, but who can tell us how?
The lowly worm climbs up a winding stair;
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Great Nature has another thing to do
To you and me; so take the lively air;
And, learn by going where I have to go.

This shaking keeps me steady. I should know
What falls away is always. And is near:
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I learn by going where I have to go.

It is a poem of nineteen lines - six tercets and one line. The concluding stanza consists four lines. In the example provided above, the rhyme pattern is aba, aba, aba, aba, aba abaa

Couplet A literary device which has two successive rhyming lines in a verse and has the same meter to form a complete thought.

Another form is a **couplet**. It is made of two lines connected by content and rhyme, and also identical by meter and length. Most English couplets are in iambic pentameter, and they have been in poetry since Chaucer used them in *The Canterbury Tales* in the 14th century. In the 17th& 18th century, the couplet was adopted for epic and heroic poetry; for which reason it was called the heroic couplet.

Sonnet A lyric poem of fourteen lines with rhymes arranged according to certain definite patterns. It usually expresses a single, complete idea with a reversal, twist, or change of direction in the concluding lines.

The **Sonnet** is a poem of fourteen lines and one of the most popular closed forms. It started as an Italian form, created by Petrarch, the Italian poet. The sonnet was therefore named in his honour and later adapted into English poetry in the early sixteenth century. The **Petrarchan sonnet** is said to be written mostly in iambic pentameter. It contains an **octave** and a **sestet.** The octave presents a problem but the resolution is presented in the sestet. The rhyme scheme is [obar/ abba/cde/cde**]**; or such other variations as [cdc/cdc**]** also be found in the sestet.

The sonnet tradition was adapted by Shakespeare who popularized it through the development of Shakespearean or English sonnet. Its rhyme scheme, differs from the Petrarchan in that it contains three quatrains and a couplet. It presents a single line of argument or thought in its four parts. The central idea is developed in the quatrain while the couplet provides the answer or climax. Its rhyme scheme is [abab/ cdcd/ efef/gg**]**.

Another form of closed poetry is the **lyric**, a form of poem that was originally meant to be sung to the music of a lyre whether as a solo performance, or as a group performance. In England, lyric poetry

flourished in the middle ages and such manuscript collections as Harley Lyrics were produced at the period. However, as time went on, the connection between poetry and music were broken.

In modern times, a lyric is described as a short poem that expresses the thought and feelings of love and emotion of a single speaker. It is usually written in 5 or 6 stanzas. Roberts & Jacobs explain that a lyric may be "personal, public, philosophical, religious and political". Lyric sometimes relates an incident or draws a scene. It does not usually relate a series of incidents. An example is A.E. Housman's "Loveliest of Trees". The **sonnet, ballad** and **ode** are some of its examples.

Ballad A narrative poem, characterized by swift action and narrated in a direct style.

Ballad originated from oral tradition; sometimes oral ballads tell the story of heroic deeds in song form. It was a popular song that attacked a person or an institution. It combined narration with dramatic dialogue. In recent times, **literary ballad** is described as a short poem in short stanzas in which a popular story is graphically narrated. It imitates the features of oral ballad such as dramatic conflict or the interaction of human and supernatural beings. Among the examples of a literary ballad are "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" by John Keats, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Coleridge and the fifteenth century anonymous **narrative ballad** titled "Sir Patrick Spens"

Note

A ballad has the following common traits:

a) the beginning is often abrupt;

b) the story is told through dialogue and action;

c) the language is simple or "folksy,"

d) the theme is often tragic--though comic ballads do exist, and

e) the ballad contains a refrain repeated several times.

Ode A long stanza poem of varied length, meter, and form that deals with a serious subject matter.

Ode is a lyric poem in rhymed stanza with some length and elevated style. The topic and form of odes are said to be diversified, meditative and philosophical. *The ode is usually much longer than the song or lyric, but usually not as long as the epic poem.*

Elegy Any poem dealing with the complaints about love, sustained formal lamentation, or sober meditations.

Elegy or lament is a lyric concerned with the death of an individual; or issues relating to mortality or tragic aspects of life. A popular example is John Milton's "Lycidas" which mourns the death of his friend and school mate who died by drowning. The poem also describes rural life.

ITQ

Question

- What can you observe about the structure of this poetry?
  Sonnet XXIX
  When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
  I all alone beweep my outcast state,
  And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,

And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.
- William Shakespeare

Feedback

- This Shakespeare's sonnet end in rhymed couplets, as in "For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings / That then I scorn to change my state with kings."

3.1.2 Types of Poetry

Narrative Poetry

This relates a series of events by telling a story through omniscient point of view (God-like narrator) in Western literature. It dates back to the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh before 2000 BC and the Homer epic of *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. Examples of narrative poetry are romance, epic and heroic poetry.

As a narrative form of poetry, **romance** derived from the medieval Latin word romanice. It related stories of adventure, heroism and chivalry. In particular, it was applied to popular courtly stories in verse. According to Margaret Drabble (2000:869), its thematic preoccupation centered around three main things: the legend of Arthur (referred to by Jean Bodel as matter of Britain); Charlemagne and his knights(matter of France) and stories about classical heroes especially Alexander (matter of Rome). It adopted an allegorical style. *Sir Gawain and the knights of the Green Castle* is an example of romance in poetry. From the 15th century, English romance was said to be in prose form.

An **epic** is a lengthy narrative poem which celebrates the achievement of a hero in history; using a grand style. It employs specific features in its performance. Dasylva& Jegede (2005:30-4) identified them as follows: action that consists deeds of great valour, a hero of imposing character and also action that begins in the middle of things (in media res)..Others are interaction between men and the supernatural forces, hero, setting that is vast in scope, elevated style, epic formulae including invocation of a muse and request for guidance, statement of theme at the beginning, inclusion of instances of sporadic wars, epic oration and epic simile. Among the great epics of the world are the classical epics *Aeneid, Illiad& Odyssey and* the English epic, *Paradise Lost* by John Milton.

Dramatic Poetry

Dramatic Poetry can be defined in the following way:

i. any verse written for the stage. It is in this sense that Shakespearian plays can be described as dramatic poetry;
ii. verse in dramatic monologue through the voice of an imaginary character who speaks directly without any additional narration by the author or who speaks as a reply to some characters replies, the poem then becomes a dialogue in which the poem unfolds the conversation between two speakers.

Satirical Poetry comments on life and the experience of man, condemning the foolishness and weakness of man. This is done through the use of sarcasm, irony and humour. An example is Chaucer's "The General Prologue" The poem is both narrative and satiric.

Discussion Activity

Analyse the form of John Milton's "Lycidas" (Appendix B, linked here).

Post your response on Study Session Three forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we have discussed different forms of poetry and the types that are peculiar to each form. Specifically, we have identified open and closed forms of poetry but we also mentioned that the classification of English poetry is flexible and that a single poem can embrace two or three forms.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 3.1 (tests Learning Outcome 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)
What is the difference between "closed form" poetry and "open form" poetry?

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Study Session 4

Figures of Speech

Introduction

Our aim in this Study Session is to acquire insight into figurative language and the use of figures of speech in English poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
4.1 *point out* and *use correctly* figurative devices.

4.1 Figurative Use of Language

In understanding a poem, the literal use of words that is their dictionary or denotative meanings, as well as their symbolic meanings are very important ways of arriving at their actual meaning. In poetry, it is common to find writers depart from the common usage of words in order to emphasize a point or to make a familiar idea appear strange, or an old idea look fresh. X.J Kennedy and Dana Gioia (2007: 110) explained that figurative language occurs when a poet employs the use of words beyond the ordinary to stand for ideas. It is important to note that all figures of speech use language to emphasize different things: contrast, comparison or to achieve musical effects. Wherever they appear, they draw attention to an idea. Figures of speech are metaphoric language, rhetorical devices and connotative use of language.

Lord Tennyson's poem "The Eagle" is a case in point:

He *clasps* the crag with *crooked hands*
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, *he stands*

The wrinkled sea beneath him *crawls;*
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

The poem above is rich in personification and images. For example,-the eagle is said to have crooked hands instead of claws and it is able to stand, crawl and fall. The sea is also said to be wrinkled. These human abilities are transferred to the bird and through implied comparison, the poet establishes a link between the bird's ability to grab things with human ability to hold things firmly. The poem is also rich in images-

such as tactile, as in "clasps with crooked hand|" and auditory as in "like a thunderbolt he falls"

Hint

Figures of speech discussed in this Study Session have been classified according to their areas of emphasis.

4.1.1 Comparative Devices

Simile: a figure of speech in which two things that are not similar are compared and connected through the use of "as" or "like" the use of the connective establishes the resemblance between them. For example "the man is innocent as a dove"

Metaphor: is a device where one thing is said to be another; thereby establishing some similarity between them. It is an implied comparison, for example Lola is a beast

Metonymy: is a device where a thing is substituted for another to which it is closely associated or identified. An object with which one thing is closely associated may be used to name it. For example teacher may be substituted for chalk, student for book, king for crown etc. By saying "the chalk was here", one could mean "the teacher was here".

Personification: This is figurative expression in which an idea, a thing or an object is given human qualities or characteristics. In this example, the whishing wind raced beyond measures", the wind is endowed with both the human quality of whistling and racing

Synecdoche: The use of a part of a thing to represent the whole of that thing. For example, "more hands are needed for the job "means more people are required to complete the work.

4.1.2 Contrastive Devices

Oxymoron: is the juxtaposition of two contrasting words in a line of a poem; in order to suggest an idea that seems contradictory "travelling abroad was a bitter sweet experience for the man "The words bitter and sweet" are placed side by side as indicators of two contrastive experiences.

Antithesis: is the device in which two words, ideas, phrases, sentences or paragraphs are used in a poem in order to establish a contrast between them. The ideas, words phrases sentence and paragraphs are not placed side by side but are contrasted in order to heighten the effect of a statement for example.

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

Like a raisin in the sun?

Or foster like a sore

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over

Like a syrupy sweet?

(Langston Hughes "Dream Deferred")

The expression "rotten meat" contrasts with "syrupy sweet". It should be noted that they are found in the first and last lines of the second stanza.

Paradox: is a figurative device in which two ideas that are obviously contradictory to one another contain some truth. At first reading, such ideas seem confusing, but on a closer look are seen to contain some truths. For example:

Heard melodies are sweet,

but those unheard are sweeter; (John Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn")

Hyperbole: is a figure in which deliberate exaggeration is used for the sake of emphasis. For example

Had we but world enough and time… I would
Love you ten years before the flood:
Thine Eyes, and on thy forehead Gaze
Two hundred to adore each Breast
An age at least to every part
(Andrew Maxwell "To His Coy Mistress)

Irony: (verbal) this is a figure in which a writer says one thing but means the opposite. For example, a discrepancy of meaning is wedding.

