Unit Overview

Because it is occasionally possible, just for brief moments, to find the words that will unlock the doors of all those many mansions inside the head and express something - perhaps not much, just something - of the crush of information that presses in on us from the way a crow flies over and the way a man walks and the look of a street and from what we did one day a dozen years ago. Words that will express something of the deep complexity that makes us precisely the way we are, from the momentary effect of the barometer to the force that created men distinct from trees. Something of the inaudible music that moves us along in our bodies from moment to moment like water in a river. Something of the spirit of the snowflake in the water of the river. Something of the duplicity and the relativity and the merely fleeting quality of all this. Something of the almighty importance of it and something of the utter meaninglessness. And when words can manage something of this, and manage it in a moment of time, and in that same moment, make out of it all the vital signature of a human being - not of an atom, or of a geometrical diagram, or of a heap of lenses - but a human being, we call it poetry.


In this short unit, you will uncover the power of the poetic voice to capture authentic human experiences and evaluate the role of poetry in the real world. As Ted Hughes describes above, poets are intensely curious, uncovering from the natural world something of the complexity of being human, and many, as you will find, challenge our way of thinking and redress injustices with courage and compassion.

Over the course of the next three weeks, you will study 4-6 poems chosen in negotiation with your teacher. You will revise and build your vocabulary of poetic devices and use these terms to express an appreciation of how poets construct meaning. You will also refine your note-taking and annotation skills and see the value of working with peers to uncover new meaning.

In your assessment task, you will be given fresh copies of two poems you have studied and asked to write an extended analytical response on one under timed conditions.

The poems in this Support Booklet are not prescribed. Teachers may select some poems from outside of the booklet that are in your best interest. While you will only study a handful of poems from this booklet, you are encouraged to read all of them for pleasure, for personal gain and for that ‘something of that inaudible music that moves us along in our bodies’.
Poetic Techniques

Poetry is the kind of thing poets write. — *Robert Frost*
Man, if you gotta ask, you’ll never know. — *Louis Armstrong*

A poet is limited in the materials he can use in creating his works: all he has are *words* to express his ideas and feelings. These words need to be precisely right on several levels at once:

- they must *sound* right to the listener even as they delight his ear
- they must have a *meaning* which might have been unanticipated, but seems to be the perfectly right one
- they must be *arranged* in a relationship and placed on the page in ways that are at once easy to follow and assist the reader in understanding
- they must probe the depths of human thought, emotion, and empathy, while appearing simple, self-contained, and unpretentious

Fortunately, the English language contains a wide range of words from which to choose for almost every thought, and there are also numerous plans or methods of arrangement of these words, called *poetic devices*, which can assist the writer in developing cogent expressions pleasing to his readers. Even though most poetry today is read silently, it must still carry with it the feeling of being spoken aloud, and the reader should practice “hearing” it in order to catch all of the artfulness with which the poet has created his work.

**The SOUNDS of Words**

Words or portions of words can be clustered or juxtaposed to achieve specific kinds of effects when we hear them. The sounds that result can strike us as clever and pleasing, even soothing. Others we dislike and strive to avoid. These various deliberate arrangements of words have been identified.

**Alliteration**: Repeated consonant sounds at the beginning of words placed near each other, usually on the same or adjacent lines. A somewhat looser definition is that it is the use of the same consonant in any part of adjacent words.

*Example*: fast and furious

*Example*: Peter and Andrew patted the pony at Ascot

In the second definition, both *P* and *T* in the example are reckoned as alliteration. It is noted that this is a very obvious device and needs to be handled with great restraint, except in specialty forms such as limerick, cinquain, and humorous verse.

**Assonance**: Repeated vowel sounds in words placed near each other, usually on the same or adjacent lines. These should be in sounds that are accented, or stressed, rather than in vowel sounds that are unaccented.

*Example*: He’s a bruisin’ loser

In the second example above, the short *A* sound in *Andrew*, *patted*, and *Ascot* would be assonant.

**Consonance**: Repeated consonant sounds at the ending of words placed near each other, usually on the same or adjacent lines. These should be in sounds that are accented, or stressed, rather than in vowel sounds that are unaccented. This produces a pleasing kind of near-
rhyme.

Example: boats into the past
Example: cool soul

Cacophony A discordant series of harsh, unpleasant sounds helps to convey disorder. This is often furthered by the combined effect of the meaning and the difficulty of pronunciation.

Example: My stick fingers click with a snicker
And, chuckling, they knuckle the keys;
Light-footed, my steel feelers flicker
And pluck from these keys melodies.
— “Player Piano,” John Updike

Euphony: A series of musically pleasant sounds, conveying a sense of harmony and beauty to the language.

Example: Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, splashless as they swim.
— “A Bird Came Down the Walk,” Emily Dickenson (last stanza)

Onomatopoeia: Words that sound like their meanings. In Hear the steady tick of the old hall clock, the word tick sounds like the action of the clock, if assonance or alliteration can be onomatopoeic, as the sound ‘ck’ is repeated in tick and clock, so much the better. At least sounds should suit the tone – heavy sounds for weightiness, light for the delicate. Tick is a light word, but transpose the light T to its heavier counterpart, D; and transpose the light CK to its heavier counterpart G, and tick becomes the much more solid and down to earth dig.

