

Outline of a poetic text

The following outline will help you recall all that you have studied in the section devoted to poetry as a literary genre. You can refer to it any time you have to analyse a poetic text on your own, or prepare for an oral/written test. A final guideline is also given about the importance of contextualizing the text and expressing personal response.

Data of the poem	Author _____ Title _____ Taken from _____ Date _____
References	The title <i>relevant to meaning?</i> _____ The content <i>addresser/addressee; setting in time and place; situation</i> _____ Layout <i>traditional, experimental</i> _____ Poetic form <i>sonnet, ballad, ode, dramatic poem, free verse</i> _____
Sound devices	Rhyme <i>regular, irregular, hints at/emphasizes words, creates musical / comic effect</i> _____ Stress and rhythm <i>foot, run-on-line, end-stopped-line; the rhythm is slow, fast, smooth, hammering, flowing</i> _____ Caesura <i>underlines key words or concepts, marks a change in mood</i> _____
Analysis of language	Use of: • alliteration _____ • onomatopoeia _____ • assonance _____ • quality of sound <i>harsh, smooth, soft,</i> _____ • repetition _____ • grating, gentle _____ Effect/s of sound devices on meaning _____ Use of: • similes _____ • metaphors _____ • symbols <i>convey, express, evoke, represent, stand for</i> _____ • personification <i>achieved through capitalization, use of personal pronouns, verbs or adjectives usually applied to humans</i> _____ • paradox _____ • language of sense impression <i>sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch</i> _____
The message	Semantic areas _____ Linguistic register <i>lofty, colloquial, straightforward</i> _____ Key-words _____ Turning-point/s and climax _____ Tone <i>neutral, ironic, tragic, committed, regretful, humorous, bitter, melancholic</i> _____
From text to context	Theme/s <i>The poem deals with / is concerned with universal / existential / social / moral / psychological themes; the main theme is</i> _____ Poet's style <i>clear / straightforward / vivid / detailed / imaginative / elegant</i> _____ Poet's aim <i>satirises / criticises / outlines / shows / focuses on / appeals to</i> _____ The poem opens with ..., <i>the first stanza sets the tone / the pattern, the second stanza introduces the theme of, is based upon, the last stanza sums up</i> _____ Ties between the text and • the collection it belongs to _____ • the author's biography and works _____ • the literary context _____ • the historical and social context _____ • other texts belonging to the same or different periods _____
Personal response	Reader's reaction/s _____ Possible connections between a picture and the text _____