She is a worthy woman all her life
What's more, she'd had five husbands
All at the church door step
(Goeffery chancer "The General Prologue")

From the above lines, one can observe the incongruity between the meaning of worthy and the act of having five husbands.

4.1.3 Allusive Devices

Apostrophe: is a direct address to an object a person, or an abstract thing that is not present, a if they are there. For example: Farewell, their child of my right hand, and joy. My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy, seven years thou wert lent to me and I thee pay".

("On My First Son" by Ben Johnson)

A direct address is made to the dead child of Ben Johnson in the above lines.

Allusion is a brief reference to a thing, person or place. It is sometimes indirect and it, could be real or imagined. For instance

"When also Zephyrus in his sweet breath
Exhales an air in every grove and heath"
(Chancer, "The General prologue")

"Zephyrus" is a classical figure so there is an instance of classical allusion in the lines above

4.1.4 Linguistic Devices

Inversion is the rearrangement of the usual sentence order e.g "much have I traveled in the realms of gold" instead of I have travelled much in the realm of gold.

(John Keats "On first looking into chapman's Homer")

Allegory is a narrative in verse that has two levels of meaning – literal and symbolic. The literal events point to symbolic ideas. The literal level tells the surface story while the symbolic consists of persons, place or things with a deeper level of meaning

Symbol A person, object or place in a poem that suggests meanings beyond the literal level. The meanings associated with a symbol may be many. They may also be personalized or universalized symbols.

Diction is the choice of words in a piece of poem. It could be **specific, concrete, general or abstract**. Specific diction describes objects or conditions that are exact and particular. Concrete choice of words refers to ideas that are can easily be perceived and imagined, while abstract diction involves words that are theoretical in nature. General diction refers to broad categories of people, ideas and situations. In English, there are four levels of diction; these are vulgate, general, formal and colloquial: Compare these stanzas of A. E. Housman's and Richard Eberhart's poems below:

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now A. E. Housman
Loveliest of *trees*, *the cherry now*
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing *white* for Easterride.

You would think the fury of aeriel bombardment by Richard Eberhart

You would think the *fury* of aeriel bombardment
Would rouse God to relent, the *infinite spaces*
Are still silent. He looks on shock-pried faces
History, even does not know what is meant.

In the first poem, concrete situations are evoked and specific objects such as trees are described while in the second one, abstract time is referred to in the expression *infinite space*. It is impossible to imagine what exactly the infinite spaces refer to in the italicized expressions. Besides, diction could also be formal and informal. Formal diction on the one hand is one that is written according to the structure of grammar, uses words that are complex and shows evidences of derivations from Greek, French and Latin words. Informal diction on the other hand, is the opposite of all these. In addition, it includes jargons, idiomatic expressions and others that may not be grammatically correct.

4.1.5 Musical Devices

Pun: A play on words. One word is substituted for another with a similar or identical sound but of very different meaning e.g the song was sung in the sun.

Parallelism: The repetition of similar or identical structural patterns in phrases, clauses or sentences. The emphasis here is on the repeated structure e.g. I can, I will. I may- this is a structure of subject and predicate. Here the parallels are perfect but there are other varieties as well. It may be the repetition of a sentence structure e.g. my mouth doth water/ my light doth shine.

Assonance: is a figure of speech where two or more vowel sounds are repeated in successive words. This creates a rhyme for instance "Blake Breaks the snaking flakes"

Alliteration is the repetition of two or more consonant sounds in successive words in a poem. For instance: terrible trouble

Rhymes are two or more words with identical or similar vowel sounds. It could be at the beginning (initial) or end of the lines; or it could be on every other line (alternate)

One morn I missed him, on the costumed hill

Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;

Another came; nor yet beside the rill

Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

("Elegy written in a country church yard" by Thomas Gray)

The above stanza shows the use of alternate rhymes: hill rhymes with rill and tree with he.

Rhythm is the recurrence of sounds or flow or words or phrases or movement of thoughts. It is also discussed as pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. The flow of ideas is divided into unit called fool. Meter is used in poetry to achieve rhythm.

Scansion is the art of determining the prevailing rhythmic pattern and poetic characteristics of a poem. According to Kennedy &Gioia (2003:613), it involves "separating the metric feet , counting the syllables, marking the accents and indicating the pauses" To be able to determine the prevailing rhythm in a poem, one needs an understanding of the meter.

Meter is the regular pattern of rhythm (recurring sounds) in poetry. In English poetry, rhythm involves the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables. When rhythm occurs in poetry at regular intervals, then it is called meter. Meters are identified by the arrangement of syllables in their feet or units. Feet in poetry are the unit of measurement in meter. It is made of one or two syllables. It must be emphasized that getting the right meter in poetry depends on putting the right stress on the right word. Non native speakers of English have often found this difficult. Many put a stress where they ought not to be and this makes it impossible to get the pattern of meter.

Types of Pattern of meter

(1) Iamb – is a metrical foot in English poetry in which one unstressed syllable is followed by one stressed syllable e.g. *a* cat, *a* /rise.

(2) Trochee – a metrical foot in which one stressed syllable is followed by an unstressed syllable e.g. *well*/come, *sum*/mer, *cho*/rus

(3) Dactyl – This is a pattern in which one stressed syllable is followed by two unstressed syllables e.g. *par*-a-mount.

(4) Anapest – This is a metrical foot in which two unstressed syllables are followed by one stressed syllable as in the expression '*in my* heart', 'heart' is stressed syllables e.g. photography.

(5) Spondee – This is made up of two unstressed syllable e.g. my name

(6) Amphoral- this is one stressed syllable between two unstressed syllables e.g. Je/*ho*/vah.

The italicized syllables carry the stress in the examples provided.

A foot is usually made up of one or two syllables. Each foot makes up the units in a meter.

(1) Monometer- This is made up of one foot

(2) Diameter – This is made up of two feet

(3) Trimeter – This is made up of three feet

(4) Tetrameter – this is made up of four feet

(5) Pentameter – This is made up of five feet

(6) Hexameter – This is made up of six feet

Image: suggests anything that can be imagined. In poetry, images generally mean a word or sequence of words that refer to any sensory experience. Often, this experience is a sight (**visual**) as in "The apparition of these faces in the crowd/Petals as a wet, black bough" ("In a station of the Metro"-Ezra Pound). At other times, it may be a sound **(auditory)** as in "the booming of bomb and the slamming of the door frightened the people". It may also appeal to the reader's sense of touch **(tactile)** as a perception of roughness or smoothness. It may be a bodily sensation such as pain, the prickling of gooseflesh as in:

The piercing chill I feel
My dead wife's comb , in our bedroom
Under my Heel (Haiku by Taniguchi Buson).

It may also be that of taste **(gustatory**) as in "sweet white wine cinnamon" or smell (**olfactory)** as in " the air was filled with excreta odour mixed with the smell of Fadey Alamanda and rose" or motion (kinetic) as in "the rushing of the water through the deep gullies in the mountain caused the erosion". Images are references that move the mind to recollect various events which help the reader to create mental pictures of what was expressed. They may be literal that is descriptive and pictorial and metaphorical or figurative and suggestive.

Discussion Activity

Point out the different types of images in George Herbert's "Easter Wing". (Appendix C, linked here).

Post your response on Study Session Four forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we have examined the figures of speech that are essential for understanding and appreciating poetry. We have also discussed metrical patterns in English poetry. The figures of speech would be applied in subsequent lectures.

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Study Session 5

Literary Theories and Appreciation

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will examine literary theories that are important to the study of poems. In this way, we will provide necessary background for the study of important theories that are useful in the analysis of poetry. You will also be exposed to practical criticism and the literary appreciation of poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
5.1 *read* and *write* poems.
5.2 analyze any poetry.

5.1 Literary Theories as Frameworks for Interpreting Poems

There are many theories in literature which are necessary frameworks for interpret poems. According to Roberts & Jacobs, many of these were developed in the C20th to create a discipline that is comparable to other disciplines. At the heart of these theories are questions about the nature and functions of literature. Some of these show the inherent qualities of literature while others show the extent to which literature contributes to other disciplines. The theories provide wide and divergent views on literature and literary problems. Not every theory is appropriate for every poem. However when, a major theory is chosen as a frame for a particular analysis, it can include bits of other approaches. Thus, a great deal of criticism is eclectic rather than rigid. The theories to be considered include formalism, feminism, psychoanalysis and marxism.

Tip

Criticism is concerned with establishing theoretical understanding of poems by approaching them from a major perspective, while using the principles and rules for analyzing them.

5.1.1 Formalism

Formalism, like structuralism, looks at the inherent quality of literature. It focuses on literary texts as formal works of art. It provides readers with means of explaining the content of works and the insights needed for evaluating the artistic qualities of poems without giving attention to things that are not directly related to the text itself. Discussion of such elements as tone, plot, simile, metaphor, and other poetic devices are formal ways of analyzing poetry. Thus a formalist theory will provide the platform for discussing what the writer said and how he said it.

The inspiration for formalist approach came from the French practice of explicating the text; a method that emphasizes detailed explanation and examination of a poem. Steps in explicating a text will be expatiated upon later in this lecture.

5.1.2 Feminism/Gender

Feminist theory had its genesis in the women's movements of 1900 and the fight for women's right. It's main aim is to query the assumptions about women and claim more space for women in their writings. Feminist critics also project women's poems, describe how male and female characters are presented in a work of fiction and highlight the extent to which assumptions about male and female are reinforced in the poem

5.1.3 Marxism

This approach focuses the cultural and economic conditions or social situations and class relations, if there is any, in a poem.

5.1.4 Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is concerned with analyzing the hidden and unconscious motives behind speech and attitude. It is also a theory that considers the connection between the poet's life experience and his major poetic preoccupation. It is a scientific theory of the mind which was propounded and practiced by Sigmund Freud and his followers.

5.1.5 Explication

Explication is not a theory but an approach that provides the opportunity to explain the meaning and implications of words in a poem. It requires the discussion of individual parts in relation to the entire work. Through this, you will be able to show that you have followed the important details in the poem, you understand the issues and meaning the poem reveals, you also explain the connection between the content of the poem and its technique and discuss important aspects of the poem.

Let your introduction contain general ideas that are related to your poem and your discussion. For example the central idea in the anonymous poem "Sir Patrick Spens" suggests two things. The first is the conflict between self- preservation and obedience to authority while the second is that innocent people may be caught in the web of fighting. Describe the poem's content and its major organizing elements in your own words. Give the meaning and possible interpretations of the poem. Refer also to

some of the techniques used in the poem like unintroduced unforegrounded quotations. The responses of Sir Patrick and his group are dramatized through this. In your conclusion, you need to repeat your major ideas which reinforce your essay's thematic structure.

In conclusion, an explication begins with a statement of the central idea. This is followed by important details in the poem with guiding phrases like "The speaker begins", "He says", "He says further". At this point step by step analysis is done. This is followed by references to the poet persona's words .The last paragraph reaffirms the main idea and idioms. This is followed by the style of the poet.