Example: boom, buzz, crackle, gurgle, hiss, pop, sizzle, snap, swoosh, whir, zip

Repetition: The purposeful re-use of words and phrases for an effect. Sometimes, especially with longer phrases that contain a different key word each time, this is called parallelism. It has been a central part of poetry in many cultures. Many of the Psalms use this device as one of their unifying elements.

Example: I was glad; so very, very glad.
Example: Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward...
...Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley’d and thunder’d...

Rhyme: This is the one device most commonly associated with poetry by the general public. Words that have different beginning sounds but whose endings sound alike, including the final vowel sound and everything following it, are said to rhyme.

Example: time, slime, mime

Double rhymes include the final two syllables. Example: revival, arrival, survival
Triple rhymes include the final three syllables. Example: greenery, machinery, scenery

A variation which has been used effectively is called slant rhyme, or half rhyme. If only the final consonant sounds of the words are the same, but the initial consonants and the vowel sounds are different, then the rhyme is called a slant rhyme or half rhyme. When this
appears in the middle of lines rather than at the end, it is called **consonance**.

*Example:* soul, oil, foul; taut, sat, knit

Another variation which is occasionally used is called near rhyme. If the final vowel sounds are the same, but the final consonant sounds are slightly different, then the rhyme is called a **near rhyme**.

*Example:* fine, rhyme; poem, goin'

Less effective but sometimes used are sight rhymes. Words which are spelled the same (as if they rhymed), but are pronounced differently are called **sight rhymes** or **eye rhymes**.

*Example:* enough, cough, through, bough

**Rhythm:** Although the general public is seldom directly conscious of it, nearly everyone responds on some level to the organization of speech rhythms (verbal stresses) into a regular pattern of accented syllables separated by unaccented syllables. **Rhythm** helps to distinguish poetry from prose.

*Example:* I THOUGHT I SAW a PUSsyCAT.

Such patterns are sometimes referred to as **meter.** Meter is the organization of voice patterns, in terms of both the arrangement of stresses and their frequency of repetition per line of verse. Poetry is organized by the division of each line into “feet,” metric units which each consist of a particular arrangement of strong and weak stresses. The most common metric unit is the iambic, in which an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed one (as in the words reverse and compose).

**Scansion** is the conscious measure of the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry. Stressed syllables are labeled with an accent mark: / Unstressed syllables are labeled with a dash: – Metrical feet may be two or three syllables in length, and are divided by slashes: |

There are five basic rhythms

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<tr>
<td>– /</td>
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<td>Trochee/Trochaic</td>
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Meter is measured by the number of feet in a line. Feet are named by Greek prefix number words attached to “meter.” A line with five feet is called pentameter; thus, a line of five iambics is known as “iambic pentameter” (the most common metrical form in English poetry, and the one favored by Shakespeare). The most common line lengths are:

- monometer: one foot
- dimeter: two feet
- trimeter: three feet
- tetrameter: four feet
- pentamer: five feet
- hexameter: six feet
heptameter: seven feet        octameter: eight feet

Naturally, there is a degree of variation from line to line, as a rigid adherence to the meter results in unnatural or monotonous language. A skilful poet manipulates breaks in the prevailing rhythm of a poem for particular effects.

The MEANINGs of Words

Most words convey several meanings or shades of meaning at the same time. It is the poet’s job to find words which, when used in relation to other words in the poem, will carry the precise intention of thought. Often, some of the more significant words may carry several layers or “depths” of meaning at once. The ways in which the meanings of words are used can be identified.

Allegory: A representation of an abstract or spiritual meaning. Sometimes it can be a single word or phrase, such as the name of a character or place. Often, it is a symbolic narrative that has not only a literal meaning, but a larger one understood only after reading the entire story or poem.

Allusion: A brief reference to some person, historical event, work of art, or Biblical or mythological situation or character.

Ambiguity: A word or phrase that can mean more than one thing, even in its context. Poets often search out such words to add richness to their work. Often, one meaning seems quite readily apparent, but other, deeper and darker meanings, await those who contemplate the poem.

Example: Robert Frost’s ‘The Subverted Flower’

Analogy: A comparison, usually something unfamiliar with something familiar. Example: The plumbing took a maze of turns where even water got lost.

Apostrophe: Speaking directly to a real or imagined listener or inanimate object; addressing that person or thing by name.

Example: O Captain! My Captain! our fearful trip is done...

Cliché: Any figure of speech that was once clever and original but through overuse has become outdated. If you’ve heard more than two or three other people say it more than two or three times, chances are the phrase is too timeworn to be useful in your writing.

Example: busy as a bee

Connotation: The emotional, psychological or social overtones of a word; its implications and associations apart from its literal meaning. Often, this is what distinguishes the precisely correct word from one that is merely acceptable.