5.2 Analyzing Poetry

Literary appreciation is an important part of studies in poetry. It is the understanding of and ability to know and evaluate the literary beauties that are inherent in a work of art, and especially a poem. This refers to the ability to read, understand and make judgments and express opinions about the totality of a given poem. These include making comments about its form, literary devices, language, content and structure among other literary devices that may be used in a given poem. A number of critical theories for understanding and interpreting poetry are available to both teachers and learners of poetry. At the heart of these approaches are questions that bother on the nature, function and form of literature. The approaches include formalism, structuralism, feminism, psychoanalysis, marxism critical approach etc.

Illustration

John Donne's "Batter my Heart" is often referred to as Holy Sonnet 10. It was one of the religious poems which he composed at a time when he drifted from Catholicism and became involved in religious thoughts. The poem portrays the intense personal agony of John Donne.

It is a strange and complex prayer poem which discusses the helplessness of a man who is spiritually lost and in bondage with the devil. He seeks the approval and favour of God after realizing his sinful state. Donne does this through a comparison of the man's position with an usurped town. He compares himself to an usurped town, or a town under siege that is trying to throw off its conquerors and willing to accept an army of liberation. He also compares the onslaught of God's love to that between a man and woman.

The poet persona begins by asking God to beat him hard and damage him, throw him down and destroy him so that he can rise and stand. He also wants God to imprison him so that he can be free. He does not identify himself or why he wants God to batter his heart in the first few lines. His speech reveals that he is in agony over his troubled state. He tries to explain why his heart should be *battered, broken, blown burnt and made new*. Because of his sinful state, his soul has been taken over by the devil and all attempts to get his freedom by himself have proved abortive. He therefore looks to God as a superior power who can save him from the bondages of sin and deliver him permanently from the hands of the devil who has taken him captive. He concludes that unless God comes to his rescue by battering and ravishing him, he cannot be chaste.

The speaker's words are both connotative and denotative. Hence many

figurative comparisons are used in order to stress the poet's captivity and desire for liberation. In order to further emphasize the extent of his captivity and the need for a forceful liberation, he uses the image of marriage and divorce:"love, betrothed, divorce, break that knot" .

As another means of stressing the need for his deliverance, the poet persona asks God to imprison him so that he could free him and also to divorce him so that he could marry him. So through the contrastive images of war/ peace, marriage / divorce, God /devil, bondage/ freedom ravish/chaste and enemy/friend, he brings out more vividly the need to deliver him. To make the irony of bondage clear, the poem uses compressed metaphor to compare a spiritual experience to something so grossly carnal.

A reading of the poem therefore shows the poem's contrasting arguments: ideas are presented in opposing pairs as we already mentioned. Donne uses these contrasting ideas to emphasize the poet persona's desire for liberation from the shackles of the devil.

Literary Devices

Subject Matter: Search for liberation from sin.

Theme: The unworthiness of man in the presence of God.

Form: The poem is a sonnet- a **p**etrarchan sonnet written in the metaphysical tradition. It is in two parts: octave and sestet. The octave is the first eight lines while the sestet is the last six lines. The style of this Petrarchan sonnet includes the use of paradox. Ideas are presented as contrasting pairs (antithesis) and in seemingly contradictory ways.

Contrasts: Lines 1-3: **paradox- batter** my heart… **that I may rise and stand.**

Lines4: **Your force** to break, blow, burn and **make me new.**

Lines 9: Dearly **I love you**… but **I'm betrothed to your enemy**.

Lines 10-12: Take me to you…**Imprison me,** for I, never **shall be free**.

Line 14: **never shall be chaste except you ravish me.**

Images of love & hatred, marriage & divorce, prison& freedom are also used in the poem.

Diction: words are connotatively used

Discussion Activity

Apply any of the literary theories that you consider relevant to your analysis of the anonymous poem "Sir Patrick Spens" (Appendix D, linked here).

Post your response on Study Session Five forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, you were exposed to different approaches that are useful for the analysis of poetry. In particular, formalism, feminism, psychoanalysis and Marxism were discussed. It was said that when a major theory is chosen as a frame for a particular analysis, it can include bits of other approaches. Finally, we provided practical illustrations of poetry analysis.

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Study Session 6

Geoffrey Chaucer and the Medieval Tradition

Introduction

In this Study Session, you will examine Chaucer's contribution to medieval English poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
6.1 *explain* medieval English poetry.
6.2 *discuss* Chaucer's contribution to medieval English poetry.

6.1 Overview of Medieval Poetry

Medieval Poetry, also referred to as the poetry of the middle ages was said to have started in with the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and ended in 1485 with the Battle of Bossworth Field. (Olawale Awosika, 1998:31) The conquest brought English culture in contact with French as the conquerors spoke French; and made it the official language. The features of English Literature changed as many literary genres and styles of French origin were introduced into medieval English literary culture. The most prominent example was the romance. The new setting was medieval Christian, England. Poetry became a by- product of Christianity and its doctrine because it was believed that the whole world was a revelation of God's presence. Some, medieval poetry expressed death as a welcome phenomenon because they believed that death frees man from boredom. Besides, medieval poetry reflected the hierarchy in the society; with God as the head, followed by kings or feudal lords, then knights and serfs. The importance of womanhood was shown in the poetry of the period. She was portrayed as a superior being to be wooed artificially and won according to conventional rules.

The allegory was another form adopted by writers to express different levels of meaning; that is the plain and the hidden. Romance thrived in the period. It has its origin in France and was most popular in the period. It is along narrative poem but not as elevated in style and language as epic. It tells the tales of chivalry involved elegant well behaved gentlemen in horse backs. In romance, the woman is idolized and elevated to the level of a goddess and worshipped by horse-riding knights. Courtly love gave rise to what is called court poetry in English

poetic traditional. This poetry was popularized in the medieval period. The man fights against situation and people to have his love reciprocated.

The romance is often categorized in the following depending on where it originated from:

i. The matter of France.
ii. The matter of Rome: This is the poem that concentrates on English and German heroes.
iii. The matter of Britain: This revolved around the activities of King Arthur and the knights.

6.2 Chaucer's Contribution to Medieval English Poetry

6.2.1 About Geoffrey Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer

A notable poet during medieval era is Geoffrey Chaucer. He was born about 1342. Literature has it that his particular birthday was not certain. His father was a prosperous wine merchant who had great connection with the court. Ian Ousby (1994:168) explained that "he was perhaps educated at St Paul's Cathedral School and later studied at the Inner Temple. He was a page in the service of Elizabeth, Countess of Ulster and Prince Lionel, but it is not known how long he remained in this service .It was at least until he was involved in military campaigns in France in 1359-60; he was ransomed in March 1360 and returned to England but was again in France later that year" He rose to wealth and prominence in the fifteenth century. He was a busy and versatile man of affairs who served in the custom, army and court of Edward 111 and Duke of Lancaster. He was a diplomat on peace mission to France and Italy. This gave him access to different kinds of literature and people. He was a close associate of many great merchants and he had intimate knowledge of French and Italian cultures. These contacts influenced his poems such as *The House of Fame, Parliament of Fowls, Troilus and Cressida*. He died in 1400.

He is considered by many critics as the greatest English poet in the medieval period. This is because in his poem, he is able to blend humour, realism, philosophical depth, poetic virtuosity, and masterful control of dialogue and character was never matched. In *The Canterbury Tale*, his skill as a story teller is brought out vividly and he is well known for this. In it, Chaucer presents thirty pilgrims who are on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas a Becket. They stayed for the night at the Tabard Inn. At dinner, they agreed that they would entertain themselves on their journey by telling four stories each; two on the homeward journey and another two on the onward journey. It is further agreed that whoever wins the story telling competition will eat a dinner to be paid for by all of them. Harry Bailey the Host and owner of the Tabard Inn, is expected to serve as the judge. The grand plan of a story telling contest, is therefore a framework for bringing together the whole poem. The first poem which is titled 'The General Prologue' is the introduction to the poetry collection.

It provides adequate information about each pilgrim, his attire, company, security gadgets, profession and occasion for Chaucer's criticism of him. An outstanding work from Geoffrey Chaucer is *The Canterbury Tales.* This medieval poetry consisted of heroic couplets are poetry collection.

6.2.2 Review of The Canterbury Tales

An example of medieval poetry is *The Canterbury Tales*. The setting of the poem is medieval England; Canterbury and South walk. These locations bring together both the religious and secular characters. This is reflected in the kind of characters and their interactions in the poem.- the knight was in the company of his son, the squire and his guard, the Yeoman; the Prioress had another Nun who is her Secretary with her. They represent various walks of life, outlooks and backgrounds in ecclesiastical and secular circles-Parson, Franklin, Searjeant –at –Law, Cook, Cleric Wife of Bath are all identified by their occupation or marital status. This bringing together of people from various walks of life; a diversity of characters, social levels, attitudes and ways of life was new to English poetry. The reader sees them as individuals and representatives of their groups or professions. Commenting on Chaucer's contribution, Carter & McRae (2001:32):

> Chaucer himself (or his narratorial persona) prefers not to take sides and does not overtly judge the characters he presents, but he allows the reader a new degree of interpretive freedom, based on the recognition of an ironic gap between how the characters see themselves and how others see them. This is new to English Literature

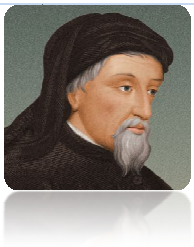
Thus, through his ironic technique of description, Chaucer creates the gap between what is, and what ought to be. He makes the reader see the gap and condemn or appraise the character. Of the wife of Bath, he said "she is a worthy woman all her life, what is more, she had had five husbands all at the church door". The reader is left to judge whether a truly worthy woman would have five husbands, and question if a good church will marry a woman five times.

Before the writing of *The Canterbury Tales*, it was said that pleasure was not part of literary subject. However, with the bringing together of different people from varying backgrounds through the idea of a pilgrimage, the high and the low share an undertaking which combines pleasure and duty. The tales use a wide range of style and form. The history of English poetry is traced from Chaucer.

The opening lines of the poem give precise geographical details- From Southwalk to Tabard to Canterbury… thus there is interplay between fiction and reality. We are also told of the season change and the pattern of change in the life of man. The rains of April pierce the draught of March. Birds sleep with open eyes and humans long for places to go. It is spring time and the world of human, animals and flowers are awakened. There is direct communion between man and his natural environment. There is also resurgence of activities and general setting and background of the pilgrimage. "The General Prologue" is a portrait gallery where we meet individual pilgrims who later feature in the tales. Our contact with them later prepares us for some of the traits which they exhibit in the

tales. The pilgrims are presented with exaggerated traits- the "Yeoman's head is like a nut" and the Franklin's eyes never seem to settle. Chaucer's narrative style includes the use of dramatic devices, irony, and entertaining effects of digressive asides. On the whole, there is simplicity of style, and language.

Discussion Activity



Electronic Literature Foundation (ELF) produced two full editions of the Canterbury Tales online: the original Middle English text, and a Modern English translation in rhyming couplets. Review any 2 poems of the modern English translation at: http://www.canterburytales.org/canterbury_tales.html

Post your response on Study Session Six forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed medieval poetry tradition and Chaucer's contributions to it through an examination of *The Canterbury Tales*. We highlighted Chaucer's theme of pleasure as novel; and the technique of frame story, narrative style, heroic couplets, dramatic devices as his major contributions.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 6.1 (tests Learning Outcome 6.1)
Discuss the characteristics of medieval poetry.

Bibliography

Reading

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Coghill, Nevill. *The Canterbury Tales.*London: Penguin, 1951.

Roland Carter and John McRae *The Routledge History of Literature in English*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Study Session 7

Petrarchan Tradition and The English Renaissance Love Sonnet

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will explore English renaissance love sonnets. Through this session, you will take an insight into the contributions of Edmund Spenser and Thomas Wyatt.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
7.1 *discuss* the contributions of Shakespeare to English poetry.

7.1 Overview of the Petrarchan Sonnet

Hint

The sonnet was discussed as one of the fixed forms of poetry in Study Session five of this manual. We noted that Coleridge defined it as a small poem in which some lonely feeling is developed. It is a short single stanza, a poem of fourteen lines, and a lyric poem that is written in iambic pentameter.

The word Petrarchan is the Anglicization of the surname of the Italian Renaissance poet, Francesco Patrice; known in English as Petrarch, who wrote sonnet to his ideal woman Laura, was popular for his collection of lyrics and sonnets. The term Petrarch is also used to refer to the Italian sonnet which is considered to be the standard form of sonnet on the one hand and to distinguish it on the other hand, from its Shakespearean counterpart which later came to be known as English sonnet. For this reason , the Petrarch an sonnet was also referred to as the Italian sonnet and further described by Carter & McRae as “highly formal, upper-class and courtly in orientation(17)”. Its introduction into England led to eradication of the native patterns. Poetry therefore became elitist and a special reserve of the educated. Traditionally, it is a poem of fourteen lines in iambic pentameter consisting two parts: an octave and a sestet. The octave rhymes as Ababa and the sestet as cede, cede. Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard were early imitators of the Petrarchan tradition in England and the earliest sonnets by them were published in an

anthology titled *Total's Miscellany* (1557).They translated the Italian sonnet into English Language. It was also said that Howard's sonnets were the first to use rhyme scheme which were later found in Shakespearean sonnets.

Early renaissance verse was therefore greatly influenced by the Petrarch an tradition of the idealization of women, classical allusions Italian renaissance references and contemporary concerns.

According to Carter and McRae (1998:58), some of the themes that featured included that of love, transience, the past and current time, change and immutability. Besides, ideas were put in pairs as either contrasts or binaries. These were done as attempts to reflect the contradictions of the modern world. This is seen in Wyatt's "I find No Peace":

I find No Peace and all my war is done

I fear and hope, I **burn** and **freeze** like ice

I **fly** above the wind, yet **can I not arise**

And naught I have and all the world I seize on…

The contrasts in the above stanza are emboldened. They include *burn* and *freeze*/ *fly* and *can I not arise*. The first pair conveys the aftermath of extreme heat and cold while the latter pair presents the persona's capability for move and lack of movement. This use of contrast in Literature later became evident in many texts after Wyatt.

Contributions of Edmund Spenser

Edmund Spenser was a poet greatly admired by other poets; although critical opinions about him differ. While some considered him to be the great poet of the Renaissance period others felt that he merely wrote poetry as a means to his financial end and as a mouthpiece of the imperial master. He was greatly influenced by the classical poet, Virgil, and he wrote his pastoral poems like Virgil's. He even made attempts to introduce the epic form into poetry by inventing the Spenserian stanza as a new form for his poem. The poem is concerned with the celebration of the heroic achievements of kings and individuals in history and myths. Besides, it affirms nations and values. In his allegories, the great influences on his works were Geoffrey Chaucer, Malory and indeed medieval traditional poems. Many even considered his work to be an expansion of Chaucer's writing.

According to Alastair Fowler (1989:52) "most sonnet sequences are concerned with disappointment if not illicit passion, but one or more like Edmund Spenser and William Habington celebrate love consummated in marriage. Spenser's sonnets are so closely connected- externally by rhyme links, internally by continued imagery- that the sequence almost becomes a poem in fourteen- line stanza" Yet, each poem could stand on its own.

Ousby (881) noted that Spenser "invented the Spenserian stanzaic form and used it in his *The FairieQueene* . It varies ottavarima, and adds a final alexandrine to eight iambic pentameters to produce a nine line

stanza rhyming ababbcbcc. Keats and Shelley used this type of rhyme pattern in their poems titled *The Eve of St Agnes* and *Adonais*" respectively.

Note

To understand Edmund Spenser's place in the extraordinary literary renaissance that took place in England during the last two decades of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, *it is helpful to begin with the remarks of the foremost literary critic of the age, Sir Philip Sidney.* In The Defence of Poetry, (1595), written in the early 1580s, Sidney looked back on the history of English literature and sees little to admire. He mentions the works of Geoffrey Chaucer and a few sonnets by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; occasional tragedies such as those printed in the 1560s in A Mirror for Magistrates; and one book of contemporary poetry, Spenser's Shepheardes Calender (1579). Although France and Italy and even lesser nations such as Scotland had their notable poets and held them in esteem, England, according to Sidney, had recently brought forth only "bastard poets" and "poet-apes," and, consequently, the art itself had "fallen to be the laughing-stock of children." Though one might quarrel with Sidney over his list of the best native writers, it is certainly true that England could boast of no early poet other than Chaucer comparable in stature to Dante, Petrarch, or Boccaccio. At the time Sidney was writing, moreover, England lacked altogether the sort of thriving literary culture that was so visible across the Channel in France. Sidney himself set out to repair this deficiency, and with him the other most important writer of his generation, Edmund Spenser.

Source: http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/edmund-spenser

Study Session Summary

Summary

This Study Session provided a critical analysis of Spenser's love sonnets. The contribution of Edmund Spenser to the English renaissance poetry has been traced to various influences on his work. These influences include poets such as Chaucer and Malory.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 7.1 (tests Learning Outcome 7.1)

Discuss the contribution of Edmund Spenser to English renaissance love sonnet.

Bibliography

Reading

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Study Session 8

William Shakespeare and His Sonnets

Introduction

The role of Shakespeare and especially his sonnets will be our focus in this Study Session. Specifically, we will examine the nature of Shakespeare's poetry and his contribution to English poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
8.1 *discuss* the contributions of Shakespeare to English poetry.

8.1 About Shakespeare

Shakespeare was a known dramatist and poet, baptized in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, on April 26, 1564. . He was the eldest of five surviving children of John Shakespeare, who was a bailiff and Justice of peace. Shakespeare's mother was from a wealthy family of landowners. He attended Stratford Grammar School.; although his records in the school were said to be lost. He learnt Latin and Greek in the school. On Nov 1582, he got married to his wife Anne Hathaway of Shottery, a village near Stratford. They had a daughter Susanna in 1853 and twins, Hamlet and Judith in 1585.

No one knows about his early days in the theatre and his beginnings as a writer. The first printed reference to him "as an upstart crow" who thinks he can compete with University lecturers came from the pamphlet titled *Greens Groats Worth of Witte* in1592. However, Shakespeare's involvement in theater, and his establishment in London literary scene was recorded.

His longer poems included *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucree* (1594) are classically inspired narratives.

8.2 Review of Shakespeare Sonnets

His sonnets were first printed in 1609 by George Eld for Thomas Thorpe and this sequence has been maintained for lack of a better one. Akporobaro identifies 154 of them. The sonnets are addressed to the young man and the dark lady. Their sequence falls into two sections; 1-

126 which are concerned with the youth and 127-154 which are concerned with the mistress. The sonnets do not have the barely suggested narrative lines of *Astrophil and Stella* and Spenser's *Amoretti*. In the first section, the poet persuades the youth to marry and have children and thereby immortalize him. Up to 126 of the poems also record the relationship between him and the youth which keeps changing between estrangement and reconciliation. The second section of the poem (127-154), is mainly about the poet and the mistress; and especially about the poet's serious concern on the mistress' infidelity. On the whole, the poems are about love and time-for example, sonnet 18, "Shall I Compare thee to a Summer's Day ?" sonnet 116, "Let me not to the Marriage of True Minds", sonnet 130 "My Mistress Eyes", and many others . Carter and MacRae (2001:90) agree:

> they are poems of love and of time; of love outlasting time, and poetry outlasting all. Critics have tried to identify the mysterious Young man and dark lady to whom the sonnet is addressed, but it is more realistic to see the poems not as having particular addresses but as examining the masculine/ feminine elements in all humanity and in all love relationship. Power, as in the plays, is another major concern of the sonnets. The power of the beloved to command is a microcosm of all power. The suffering of a lover is a symbol of all suffering.

Ambiguity is also at the centre of his poems. It is not certain whether the "I" poet persona is in love with someone or is being loved by another.

The sonnets are written in rhyming pattern **ababcdcdefefgg** which conforms to the Elizabethan style and contradicts the Petrarchan version that had been popular before Shakespeare. The form has been discussed in one of our previous lectures. Most of his sonnets are individualistic in orientation. They are addressed to and concerned with private themes. This accounts for its difficulties and its unanswered questions about the identity of its subjects like the 'man right fair" or the "dark lady" Many of them are concerned with universal issues such as time, death, fame truth and memory.

Discussion Activity

Can you attempt an appreciation of Shakespeare's sonnet 71 "No Longer Mourn for Me when I am dead" (Appendix E, linked here). You may see some analysis at: http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/71.html

Post your response on Study Session Seven forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

We have given a general background to the theme and form of Shakespeare's sonnets in this Study Session.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 8.1 (tests Learning Outcome 8.1)

Review Shakespeare's "Shall I compare thee to a summer's Day?"

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Reading

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…. "Let me not to the Marriage of True Minds". In Roberts, Edgar & Jacobs, Henry. Literature: *An Introduction to Reading and Writing*. New Jersey: Pearson, 2007.

…"My Mistress Eyes".In Roberts, Edgar & Jacobs, Henry. Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing. New Jersey: Pearson, 2007.