Contrast: Closely arranged things with strikingly different characteristics.

Example: He was dark, sinister, and cruel; she was radiant, pleasant, and kind.

Denotation: The dictionary definition of a word; its literal meaning apart from any associations or connotations. Students must exercise caution when beginning to use a thesaurus, since often the words that are clustered together may share a denotative meaning, but not a connotative one, and the substitution of a word can sometimes destroy the mood, and even the meaning, of a poem.
**Euphemism:** An understatement, used to lessen the effect of a statement; substituting something innocuous for something that might be offensive or hurtful.  
*Example:* She is at rest. (meaning, she’s dead)

**Hyperbole:** An outrageous exaggeration used for effect.  
*Example:* He weighs a ton.

**Irony:** A contradictory statement or situation to reveal a reality different from what appears to be true.  
*Example:* Wow, thanks for expensive gift...let’s see: did it come with a Fun Meal or the Burger King equivalent?

**Metaphor:** A direct comparison between two unlike things, stating that one *is* the other or *does the action* of the other.  
*Example:* He’s a zero.  
*Example:* Her fingers danced across the keyboard.

**Metonymy:** A figure of speech in which a person, place, or thing is referred to by something closely associated with it.  
*Example:* The White House stated today that...  
*Example:* The Crown reported today that...

**Oxymoron:** A combination of two words that appear to contradict each other.  
*Example:* a pointless point of view; bittersweet

**Paradox:** A statement in which a seeming contradiction may reveal an unexpected truth.  
*Example:* The hurrier I go the behinder I get.

**Personification:** Attributing human characteristics to an inanimate object, animal, or abstract idea.  
*Example:* The days crept by slowly, sorrowfully.

**Pun:** Word play in which words with totally different meanings have similar or identical sounds.  
*Example:* Like a firefly in the rain, I’m de-lighted.

**Simile:** A direct comparison of two unlike things using “like” or “as.”  
*Example:* He’s as dumb as an ox. *Example:* Her eyes are like comets.

**Symbol:** An ordinary object, event, animal, or person to which we have attached extraordinary meaning and significance – a flag to represent a country, a lion to represent courage, a wall to symbolize separation.  
*Example:* A small cross by the dangerous curve on the road reminded all of Johnny’s death.

**Synecdoche:** Indicating a person, object, etc. by letting only a certain part represent the whole.  
*Example:* All hands on deck.

**Arranging the Words**

Words follow each other in a sequence determined by the poet. In order to discuss the arrangements that result, certain terms have been applied to various aspects of that arrangement process. Although in some ways these sequences seem arbitrary and mechanical, in another sense they help to determine the nature of the poem. These various ways of organizing words have been identified.
**Point of View**: The author’s point of view concentrates on the vantage point of the speaker, or “teller” of the story or poem. This may be considered the poem's “voice” — the pervasive presence behind the overall work. This is also sometimes referred to as the *persona*.

- **1st Person**: the speaker is a character in the story or poem and tells it from his/her perspective (uses “I”).
- **3rd Person limited**: the speaker is not part of the story, but tells about the other characters through the limited perceptions of one other person.
- **3rd Person omniscient**: the speaker is not part of the story, but is able to “know” and describe what all characters are thinking.

**Line**: The line is fundamental to the perception of poetry, marking an important visual distinction from prose. Poetry is arranged into a series of units that do not necessarily correspond to sentences, but rather to a series of metrical feet. Generally, but not always, the line is printed as one single line on the page. If it occupies more than one line, its remainder is usually indented to indicate that it is a continuation.

There is a natural tendency when reading poetry to pause at the end of a line, but the careful reader will follow the punctuation to find where natural pauses should occur.

In traditional verse forms, the length of each line is determined by convention, but in modern poetry the poet has more latitude for choice.

**Verse**: One single line of a poem arranged in a metrical pattern. Also, a piece of poetry or a particular form of poetry such as *free verse*, *blank verse*, etc., or the art or work of a poet.

The popular use of the word *verse* for a stanza or associated group of metrical lines is not in accordance with the best usage. A stanza is a *group* of verses.

**Stanza**: A division of a poem created by arranging the lines into a unit, often repeated in the same pattern of meter and rhyme throughout the poem; a unit of poetic lines (a “paragraph” within the poem). The stanzas within a poem are separated by blank lines.

Stanzas in modern poetry, such as *free verse*, often do not have lines that are all of the same length and meter, nor even the same number of lines in each stanza. Stanzas created by such irregular line groupings are often dictated by meaning, as in paragraphs of prose.

**Stanza Forms**: The names given to describe the number of lines in a stanzaic unit, such as: *couplet* (2), *tercet* (3), *quatrain* (4), *quintet* (5), *sestet* (6), *septet* (7), and *octave* (8). Some stanzas follow a set rhyme scheme and meter in addition to the number of lines and are given specific names to describe them, such as, *ballad meter*, *ottava rima*, *rhyme royal*, *terza rima*, and *Spenserian stanza*.

Stanza forms are also a factor in the categorization of whole poems described as following a *fixed form*.