Study Session 9

William Blake and English Romantic Tradition

Introduction

In this Study Session, you will be exposed to the English Romantic tradition by expounding your prior knowledge of the contribution of William Blake to English poetry (ENGIII – Study Session7: Romantic Poetry). You should be prepared to understand the difference between this tradition and others in English poetry.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
9.1 *explain* the characteristics of romantic poetry.
9.2 *discuss* the contributions of William Blake to English romantic

9.1 Emergence of Romantic Period in English Poetry

Reflection

> Beauty is truth, truth beauty, - that is all
>
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know
>
> (John Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn")

Before the romantic period, English poets were dissatisfied with the mechanical and artificial rigidity of 17th century literary practice. The elegance, taste and wit of the classical predecessors which was emulated by neo- classical poets, was put aside in the romantic period. Romantic tradition therefore came as a challenge to the established social, political and literary assumptions of the neo-classical period. Romantic tradition in poetry is therefore synonymous with enquiry, quest or spirit of investigation and the urge to challenge established assumptions or statuesque. The romantic spirit was a free expression of the revolution wave, the spirit of non-conformity and rebellion against established authority. It demands the ethical principle of prudent and it approved the urge to advance to new achievement. The romantics brought a new definition to poetry as spiritual satisfaction for the soul of man. It was the expression of a reality that was profound and sometimes critical, inescapable and personal. Carter & McRae (2001:202) contend:

> The romantic period is seen today as a crucial
> time in history. It embodies many of the conflicts

and ideological debates which are still at the heart of the modern world; political freedom/ repression, individual and collective responsibility, masculine and feminine roles…past, present and future. These issues recur time and again in Romantic writing.

The romantic period was a time when ideologies were at the melting pot and all issues were considered to be important – innocence/experience, old/new, country/city etc. In romantic poetry, nature was redefined and seen as the image of the divine God. Imagination was also redefined as a free creative spirit in man. The romantics used myths and symbols and as significant tools of poetry. Besides, their poetry focuses on some of the following:

1) Description of the natural environment
2) reaction against industrial revolution as William Blake does in *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. and William Wordsworth in *Lyrical ballads*.
3) use of native dialects or simple speeches.
4) simple characters in simple life
5) graveyard sentiments and death wishes e.g Thomas Gray's 'Elegy written country churchyard'
6) imagination as a creative agent and vehicle of communication with the God-head.

The poets include Percy B. Shelley 'Ode to the West Wind', S.T. Coleridge 'Kubla Khan', '*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'*, John Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', Gerald Manley Hopkins and William Wordsworth's 'A Perfect Woman' William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of experience*. Songs of innocence describe the simplicity of a child's mind whereas Songs of experience describe the tyranny of the authority of an adult.

9.2 Contributions of William Blake to English Romantic Tradition

William Blake

William Blake (1757-1827) came to be recognized as a poetry genius in twentieth century. He was baptized at St James Church, Piccadilly. He was trained at home by his mother because he never went to school. He was well exposed to the works of William Shakespeare, John Milton and Ben Johnson. He trained as an engraver from the age of fourteen to twenty one. In 1782, he married Catherine Boucher and the family moved to Leicester fields. He published his poetry collection *Songs of Innocence* in 1789 and later added *Songs of Experience* in 1794.The poems set the world of pastoral innocence and childhood against the world of adult corruption and repression.

He brought his knowledge of engraving on his poetry by illustrating them in a way that they could be read visually and verbally. He rejected the formal restrictions of Augustan poetry. He holds an individual view of the world in which he views it in terms of opposites. He wrote that "without contraries is no progression"; and so most of his poems reflect

major oppositions as a contrast between the order of the eighteenth century and the sense of liberation felt in the 1790s.Examples are *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *The Songs of Innocence and Experience.* In the latter, several poems were written in pairs. Blake demonstrated a good understanding of human existence by critically examining the physical and spiritual sides of man.

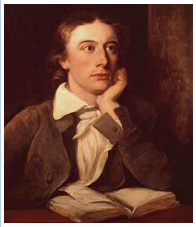
He made use of symbols. For example, children, flowers lambs or seasons symbolize innocence and adults, experience. Industrialization, machines, leaders, urban and industrial landscape symbolize oppression. Like most romantic poets, images of childhood were central to his poems.

In his poem "The Chimney Sweeper", the contrast between nature and social order; and between innocence and social pressures were brought to the fore. Blake was also concerned about the effect of industrialization on the individual. His poem *London* discussed the issue and pointed to the fact that even River Thames was charter'd-to be used for commercial purposes.

Tip

Blake's vision was social. He was concerned about issues that affected nature, natural course of events and members of the society. His poetry actually was a crusade against exploitation at all levels. His main stylistic devices included symbols, images and use of binary opposites..

Discussion Activity



Write an appreciation of John Keat's "Ode on a Grecian Urn". (Appendix F, linked here).

Post your response on Study Session Eight forum page.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed the characteristics of romantic poetry. We went further to examine the contributions of William Blake to English romantic period.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 9.1 (tests Learning Outcome 9.1)

Define romantic poetry and discuss some of its characteristics.

Bibliography

Reading

Ousby, Ian. *The Wordsworth Companion to Literature in English.* Cambridge: Univ of Cambridge, 1994.

Dasylva, A. O & Jegede, O.B .*Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Atlantis Books, 2005.

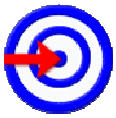
Roland Carter and John McRae *The Routledge History of Literature in English*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Study Session 10

John Donne and English Metaphysical Poetry

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will discuss English metaphysical tradition and the contribution of John Donne and other poets in the tradition. Essentially, you will be prepared to understand the difference between this tradition and others in English poetry.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
10.1 *differentiate* between metaphysical poetry and other traditions in English poetry.
10.2 *discuss* the contributions of John Donne to metaphysical

10.1 An Overview of Metaphysical Poetry

Metaphysical poetry was popular between 17th and 18th centuries. Poets in this tradition wrote differently from Elizabethan poets. Elizabethan poets wrote under Petrarchan tradition in which poetry was embellished, flowery and rhetorical. Their poetry also showed platonic love for women. Women were made heroes and their appearances in poetry were exaggerated.

Metaphysical poets use what is called wit and conceit that is piling of metaphor upon metaphor in such a descriptive manner; in an attempt to exhibit their descriptive ability, and image on image. So, there is the use of extravagant metaphor, image, hyperbole, elaborations and baroque or excessive ornamentation.

Metaphysical poets included John Donne, George Herbert, Andrew Marvel, Henry Vaughan and Richard Crawshaw.

As a metaphysical poet, Richard Crashaw represents a new trend of metaphysical poets. He is known for his use of 'verbal emblem and baroque while Vaughan is known for him use of 'visual emblem'.

Hint

We will analyze the contributions of John Donne to Metaphysical Poetry in the next section.

10.2 Contributions of John Donne to Metaphysical Poetry

John Donne

John Donne was born in London by wealthy parents. He was brought up as a Roman Catholic. He enrolled in Hart Hall, Oxford and left without a degree in 1854 because he refused to take the oath of Supremacy which was a prerequisite for his qualification. He became a Member of Parliament in 1601 and secretly married Ann, a seventeen year old girl in the same year. The union was discovered and Donne was dismissed from Parliament and briefly imprisoned. He was jobless and life became tough. He had seven surviving children and he suffered from different kinds of sicknesses. He was depressed and he travelled to Europe. His frustration was reflected in his Holy Sonnets. He became involved in religious thoughts. He wrote some religious books such as *Biathanatos*, a prose work about Christianity and suicide and *Pseudo Martyr*, another prose work meant to persuade English Roman Catholics to take the oath of Supremacy. In 1615, he took Holy Orders and James 1 appointed a Royal Chaplain. His wife died in 1617 and Donne was visibly shaken by the experience. He returned to London in 1622 and was made the Dean of St Paul's, London. He excelled in the position.

Most of his poems were concerned with the theme of death; even in *The Holy Sonnets* which he wrote before his ordination.

Holy Sonnet 10: "Death be not proud"

Death be not proud, though some have called thee a

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so; b

For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow b

Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me a

From rest and sleep, which but they pictures be, a

Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow, b

And sonnets our best men with thee do go b

Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery a

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings and desperate men, c

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell d

And poppy or chance can make us sleep as well, d

And better than thy stroke; why swelle'st thou then? c

One short sleep past, we wake eternally, e

And death shall be no more. Death, thou shall die. f

"Death be not proud" is a very philosophical and religious poem. The poem was informed by the agony that accompanied the experience of his wife's death. He foregrounded the fact that death is a slave and weakling that is neither dreadful nor mighty but just a passage to eternity and place of rest. He even argues that death cannot kill him and that death itself will die. Donne begins the poem by addressing death. The tone is angry and argumentative. The poem is dramatic and introduces a twist to the Petrarchan tradition of the sonnet. While its octave retains the traditional rhyme pattern of abab, abab, in the sestet, the rhyme pattern changes to cdd/cef.

He argued that Elizabethan techniques were too artificial, ornamental and rhetorical. So, he wrote in a colloquial causal manner, instead of the poetical rhetorical techniques of the Petrarchan poetic tradition. He wrote the way he felt about women. He was schooled in law, philosophy, logical, classic, religion and cosmology. He brought all of this knowledge to poetry. He aimed at a select audience or few people who were as knowledgeable as him. So, his poetry was difficult. The difficulties in some of his poems arose from his use of

i. Metaphysical conceit i.e. obscure metaphor
ii. Dialectics
iii. His poetry is argumentative and dramatic.
iv. Sometimes his poetry takes the form of syllogism as in his poem, Death, be not proud'
v. In some of his poems, we have three part mathematical approach to poetry. In the first part, we have a question, in the second part, working and in the third, an answer.
vi. his poetry has rugged rhythm. Even his love and religious poems were written with equal vigour.

His poem, Holy Sonnet 14, titled "Batter my Heart", portrays the struggles in his mind between faith and unbelief; and his desire to show allegiance to his faith. The poem shows the unworthiness of man in the presence of God. In these poems, he looks at the consequences of sins.

Particularly in this poem, Donne is saying that God is knocking to enter but couldn't because the poet persona is under the control of Satan. There is, in the poem, the image of military garrison and the image of the city. The poet persona is the city. In the octave, the persona is a captive overrun by the enemy's army. In the sestet, the poet persona is married to Satan, the enemy of God. So, there is the image of marriage. However, the poet persona is in love with God now; and he seeks divorce from Satan who originally had his heart. He calls on God to rescue him from Satan. He could only be chaste if God ravished him.


Note

Ousby Conclusion on John Donnes poetry:

His secular poems were original, energetic and highly rhetorical, full of passionate thought and intellectual juggling. His love poetry often turns on paradox and puns and was designed to work forcefully against the Petrarchan school of Sidney and

Spenser.

Study Session Summary

Summary

We commenced this session by highlighting the general characteristics of metaphysical poetry. These characteristics include: wit and conceit and general appeal to the intellect.

We noted that Donne was a foremost metaphysical poet whose poetry was concerned with both secular and religious issues. His poems were consequently analyzed.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 10.1 (tests Learning Outcome 10.1)

Choose a metaphysical poem and discuss its elements.

define metaphysical poetry and discuss some of its characteristics.