**Rhetorical Question**: A question solely for effect, which does not require an answer. By the implication the answer is obvious, it is a means of achieving an emphasis stronger than a direct statement.

*Example*: Could I but guess the reason for that look?
Example: O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

**Rhyme Scheme**: The pattern established by the arrangement of rhymes in a stanza or poem, generally described by using letters of the alphabet to denote the recurrence of rhyming lines, such as the *ababbcc* of the *Rhyme Royal* stanza form.

Capital letters in the alphabetic rhyme scheme are used for the repeating lines of a refrain; the letters *x* and *y* indicate unrhymed lines.

In quatrains, the popular rhyme scheme of *abab* is called *alternate rhyme* or *cross rhyme*. The *abba* scheme is called *envelope rhyme*, and another one frequently used is *xaxa* (This last pattern, when working with students, is generally easier for them to understand when presented as *abcabc*, as they associate matched letters with rhymed words).

**Enjambment**: The continuation of the logical sense — and therefore the grammatical construction — beyond the end of a line of poetry. This is sometimes done with the title, which in effect becomes the first line of the poem.

**Form**: The arrangement or method used to convey the content, such as *free verse*, *ballad*, *haiku*, etc. In other words, the “way-it-is-said.” A variably interpreted term, however, it sometimes applies to details within the composition of a text, but is probably used most often in reference to the structural characteristics of a work as it compares to (or differs from) established modes of conventionalized arrangements.

- **Open**: poetic form free from regularity and consistency in elements such as rhyme, line length, and metrical form
- **Closed**: poetic form subject to a fixed structure and pattern
- **Blank Verse**: unrhymed iambic pentameter (much of the plays of Shakespeare are written in this form)
- **Free Verse**: lines with no prescribed pattern or structure — the poet determines all the variables as seems appropriate for each poem
- **Couplet**: a pair of lines, usually rhymed; this is the shortest stanza
- **Heroic Couplet**: a pair of rhymed lines in iambic pentameter (traditional heroic epic form)
- **Quatrain**: a four-line stanza, or a grouping of four lines of verse

**Fixed Form**: A poem which follows a set pattern of *meter*, *rhyme scheme*, *stanza form*, and *refrain* (if there is one), is called a *fixed form*.

Most poets feel a need for familiarity and practice with established forms as essential to learning the craft, but having explored the techniques and constraints of each, they go on to experiment and extend their imaginative creativity in new directions. A partial listing includes:

- Ballad
- Ballade
- Epigram
- Epitaph
- Haiku
- Limerick
- Lyric
The IMAGES of Words

A poet uses words more consciously than any other writer. Although poetry often deals with deep human emotions or philosophical thought, people generally don’t respond very strongly to abstract words, even the words describing such emotions and thoughts. The poet, then, must embed within his work those words which do carry strong visual and sensory impact, words which are fresh and spontaneous but vividly descriptive. He must carefully pick and choose words that are just right. It is better to show the reader than to merely tell him.

Imagery: The use of vivid language to generate ideas and/or evoke mental images, not only of the visual sense, but of sensation and emotion as well. While most commonly used in reference to figurative language, imagery can apply to any component of a poem that evoke sensory experience and emotional response, and also applies to the concrete things so brought to mind. Poetry works its magic by the way it uses words to evoke “images” that carry depths of meaning. The poet’s carefully described impressions of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch can be transferred to the thoughtful reader through imaginative use and combinations of diction. In addition to its more tangible initial impact, effective imagery has the potential to tap the inner wisdom of the reader to arouse meditative and inspirational responses. Related images are often clustered or scattered throughout a work, thus serving to create a particular mood or tone. Images of disease, corruption, and death, for example, are recurrent patterns shaping our perceptions of Shakespeare’s Hamlet.

Examples:

- **Sight:** Smoke mysteriously puffed out from the clown’s ears.
- **Sound:** Tom placed his ear tightly against the wall; he could hear a faint but distinct thump thump thump.
- **Touch:** The burlap wall covering scraped against the little boy’s cheek.
- **Taste:** A salty tear ran across onto her lips.
- **Smell:** Cinnamon! That’s what wafted into his nostrils.

Synesthesia: An attempt to fuse different senses by describing one kind of sense impression in words normally used to describe another. Example: The sound of her voice was sweet. Example: a loud aroma, a velvety smile

Tone, Mood: The means by which a poet reveals attitudes and feelings, in the style of language or expression of thought used to develop the subject. Certain tones include not only irony and satire, but may be loving, condescending, bitter, pitying, fanciful, solemn, and a host of other emotions and attitudes. Tone can also refer to the overall mood of the poem itself, in the sense of a pervading atmosphere intended to influence the readers’ emotional response and foster expectations of the conclusion. Another use of tone is in reference to pitch or to the demeanor of a speaker as interpreted through inflections of the voice; in poetry, this is conveyed through the use of connotation, diction, figures of speech, rhythm and other elements of poetic construction.
How to Use Quotations

Quotation is essential in any critical essay. Like any analytical skill (such as science or history), if you wish to prove your theory, you must use evidence to support and illustrate it. In English, the evidence is the language which is used by a writer to create particular effects in the reader's mind, and you need to quote this evidence in your essays. The deft use of quotation is a key part of learning to write professionally and academically. The following methods provide you with possible ways of doing this.

The following discussion is based on a supposed (though unlikely) critical response to this stanza of poetry:

Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are

1. Most of the time you should only need to quote one or two words. These should be used as part of your own sentence, in which you analyse and explain the effects created by the language you have quoted. Thus:

   The poet repeats the word 'twinkle' at the start of the poem, as if he is mesmerised by the sight.

   The assonant rhyme of 'sky' and 'high' helps to reinforce a sense of longing.

NB: In both these examples, there is both a direct 'quotation' and an explanation of the effect created by the language quoted. You will see this pattern repeated below.

2. If you wish to quote a list of words all illustrating the same point, you can introduce them using a colon. Note that each quoted word or phrase needs its own inverted commas (unless you are using method 2 above). Thus:

   There is a pattern of imagery in the poem relating to light, particularly sparkling or reflected light: 'twinkle', 'star', 'diamond'. Again, the effect seems to be one of wonder or fascination.

3. Sometimes you want to include a quotation in your sentence but it is in the wrong tense/person, etc. In this case, if you are changing or adding words in the quotation in order to preserve the grammar of your sentence, put the altered or added words in [square brackets], to indicate that you have changed the original. Thus:

   Addressing the star, the speaker says he 'wonder[s] what you are'.

   The star is an object of unattainable desire; the poet describes it as being 'above the world (shining] like a diamond', inviting, but out of reach.

4. Sometimes you want to quote a longer phrase, but leave out certain parts which are not relevant to the point you are trying to make. In this case, use a series of dots [. ....,] to indicate that words from the original text have been omitted. Make sure that what remains is still grammatically coherent. Thus:

   The fact that the star is 'up....so high' suggests that it is unattainable, and as such represents the focus of the poet's sense of yearning for things beyond his reach.
5. Very occasionally, you will need to quote an entire line, or more than one line, from a poem. In this case, you should set the lines out as they appear in the original, introduced by a colon. Note that the colon must come at the end of a grammatically complete sentence. Thus:

The poem contains a regular four-beat rhythm and a couplet rhyme scheme:

'Twinkle twinkle little star How I wonder what you are'.

6. Another method, when the quotation is still relatively short, is to use an oblique line (/) to indicate the line ending. Thus:

The poet uses repetition of the long \'i\' sound in the phrase 'the sky so high/Like a diamond', in order to create a sense of wonder and awe.
### Valuable Vocabulary for Analytical Writing

#### Useful Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valuable Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reveals</td>
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<td>asserts</td>
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#### Transitioning Terms (Text Connectives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Verbs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>highlights</td>
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#### Some Words, Terms & Phrases for Comparing and Contrasting

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<td>Comparatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>echoes / echoed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrently</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposing this is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In contrast,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrasting / Contrastingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dissimilar/Dissimilarly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juxtaposed/ juxtaposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incongruity/ incongruous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variance / variation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contradicts/ contradiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter</td>
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<tr>
<td>dispute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the other hand,</td>
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<tr>
<td>whereas</td>
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<tr>
<td>yet</td>
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<tr>
<td>…which is a stark contrast to…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…which is notably at odds with …</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Synonyms for ‘Opinion’, ‘Image’ or ‘Idea’

- concept
- notion
- belief
- theory
- ideology
- ideation
- conceptualisation
- interpretation
- assertion
- manifestation
- tenet
- maxim
- precept

> Some phrases for describing or capturing impact & effect on the reader AND certain approaches to structuring sentences that analyse quotes and elaborate/expand on ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capturing effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...evokes a sense of empathy through…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...allows readers to empathise with…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...invites a sense of sympathy for…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...creates a heightened personal response...\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The audience is explicitly made aware of…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This &lt;insert idea/image/outcome&gt; positions the reader to…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...positioning the responder in a way that…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...engages the viewer through…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...illustrates a … mood\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...highlights the intended atmosphere that is…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...illuminates the contextual influences that underpin the text…\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...foreshadows the entire scene, forcing readers to consider…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expanding on ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• This notion of &lt;insert idea&gt; is manifested in &lt;insert quote&gt; …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This interpretation is further borne out in/through &lt;insert quote&gt;, which &lt;explain effect of quote&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Such a reality is extensively explored through &lt;insert quote/idea/image&gt;…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The &lt;insert adjective&gt; image captured in &lt;insert quote&gt; is suggestive of &lt;insert idea&gt; …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The depiction of &lt;insert description of character or setting&gt; is confronting/uplifting/unsettling as &lt;explain cause/effect relationship&gt; …</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CAUTION: DO NOT ASSUME YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THESE WORDS.**
Ensure that you are using them in the right context, and for the right reason; look up the definitions!
Tell all the truth but tell it slant —
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As Lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind —
Edith Sitwell, ‘Still Falls the Rain’

Still falls the Rain---
Dark as the world of man, black as our loss---
Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails
Upon the Cross.