SAQ 10.2 (tests Learning Outcome 10.2)

...

Bibliography

Reading

Dasylva, A. O. & Jegede, O.B .*Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Atlantis Books, 2005.

Kennedy, X. J &Gioia, Dana. *An Introduction to Poetry* New York: Pearson Longman, 2007.

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Study Session 11

John Milton and English Neo-Classical Tradition

Introduction

In this Study Session, we will discuss English neo-classical tradition in a bid to expound our prior knowledge of the contribution of John Milton to English poetry. Basically, through the course, the student would be prepared to understand the difference.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
11.1 *differentiate* between neo-classical tradition and other traditions in English poetry.
11.2 *discuss* the contributions of John Milton to neo-classical

11.1 The Nature of Neo-classical Tradition

John Milton

Neo-classical tradition evolved in 17th and 18th centuries under the classical tradition. There were really no principles that could be referred to as neo-classical in the real sense but there were writers who emulated the classical writers such as Horace and Homer. Their literature was influenced by Aristotle's Poetics. It was a kind of literature that matched content with style and combined pleasure with instruction. According to Ousby (1992:661), "by the middle of c18th, poetry written by recipe and formulaic regulations had become stale and outworn…The later decades of the c18th moved away from general body of inherited classical principles towards the poetics which is labeled Romanticism" The poets and poems in this traditional included Alexandra Pope's 'Rape of the lock', Samuel Johnson's 'Vanity', and John Milton's "Lycidas" and *Paradise Lost*.

11.2 Contributions of John Milton to Neo-classical Tradition

John Milton criticized the metaphysical tradition in both subject and style. "Lycidas" is one of his poems. His position is that poetry should not express the poet's fear, hope, joy, ideas or ego; rather it should express high moral principles, ethical objectives and moral intentions. He

described a poet as a seer and a voice of social consciousness. So, according to him, poetry should not be concerned with love affairs or other private themes but rather public issues that can be beneficial to all.

As a poet, Milton distinguished himself in his use of lyrical mode and poetic drama. He used classical mythology and highly elevated language. He did not imitate classical poets as Dryden Pope and Johnson did. He created a poetic idiom which was quite different from everyday language. After Milton's death, there was a decline in poetry. Charles 1 was executed. In 1660, Charles II was installed and the English society settled again and there was peace. This facilitated the growth of art and poetry.

Poetry witnessed a rebirth. There was simplicity, clarity, restraint, good sense and positive behaviour in art and life. The poets had a good sense of social responsibility. This gave rise to the use of satire and burlesque in poetry. The role of literature which is to teach and entertain also became distinct. They attacked the use of metaphysical wits. They favoured the invention of new poetic techniques and forms. They used heroic couplets and measured poetry i.e. writing in verse.

Neo-classical poets regarded nature as a concept and superior reality not as plant or vegetation but a human nature or norms that determine social behaviours that were acceptable to the society. Pope is a moral poet and social critic. He regarded poetry as an imitative act and so he imitated what he considered to be the best in the great authors of the past. For example, he translated 'Iliad' by 'Homer' and Virgil's epics. He imitated great poets and started the tradition of mock heroic poetry in 'Rape of the Lock'.- a trivial event is elevated to epic proportion in order to produce a mock epic.

John Milton (1608-1674) was born by wealthy parents His rich background facilitated his education and enabled him pursue a private programme of study in adulthood. In 1642, he married Mary Powell who returned to her family after six weeks. They reconciled in 1645 and had four children. His wife and son died in 1652. He became blind in 1653. He remarried in 1656 to Katherine Woodcock who gave birth to a daughter named Katherine, after her mother. Both mother and daughter died on the same day in 1656.

He wrote some sonnets on his personal experiences such as his blindness and the death of his wife He wrote political pamphlets .All these were burnt after the restoration He completed *Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. His poem on his blindness is referred to as "When I consider how my Light is spent/ On His Blindness", John Milton portrays man's inability to serve his maker in the midst of problems.

He skillfully translates his private problem into public themes. The poem is a Petrarchan or Italian sonnet with an octave and a sestet, with rhyme scheme abbaabba, cde, cde. It is rich in biblical allusion e.g. line 3, metaphor lines 3 4, rhetorical question line 7, alliteration in line 18, archaic language among other devices. His poetry gained prominence shortly before he died. His style was considered to be a model for the sublime mode in the c18th English poetry.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we presented neo-classical poetry as a reaction against metaphysical poetry and an imitation of classical tradition. We also discussed John Milton's position that poetry should not be an expression of personal feelings but a presentation of high moral principles, ethical objectives and moral intentions. Although John Milton discusses his personal problems in poetry, he translates them into themes with important social significance.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 11.1 (tests Learning Outcome 11.1)
Write an appreciation of any poem in the neo classical tradition.

SAQ 11.2 (tests Learning Outcome 11.2)
Write on John Milton and his poems that you are familiar with.

Bibliography

Reading

Dasylva, A. O. & Jegede, O.B .*Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Atlantis Books, 2005.

Kennedy, X. J &Gioia, Dana. *An Introduction to Poetry* New York: Pearson Longman, 2007.

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Study Session 12

Modern Poetry and Selected Poets

Introduction

Understanding the context of literary modernism (specifically, modern poetry) is important for students before they analyze modernist texts themselves. To that end, this Study Session will enable you to explore and consider the forces that prompted such a "fundamental change" in human nature

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
12.1 *explain* the context of modernism in poetry.
12.2 *identify* and *analyze* different modern poems.

12.1 Modernism in Poetry

Reflection

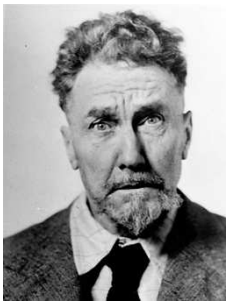
- What are several historical, social, and cultural forces that prompted the modernist movement?
- What were the effects of these influential factors?

Modernism Radical shift in aesthetic and cultural sensibilities evident in the art and literature of the post-World War I period.

Modernism started in the last decade of the c19th as a creative renaissance which embraced a wide range of movements including imagism, symbolism and expressionism. Technically it is opposed to traditional style and form. It is an extension of the romantic spirit with bold experimentation in poetry. Modernism continued the revolution started by the Romanticists. In a new kind of sensibility, modern poets evoked verbal technology for the purpose of creating an unusual but unique impression in poetry. Modernist poets condemned Victorian poets like Roberts browning Mathew Arnold and Alfred Lord now sermonized. Modern poets condemned such poems for lacking vitality. Great poets in this tradition included Ezra Pound, William Butler Yeats and T.S. Eliot.

Ezra Pound was born in 1885 and trained in America at the University of Pennsylvania. He moved to Venice and there published his first volume of poetry in 1908. He later travelled to London and it was there that he renewed his friendship with William Butler Yeats.

12.2 Contributions of selected Poets within the Modern Tradition

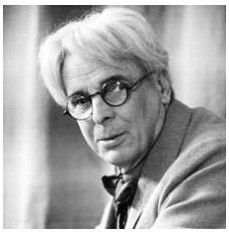


Ezra Pound

Ezra Pound

Before Ezra became a modern poet, he treated any subject or topic in poetry without the use of preamble, inversions or borrowed words. He also brought the imagist and symbolist tradition into poetry. This tradition later became a movement of people who embraced conciseness of expression, concreteness of imagery and rhythm composed in a sequence of the musical phrase. Irrelevant words are avoided in composition.
He favoured internal natural rhythm through the use of symbols. He presented intellectual and emotional complex ideas in form of images or symbols.

Language is used in this tradition to evolve and suggest ideas rather than to describe or declare it. There is absence of verbs or connectives. No use of connectives, the syntactic structure of such poetry suffered dislocation. For example, Ezra Pound's "In a station of the Metro"



William Butler

William Butler

William Butler Yeats was born in 1865 in Dublin. He travelled in and out of Dublin due to the guerilla war. He became a Senator in 1922 and was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1923.His early works included *The Wanderings of Oisin and Other Poems* (1889)*.The Countess Kathleen and other Legends and Lyrics* (1892) and *The Green Helmet and other Poems.* He published several anthologies of Irish poem. He also used symbolism but he wrote in traditional metrical patterns which symbolists rejected. His poetry is however logical and intelligible. He has been described as an emotional and passionate poet. He later became a modern poet. In his poems, "No second Troy" and "To that Rose upon the Rood of time", modern poetry becomes direct and functional.

T.S Eliot

T.S Eliot

T.S Eliot was born and raised in St Louis Missouri in 1888.He studied Philosophy at Harvard in 1906 and got a B.A and M.A. He enrolled for a Ph.D, wrote his thesis but chose not to take the degree. The thesis was eventually published as *Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley*. At Harvard, he was exposed to the works of Dante and the French symbolists. He was married to Vivien Haigh-Wood in 1915 and was separated from his wife of 15years in 1930. He remarried to Valerie in 1957 after the death of his first wife. He later settled in London and worked in various places such as school, bank and an assistant editor for *The Times Literary Supplement*. He started publishing poetry with the help of Ezra Pound. His poem, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* appeared in the American magazine in 1915. This was followed by *Poetry* (1917), *Poems* (1910) and later *The Wasteland* (1922). He was in love with English civilization, humanity, culture and tradition which

affect the soul. According to Ousby (1994:292), in "*For LanceleotAndrewes: Essays on Style and Order* (1928), Eliot described himself as classical in Literature, royalist in politics, and Anglo – Catholic in religion … Tradition and Individual Talent". His poetry identified with, reflected and kept abreast of the society. He became a British citizen in1927 and joined the Church of England in the same year. From that time, his poems showed the influence of Christian religion. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature and the Order of Merit in 1948.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this Study Session, we discussed the contributions of different poets in the modern period of English poetry. Specifically, we have identified T.S Eliot, Ezra Pound and William Butler Yeats who are three of the important poets in the period.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 12.1 (tests Learning Outcome 12.1)
Analyze T.S. Eliot's poem titled "The Journey of the Magi".

SAQ 12.2 (tests Learning Outcome 12.2)
Identify and analyze three modern poets and their poems from the anthology.

Bibliography

Reading

Dasylva, A. O & Jegede, O.B .*Studies in Poetry*. Ibadan: Atlantis Books, 2005.

Kennedy, X.J &Gioia, Dana *An Introduction to Poetry New York*: Pearson Longman, 2007.

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http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/understanding-context-modernist-poetry#sect-activities retrieved May, 2014.

Study Session 13

Visual Poetry

Introduction

The aim of this Study Session is to discuss a unique form of poetry called picture poetry. We will use the example of George Herbert's 'Easter Wings' to describe how poets manipulate structure in order to emphasize meaning.

Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
13.1 *discuss* the theme of a picture poem.

13.1 Theme of a Picture Poem

Visual poetry is also called shaped or picture poetry. It is a kind of poem in which ideas are put into concrete shapes and attempt is made the poet to balance meaning with shape. Thus, the shape of the poem points in the direction of its meaning because the shape emphasizes the idea and emotions of their subject. In such poems, the focus of attention is on the visual arrangement of lines, words and spaces. Attempt is also made to fuse writing with painting and graphic designs. This kind of poem makes an appeal to the reader's sense of seeing and hearing. The Chinese were known to have produced it for many years, and so also were the Greeks. Roberts & Jacobs (933) write that:

> In the seventeenth century, traditional English poets were manipulating the lines of their poems to represent wings, altars, squares, triangles, stars and the like. This type of poetry was often more ingenious than significant.

Exceptional poets, however, produced shaped verse in which the visual image and the meaning echo each other. In an attempt to understand it, one should seek correspondences between images and poetic ideas. Essentially, time should be spent to study and then describe the shape of the poem and the pattern of lineation especially as they increase and decrease to reflect the meaning of the poem.

The poem should also be read from different angles. The commonest example of C17th visual poetry is George Herbert's "Easter Wings". Other examples have emerged since then. They include May Swenson's

"Women"(1968) and Charles Harper Webb's "The Shape of History" (1995), among others.

A Review of "Easter Wings" By George Herbert

George Herbert was born into a noble family that had properties and titles. He was educated at Westminister and Trinity College, Cambridge. He became the fellow of the institution at the age of 22; and was also its public orator until he became a priest in 1630.When he realized that his Health was failing, he sent his English poems to Ferrari his friend, with the instruction that they should be published. According to Margaret Drabble (473), Herbert described the poems as "a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul". He later died in 1633. His poems were published in 1633 after his death.

The poem 'Easter Wings', gives the Biblical account of how sin and death were introduced as punishment for humankind after the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and a prayer for redemption. It compares humanity's loss of Eden to the persona's spiritual state-one seeking for salvation. Edgar & Jacob further write that when the "poem is viewed straight on, each stanza resembles an altar. Sideways, the stanzas resemble the wings of two angels. The images are thus linked with the title of the poem and they connote contrition, prayer, grace and angelic reward" (935):

Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,

Through foolishly he lost the same,

Decaying more and more,

Till he became

Most poor;

With thee

Oh, let me rise

As larks, harmoniously,

And sing this day thy victories:

Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did begin:

And still with sicknesses and shame

Thou didst so punish sin,

That I became

Most thin

With thee

Let me combine

And feel this day thy victor

For, if I imp my wing on thane,

Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

The poem is in four stanzas. The arrangement of the stanzas is manipulated. Every stanza that begins with a long line is followed by another stanza with a short line. Thus, the length of lines is manipulated. The ideas in the poem are emphasized through the arrangement of length lines.

In discussing the store of treasure that God gave unto man at creation, the length of the poem expands. As man falls and loses eternity, the lines gradually get shorter. The same pattern is repeated in the whole poem. Wherever a loss is discussed (such as sickness and shame in lines 11-15), the lines gradually decrease whereas when the discussion is positive such as portraying the speaker's hope of redemption and prayer for grace and salvation, the line length increases. This is found in lines 10 and 20 where the divine favor requested by the poet persona in line 1 is restored to him.

Study Session Summary

Summary

In this session, we described picture poetry in order to show how exceptional poets manipulate structure to emphasize content. The example of George Herbert that is used in the discussion is aptly presented.

Assessment

Assessment

SAQ 13.1 (tests Learning Outcome 1.1)

Discuss the structure and content of Charles Harper Webb's "The Shape of History"

Bibliography

Reading

Drabble, Margaret (Ed.) *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000.

Ousby, Ian. *The Wordsworth Companion to Literature in English.* Cambridge: Univ of Cambridge, 1994.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Selected Definitions of Poetry

- “Poetry is a way of taking life by the throat” **(Robert Frost)**
- “The spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (**William Wordsworth**)
- “Emotion put into measure” **(Thomas Hardy)**
- “Not the assertion that something is true, but the making of that truth more fully real to us” (**T.S. Eliot**)
- “The clear expression of mixed feelings” (**W.H Auden**)
- “Hundreds of things coming together at the right moment” (**Elisabeth Bishop**)
- “The best words in the best order” (**Samuel Taylor Coleridge**)
- “Anything said in such a way or put on the paper in such a way, as to write from the hearer or the reader a certain attention” (**William Stafford**.)

Appendix B: Lycidas

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse!
So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
And as he passes turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,

Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at ev'ning bright
Toward heav'n's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th'oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with clov'n heel,
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damætas lov'd to hear our song.

But O the heavy change now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear
When first the white thorn blows:
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream
Had ye bin there'—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th'abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phoebus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
"What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?"
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th'eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
"How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reck'ning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;

And when they list their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw,
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoll'n with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said,
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more".

Return, Alpheus: the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world,
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth;
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high

Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more:
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th'oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropp'd into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

-John Milton

Source: http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173999

Appendix C: Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

- George Herbert

Appendix D: Sir Patrick Spens

I. The Sailing

THE king sits in Dunfermline town
  Drinking the blude-red wine;
'O whare will I get a skeely skipper
  To sail this new ship o' mine?'

O up and spak an eldern knight,
  Sat at the king's right knee;
'Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
  That ever sail'd the sea.'

Our king has written a braid letter,
  And seal'd it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
  Was walking on the strand.

'To Noroway, to Noroway,
  To Noroway o'er the faem;
The king's daughter o' Noroway,
  'Tis thou must bring her hame.'

The first word that Sir Patrick read
  So loud, loud laugh'd he;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read
  The tear blinded his e'e.

'O wha is this has done this deed
  And tauld the king o' me,
To send us out, at this time o' year,
  To sail upon the sea?

'Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
  Our ship must sail the faem;
The king's daughter o' Noroway,
  'Tis we must fetch her hame.'

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn
  Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway
  Upon a Wodensday.

II. The Return

'Mak ready, mak ready, my merry men a'!
  Our gude ship sails the morn.'
'Now ever alack, my master dear,
  I fear a deadly storm.

'I saw the new moon late yestreen
  Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,

I fear we'll come to harm.'

They hadna sail'd a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the topmast lap,
It was sic a deadly storm:
And the waves cam owre the broken ship
Till a' her sides were torn.

'Go fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side,
And let nae the sea come in.'

They fetch'd a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine,
And they wapp'd them round that gude ship's side,
But still the sea came in.

O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords
To wet their cork-heel'd shoon;
But lang or a' the play was play'd
They wat their hats aboon.

And mony was the feather bed
That flatter'd on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam hame.

O lang, lang may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang may the maidens sit
Wi' their gowd kames in their hair,
A-waiting for their ain dear loves!
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half-owre, half-owre to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep;
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet!

Appendix E: Sonnet 71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Then you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled

From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse.
But let your love even with my life decay,
Lest the wise world should look into your moan
And mock you with me after I am gone.

- Shakespeare

Appendix F:

Sample Poems from Metaphysical Tradition

POEM 1. BATTER MY HEART by John Donne

Batter my heart, three-personed God, for You
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend.
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurped town to another due,
Labor to admit You, but Oh! to no end.
Reason, Your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captive, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love You, and would be loved fain,
But am betrothed unto Your enemy;
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again;
Take me to You, imprison me, for I,
Except You enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

POEM 2. A VALEDICTION: FORBIDDING MOURNING by John Donne

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say
The breath goes now, and some say no:

So let us melt, and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity0 our love,
Moving of th' earth° brings harms and fears;
Men reckon what it did and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent,

Dull sublunary lovers' love
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
Those things which elemented° it.

But we, by a love so much refined
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls, therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two:
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the' other do.

And though it in the center sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and harkens after it,
And grows erect as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,

Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,°
And makes me end where I begun.

POEM 3. THE FLEA by John Donne

Mark but this flea, and mark in this
How little that which thou deny'st me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.
Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, yea more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, we're met
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
Though use° make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that, self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.
Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thyself, nor me, the weaker now;
'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be;
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

POEM 4. DEATH BE NOT PROUD by John Donne

Death be not proud, though some have called thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

POEM 5. TO HIS COY MISTRESS by Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough and time,
This coyness,° lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Should'st rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze,
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest.
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,°
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear

Time's winged chariot hurrying near,
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor in thy marble vault shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning glew°
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped0 power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough° the iron gates of life,
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

POEM 6. LOVE by George Herbert

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lacked anything.
A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here";
Love said, "You shall be he."

I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee."
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"
Truth, Lord, but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
You must sit down," says Love, "and taste My meat."
So I did sit and eat.

POEM 7A. THE PULLEY by George Herbert

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
"Let us" (said he) "pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span".

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should "said he
"Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast"

POEM 7B THE ALTAR

A broken A L T A R, Lord, thy servant rears,
Made of a heart, and cemented with tears,
Whose adore are as they hand did frame;
No workman's is toll heath touched the same.
A Heart alone
Is such a stone
As nothing but
Thy power doth cut
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame
To praise thy Name;

That, If I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise thee may not cease.
O let they blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
And sanctify this A L T A R in to be thine.

POEM 7C EASTER WINGS by George Herbert

Lord, who created'st man in wealth and store,
Through foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying and more,
Till he became
Most poor;
With three
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day they victories:
Then shall the fall further the fight in me.
My tender age in sorrow did begin:
And still with sicknesses and shame
Thou didst so punish sin,
That I became
Most thin

With thee
Let me combine
And feel this day thy victor
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the fight in me.

POEM 8. ON MY FIRST SON by Ben Johnson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy.
My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy;
Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.
Oh, could I lose all father° now. For why
Will man lament the state he should envy—
To have so soon 'scaped world's and flesh's rage,
And, if no other misery, yet age?
Rest in soft peace, and asked, say, "Here doth lie
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry,"
For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such
As what he loves may never like0 too much.