Still falls the Rain
With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is changed to the hammer-beat
In the Potter's Field, and the sound of the impious feet

On the Tomb:
Still falls the Rain

In the Field of Blood where the small hopes breed and the human brain
Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.

Still falls the Rain
At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross.
Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy on us---
On Dives and on Lazarus:
Under the Rain the sore and the gold are as one.

Still falls the Rain---
Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side:
He bears in His Heart all wounds,---those of the light that died,
The last faint spark
In the self-murdered heart, the wounds of the sad uncomprehending dark,
The wounds of the baited bear---
The blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat
On his helpless flesh... the tears of the hunted hare.

Still falls the Rain---
Then--- O Ile leape up to my God: who pulles me doune---
See, see where Christ's blood streames in the firmament:
It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree

Deep to the dying, to the thirsting heart
That holds the fires of the world,---dark-smirched with pain
As Caesar's laurel crown.

Then sounds the voice of One who like the heart of man
Was once a child who among beasts has lain---
‘Still do I love, still shed my innocent light, my Blood, for thee.’
Alison Fell, ‘August 6, 1945’

In the Enola Gay
five minutes before impact
he whistles a dry tune

Later he will say
that the whole blooming sky
went up like an apricot ice.

Later he will laugh and tremble
at such a surrender, for the eye
of his belly saw Marilyn’s skirts
fly over her head for ever

On the river bank,
bees drizzle over
hot white rhododendrons

Later she will walk
the dust, a scarlet girl
with her whole stripped skin
at her heel, stuck like an old
shoe sole or mermaid’s tail

Later she will lie down
in the flecked black ash
where the people are become
as lizards or salamanders
and, blinded, she will complain
Mother you are late. So late

Later in dreams he will look
down shrieking and see
ladybirds
ladybirds
Sylvia Plath, ‘Morning Song’

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.
The midwife slapped your footsoles, and your bald cry
Took its place among the elements.

Our voices echo, magnifying your arrival. New statue.
In a drafty museum, your nakedness
Shadows our safety. We stand round blankly as walls.

I’m no more your mother
Than the cloud that distills a mirror to reflect its own slow
Effacement at the wind’s hand.

All night your moth-breath
Flickers among the flat pink roses. I wake to listen:
A far sea moves in my ear.

One cry, and I stumble from bed, cow-heavy and floral
In my Victorian nightgown.
Your mouth opens clean as a cat’s. The window square

Whitens and swallows its dull stars. And now you try
Your handful of notes;
The clear vowels rise like balloons.
Outside in the street I hear
A car door slam; voices coming near;
Incoherent scraps of talk
And high heels clicking up the walk;
The doorbell rends the noonday heat
With copper claws;
A second's pause.
The dull drums of my pulses beat
Against a silence wearing thin.
The door now opens from within.
Oh, hear the clash of people meeting ---
The laughter and the screams of greeting:

Fat always, and out of breath,
A greasy smack on every cheek
From Aunt Elizabeth;
There, that's the pink, pleased squeak
Of Cousin Jane, out spinster with
The faded eyes
And hands like nervous butterflies;
While rough as splintered wood
Across them all
Rasps the jarring baritone of Uncle Paul;
The youngest nephew gives a fretful whine
And drools at the reception line.

Like a diver on a lofty spar of land
Atop the flight of stairs I stand.
A whirlpool leers at me,
I cast off my identity
And make the fatal plunge.
Judith Wright, ‘The Surfer’

He thrust his joy against the weight of the sea;
climbed through, slid under those long banks of foam--
(hawthorn hedges in spring, thorns in the face stinging).
How his brown strength drove through the hollow and coil of green-through weirs of water!
Muscle of arm thrust down long muscle of water;
and swimming so, went out of sight
where mortal, masterful, frail, the gulls went wheeling
in air as he in water, with delight.

Turn home, the sun goes down; swimmer, turn home.
Last leaf of gold vanishes from the sea-curve.
Take the big roller's shoulder, speed and serve;
come to the long beach home like a gull diving.

For on the sand the grey-wolf sea lies, snarling,
cold twilight wind splits the waves' hair and shows
the bones they worry in their wolf-teeth. O, wind blows
and sea crouches on sand, fawning and mouthing;
drops there and snatches again, drops and again snatches
its broken toys, its whitened pebbles and shells.
Gwen Harwood, ‘Suburban Sonnet’