POEM 9. WHEN I CONSIDER HOW MY LIGHT IS SPENT by John Milton (1608-1674)

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly° ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or His own gifts. Who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

POEM 10. LYCIDAS by John Milton

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown°, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude°,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier
Unwept, and welter0 to the parching wind,
Without the meed° of some melodious tear.
Begin, then, Sisters of the Sacred Well .
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin and somewhat loudly sweep the stung.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse°
With lucky words favor my destined urn,
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
For we.were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flocks, by fountain, shade, and till;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared.
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard.
What time the gray-fly winds0 her sultry born,
Batt'ning° our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright,
Toward Heav'n's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten° flute,

Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel,
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damoetas loved to hear our song
But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding° vine o'ergrown,
And all, their echoes mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning heir Joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay' wardrobe wear
When first the white, thorn blows
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to.shepherd's ear.
Where wee ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay met I fondly dream!
"Had ye been there"—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The. Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal Nature did lament,
When, by the rout° that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift 1-lebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! 'What boots it° with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,
And Strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use°,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit cloth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering° foil,
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor° lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those' pure eyes
And perfect witness of all judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed°."
O fountain Are thus, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came In Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap bath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not 'of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th' eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That 'sunk so low that' sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,

In wrought with figures dim, and' on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?" .
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys be bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the Iron shuts amain°).
He shook his mitered locks, and stern bespake:—
How 'well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, 'and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reck'ning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy 'bidden guest.
Blind mouths! That scarce themselves know how 'to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's belongs!
What recks It them? What need they? they are sped°;
And, when they list0, their lean and flashy songs
Orate on their sctazmel° pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoll'n with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot Inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy0 paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Aipheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and hid them hither cast
Their bells and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use°
'€ff shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enameled eyes,
-That on the green turf suck the honled showers,

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rather° primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale Jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked° with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rase, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,. .
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies,
For to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts daily with false surmise,
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides, . . .
Where thou, perhaps, under the whelming tide
Visit's the bottom of the monstrous° world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows0 denied, .
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancc,s and Bayona's hold°:
Look homeward, angel, now, and melt with ruth°;
And, 0 ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth. .
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor:
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks0 his beams, and with new-spangled ore°
Flames In the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,

And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of Joy and Love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing In their glory move,
And wipe the tears forever from his eyes,
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius° of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
Thus sang the uncouth° swain to th' oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager though warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
I borrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

POEM 11.TO THE MEMORY OF MR. OLDHAM by John Dryden

Farewell, too little and too lately known,
Whom I began to think and call my own;
For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
Cast in the same poetic mold with mine.
One common note on either lyre did strike,
And knaves and fools we both abhorred alike.
To the same goal did both our studies drive:
The last set out the soonest did arrive.
Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
While his young friend performed and won the race.
O early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added more?
It might (what Nature never gives the young)
Have taught the numbers° of thy native tongue.
But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.

A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betrayed.
Thy gen'rous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
Still showed a quickness; and maturing time
But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme.
Once more, hail, and farewell! farewell, thou young
But ah! too short, Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy and with laurels bound;
But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

SAMPLE POEMS FROM ROMANTIC TRADITION.

POEM 12. THE TYGER by William Blake

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,

And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

POEM 13. THE SICK ROSE by William Blake (1757-1827)

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

POEM 14.THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER by William Blake (1757_1827)

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry “weep! ‘weep! ‘weep! ‘weep!”
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.
There’s little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb’s back, was shaved: so I said
“Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head’s bare
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.”
And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight!
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.
And by came an Angel who had a bright key, And he opened the coffins and set them all free;
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,

And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.
Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want° joy.
And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

POEM 15.THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE by William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.
And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.
I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

POEM 16. TO AUTUMN by John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,

Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.
II
Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep:
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook°
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.
III
Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows,° borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft°
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

POEM 17 ODE ON A GRECIAN URN by John Keats

Thou still unrevised bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?

What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual° ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, 0 mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede°
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth Eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou salt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say's,
Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Yet know on earth, and all ye need to know.

POEM 18.THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US by William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bears her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

POEM 19.A PERFECT WOMAN by William Wordsworth

SHE was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair,

Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw he upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet.
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;'
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveler between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, 'and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic lights

POEM 20. COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE by William Wordsworth

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

POEM 21. THE SECOND COMING by William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

Turning and turning in the widening gyre°
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand;
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image our of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,

Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

POEM 22. SAILING TO BYZANTIUM by William Butler Yeats

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unaging intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,°
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make

Of hammered gold and gold enameling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

POEM 23. OZYMANDIAS by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that: mocked° them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

POEM 24. THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK

S’io credessi che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piü scosse.
Ma per ciô che giammai di questo fondo
Non tornô vivo alcun, s’i’odo il vero,
Senza tema d’infamia ti risporndo.

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky

Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question...
Oh, do not ask, “What is it?”
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.
The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,

And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.
And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, “Do I dare?” and, “Do I dare?”
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say: “How his hair is growing thin!”)
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
(They will say: “But how his arms and legs are thin!”)
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all—
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?
And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamp light, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?

Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl. And should I then presume?

And how should I begin?

***

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets

And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes

Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows?

I should have been a pair of ragged claws

Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

***

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!

Smoothed by long fingers,

Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,

Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.

Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,

Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?

But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,

Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,

I am no prophet—and here's no great matter;

I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,

And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,

And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,

After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,

Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,

Would it have been worth while,

To have bitten off the matter with a smile,

To have squeezed the universe into a ball

To roll it towards some overwhelming question,

To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,

Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"—

If one, settling a pillow by her head,

Should say: “That is not what I meant at all.
That is not it, at all.”

And would it have been worth it, after all,
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—
And this, and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
“That is not it at all,
That is not what I meant, at all.”
***
No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old. . . I grow old…
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

POEM 25. ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY YARD by Thomas Gray

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mold'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse. them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow of the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry°, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted° vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the' silent dust,
Or Flatt'rysoothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils, of time did ne'er unroll
Chill Penury° repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his field withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of llst'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone,
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,
The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous° shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding° crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor° of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect

Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die. ,

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Let the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted° fires.

By thee, who mindful of th' unhonored dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led, -
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swan may say,
Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.
"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,

Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him, on the customed hill,
Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill°,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay°,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

The Epitaph
Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown,
Fair Science° frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had a tear,
He gained from Heav'n ('twas all he. wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of His Father and his God.

POEM 26. KUBLA KHAN by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

Or, a Vision in a Dream.A Fragment.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedam cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight ‘twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

POEM 27. MY LAST DUCHESS by Robert Browning

That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now; FrâPandolf’s hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will’t please you, sit and look at her? I said
“Fra Pandolf” by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, ‘twas not

Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps
FrâPandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause' enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say? - too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, good! but thanked
Somehow - I know not how as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred years old name
With anybody's gift, who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—which I have not—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse—
E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive.Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then, I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence

Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

SAMPLE POEMS FROM MODERNIST TRADITION.

POEM 28. JOURNEY OF THE MAGI by T.S. Eliot

"A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter."
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.
Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.

Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt, I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

POEM 29. THE DONKEY by G. K. Chesterton

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,

Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

A. E. Housman

POEM 30. TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

Today, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,

Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laureled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's

RENNAISANCE POETRY

POEM 31 I Find No Peace by Sir Thomas Wyatt

I find no peace and all my war is done
I fear and hope, I burn and freeze like ice;
I fly above the wind, yet can I not arise,
And naught I have and all the world I seize on;
That° looseth nor locketh holdeth me in prison,
And holdeth use not yet can I scape no wise;
Nor letteth me live nor die at my devise,[o]
And yet of death it giveth none occasion.
Without eyen° I see, and without tongue I plain;
I desire to perish, and yet I ask health;
I love another, and thus I hate myself;
I feed me in sorrow, and laugh in all my pain.
Likewise displeaseth me both death and life,
And my delight is causer of this strife.

POEM 32 Farewell, Love by Sir Thomas Wyatt

Farewell, Love, and all thy laws forever,—

Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more;
Senec° and Plato call me from thy lore,
To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavour.
In blind error when I did persever,
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore,
Hath taught me to set in trifles no store
And scape forth since liberty is lever.°
Therefore farewell—go trouble younger hearts,
10 And in me claim no more authority;
With idle youth go use thy property,
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts.
For hitherto though I have lost all my time,
Me lusteth° no longer rotten boughs to climb.

POEM 33 SONNET 116 by William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments: love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.°
Oh no! it is an ever-fixd mark°
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown although his height be taken.°
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
10 Within his bending° sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out° even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

POEM 34 SONNET 129 by William Shakespeare.

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame°
Is lust° in action; and till action, lust°

Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude,° cruel, not to trust;
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows, yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

POEM 35 SONNET 130 by William Shakespeare My mistress' eyes

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head;
I have seen roses damasked,° red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music bath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go
(My mistress when she walks treads on the ground).
And yet by heaven I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

POEM 36 Anonymous (traditional Scottish ballad) by Sir Patrick Spence

The King sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:

"O whar will I get guid sailor
To sail this schip of mine?".

Up and spak an eldern knicht,
Sat at the kings richt kne:
"Sir Partrick Spence is the best sailor
That sails upon the se"

The king has written a braid letter,
And signed it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch launched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
The teir blinded his ee.

"O wha is this has don this deid,
This ill deid don to me
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
To shall upon the se!

"Mak haste, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne"
"O say na sae", my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme

"Late late yestreem I saw the new moone,
Wi' the auld moone in hir arme,
And I feir, I feir my deir master,
That we will cum to harme",

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith
To weet' their cork-heild schoone,

Bot lang owre a' the play wer playd,
Their hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Or ere' they se Sir Patrick Spence
Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may the ladies stand.
Wi' their gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for their ain deir lords,
For they'll se thame na mair.

Haf owre, haf owre to Aberdour,
It's fiftie fadom deip.
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
Wi' the Scots Lords at his feit.

Notes on Self Assessment Questions

SAQ 3.1 - In terms of poetry, there are two kinds or forms, based upon the "structure or pattern of organization" that a poet adopts when writing his verse. These are called "open" or "closed" forms.

When looking at a poem's form, you can observe the following. Look for the rhyme used: it may be end rhyme (where a word at the end of one line rhymes with the word at the end of another line). There may be a rhyme scheme (which is a specific pattern of rhyme, such as ABAB, where each letter represents a sound, and the pattern is followed in a stanza or an entire poem). The meter, which is the poem's beat (which is found in sonnets, where, for example, iambic pentameter is often used: ten syllables in a line). There may even be stanzas used (which are often groups of four lines, but not always). There are other elements as well: these are only a few examples.

When a poem has a closed form, the poet has adopted a pattern that the poem will follow in more than one area, such as those mentioned above. As an example, a Shakespearean sonnet is a fourteen-line poem. It has three quatrains (which are four-line stanzas), it ends with a rhyming couplet (a pair of lines that rhyme with each other), it follows a specific pattern of rhyme (ABAB CDCD EFEF GG), and is written in iambic

pentameter. In composing this kind of sonnet, the poet follows these parameters. Other examples of a closed form poem are the traditional haiku, the tanka, the limerick, the cinquain, and the villanelle.

Note the haiku below. It is about nature; it has three lines; and, the syllabic pattern (number of syllables) per line is 5-7-5:

"The Rose" by Donna Brock

The red blossom bends (5)

and drips its dew to the ground. (7)

Like a tear it falls (5)

In contrast, the open form poem does not follow set guidelines. There is no required rhyme scheme, rhyming pattern, or set number of lines in a stanza. One stanza, for instance may have four lines, as may the second, but a third stanza may have five lines.

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