She practises a fugue, though it can matter to no one now if she plays well or not. Beside her on the floor two children chatter, then scream and fight. She hushes them. A pot boils over. As she rushes to the stove too late, a wave of nausea overpowers subject and counter-subject. Zest and love drain out with soapy water as she scours the crusted milk. Her veins ache. Once she played for Rubinstein, who yawned. The children caper round a sprung mousetrap where a mouse lies dead. When the soft corpse won’t move they seem afraid. She comforts them; and wraps it in a paper featuring: Tasty dishes from stale bread.
They came in to the little town
A semi-naked band subdued and silent
All that remained of their tribe.
They came here to the place of their old bora ground
Where now the many white men hurry about like ants.
Notice of the estate agent reads: 'Rubbish May Be Tipped Here'.
Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.
'We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.
We belong here, we are of the old ways.
We are the corroboree and the bora ground,
We are the old ceremonies, the laws of the elders.
We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told.
We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering camp fires.
We are the lightening bolt over Gaphembah Hill
Quick and terrible,
And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.
We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark lagoon.
We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low.
We are nature and the past, all the old ways
Gone now and scattered.
The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the laughter.
The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this place.
The bora ring is gone.
The corroboree is gone.
And we are going.
Change is the law. The new must oust the old.
I look at you and am back in the long ago,
Old pinaroo lonely and lost here
Last of your clan.
Left only with your memories, you sit
And think of the gay throng, the happy people,
The voices and the laughter
All gone, all gone,
And you remain alone.

I asked and you let me hear
The soft vowelly tongue to be heard now
No more for ever. For me
You enact old scenes, old ways, you who have used
Boomerang and spear.
You singer of ancient tribal songs,
You leader once in the corroboree,
You twice in fierce tribal fights
With wild enemy blacks from over the river,
All gone, all gone. And I feel
The sudden sting of tears, Willie Mackenzie
In the Salvation Army Home.
Displaced person in your own country,
Lonely in teeming city crowds,
Last of your tribe.
W.H. Auden, ‘Musee des Beaux Arts’

About suffering they were never wrong,
The old Masters: how well they understood
Its human position: how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
For the miraculous birth, there always must be
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
On a pond at the edge of the wood:
They never forgot
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water, and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.
Ted Hughes, ‘The Thought-Fox’

I imagine this midnight moment’s forest:
Something else is alive
Beside the clock’s loneliness
And this blank page where my fingers move.

Through the window I see no star:
Something more near
Though deeper within darkness
Is entering the loneliness:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow,
A fox’s nose touches twig, leaf;
Two eyes serve a movement, that now
And again now, and now, and now

Sets neat prints into the snow
Between trees, and warily a lame
Shadow lags by stump and in hollow
Of a body that is bold to come

Across clearings, an eye,
A widening deepening greenness,
Brilliantly, concentratedly,
Coming about its own business

Till, with a sudden sharp hot stink of fox
It enters the dark hole of the head.
The window is starless still; the clock ticks,
The page is printed.
Wole Soyinka, ‘Telephone Conversation’

The price seemed reasonable, location
Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived
Off premises. Nothing remained
But self-confession. ‘Madam,’ I warned,
‘I hate a wasted journey--I am African.’
Silence. Silenced transmission of
Pressurized good-breeding. Voice, when it came,
Lipstick coated, long gold-rolled
Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was foully.
‘HOW DARK?’ . . . I had not misheard . . . ‘ARE YOU LIGHT
OR VERY DARK?’ Button B, Button A. Stench
Of rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.
Red booth. Red pillar box. Red double-tiered
Omnibus squelching tar. It was real! Shamed
By ill-mannered silence, surrender
Pushed dumbfounded to beg simplification.
Considerate she was, varying the emphasis--
‘ARE YOU DARK? OR VERY LIGHT?’ Revelation came.
‘You mean--like plain or milk chocolate?’
Her assent was clinical, crushing in its light
Impersonality. Rapidly, wave-length adjusted,
I chose. ‘West African sepia’ – and as afterthought,
‘Down in my passport.’ Silence for spectroscopic
Flight of fancy, till truthfulness clanged her accent
Hard on the mouthpiece. ‘WHAT’S THAT?’ conceding
‘DON’T KNOW WHAT THAT IS.’ ‘Like brunette.’
‘THAT’S DARK, ISN’T IT?’ ‘Not altogether.
Facially, I am brunette, but, madam, you should see
The rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my feet
Are a peroxide blond. Friction, caused--
Foolishly, madam--by sitting down, has turned
My bottom raven black--One moment, madam!’ – sensing
Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
About my ears – ‘Madam,’ I pleaded, ‘wouldn't you rather
See for yourself?’
Michael Dransfield, ‘Fix’

It is waking in the night,
after the theatres and before the milkman,
alerted by some signal from the golden drug tapeworm
that eats your flesh and drinks your peace;
you reach for the needle and busy yourself
preparing the utopia substance in a blackened
spoon held in candle flame
by now your thumb and finger are leathery
being so often burned this way
it hurts much less than withdrawal and the hand
is needed for little else now anyway.
Then cordon off the arm with a belt,
probe for a vein, send the dream-transfusion out
on a voyage among your body machinery. Hits you like sleep –
sweet, illusory, fast, with a semblance of forever.
For while the fires die down in you,
until you die down in the fires.
Once you have become a drug addict
you will never want to be anything else.
Simon Armitage, ‘The Tyre’

Just how it came to rest where it rested,
 miles out, miles from the last farmhouse even,
 was a fair question. Dropped by hurricane
 or aeroplane perhaps for some reason,
 put down as a cairn or marker, then lost.
 Tractor-size, six or seven feet across,
 it was sloughed, unconscious, warm to the touch,
 its gashed, rhinoceros, sea-lion skin
 nursing a gallon of rain in its gut.
 Lashed to the planet with grasses and roots,
 it had to be cut. Stood up it was drunk
 or slugged, wanted nothing more than to slump,
 to spiral back to its circle of sleep,
 dream another year in its nest of peat.
 We bullied it over the moor, drove it,
 pushed from the back or turned it from the side,
 unspooling a thread in the shape and form
 of its tread, in its length, and in its line,
 rolled its weight through broken walls, felt the shock
 when it met with stones, guided its sleepwalk
 down to meadows, fields, onto level ground.
 There and then we were one connected thing,
 five of us, all hands steering a tall ship
 or one hand fingerling a coin or ring.

Once on the road it picked up pace, free-wheeled,
 then moved up through the gears, and wouldn't give
 to shoulder-charges, kicks; resisted force
 until to tangle with it would have been
 to test bone against engine or machine,
 to be dragged in, broken, thrown out again
 minus a limb. So we let the thing go,
 leaning into the bends and corners,
balanced and centred, riding the camber, 
carried away with its own momentum. 
We pictured an incident up ahead: 
life carved open, gardens in half, parted, 
a man on a motorbike taken down, 
a phone-box upended, children erased, 
police and an ambulance in attendance, 
scuff-marks and the smell of broken rubber, 
the tyre itself embedded in a house 
or lying in a gutter, playing dead.

But down in the village the tyre was gone, 
and not just gone but unseen and unheard of, 
not curled like a cat in the graveyard, not 
cornered in the playground like a reptile, 
or found and kept like a giant fossil. 
Not there or anywhere. No trace. Thin air.

Being more in tune with the feel of things 
than science and facts, we knew that the tyre 
had travelled too fast for its size and mass, 
and broken through some barrier of speed, 
outrun the act of being driven, steered, 
and at that moment gone beyond itself 
towards some other sphere, and disappeared.
Carol Ann Duffy, ‘Little Red Cap’

At childhood’s end, the houses petered out
into playing fields, the factory, allotments
kept, like mistresses, by kneeling married men,
the silent railway line, the hermit’s caravan,
till you came at last to the edge of the woods.
It was there that I first clapped eyes on the wolf.

He stood in a clearing, reading his verse out loud
in his wolfy drawl, a paperback in his hairy paw,
red wine staining his bearded jaw. What big ears
he had! What big eyes he had! What teeth!
In the interval, I made quite sure he spotted me,
sweet sixteen, never been, babe, waif, and bought me a drink,

The wolf, I knew, would lead me deep into the woods,
away from home, to a dark tangled thorny place
lit by the eyes of owls. I crawled in his wake,
my stockings ripped to shreds, scraps of red from my blazer
snagged on twig and branch, murder clues. I lost both shoes

but got there, wolf’s lair, better beware. Lesson one that night,
breath of the wolf in my ear, was the love poem.
I clung till dawn to his thrashing fur, for
what little girl doesn’t dearly love a wolf?1
Then I slid from between his heavy matted paws
and went in search of a living bird – white dove –

which flew, straight, from my hands to his hope mouth.
One bite, dead. How nice, breakfast in bed, he said,
licking his chops. As soon as he slept, I crept to the back
of the lair, where a whole wall was crimson, gold, aglow with books.
Words, words were truly alive on the tongue, in the head,
warm, beating, frantic, winged; music and blood.

But then I was young – and it took ten years
in the woods to tell that a mushroom
stoppers the mouth of a buried corpse, that birds
are the uttered thought of trees, that a greying wolf
howls the same old song at the moon, year in, year out,
season after season, same rhyme, same reason. I took an axe
to a willow to see how it wept. I took an axe to a salmon
to see how it leapt. I took an axe to the wolf
as he slept, one chop, scrotum to throat, and saw
the glistening, virgin white of my grandmother’s bones.
I filled his old belly with stones. I stitched him up.
Out of the forest I come with my flowers, singing, all alone.
Katie Makkai, ‘Pretty’

When I was just a little girl, I asked my mother "What will I be? ....will I be pretty?
Will I be pretty?
Will I BE PRETTY?!?!?
What comes next?
Oh Right – Will I be rich,
which
is almost pretty, depending on where you shop.
And the pretty question infects from conception, passing blood and breath, into cells
The word hangs from our mothers' hearts in a shrill florescent floodlight of worry.
Will I be wanted?
Worthy?
Pretty?

But, puberty left me this fun house mirror dryad, teeth set at science fiction angles, crooked nose, face- donkey long, and pock-marked where the hormones went finger-painting
My Poor Mother...
How could this happen?!?!?

"You'll have porcelain skin as soon as we can see a dermatologist!
You sucked your thumb, that's why your teeth look like THAT!
You were hit in the face by a Frisbee when you were six , otherwise your nose would have been JUST FINE!
Don't worry!
We'll get it ALL fixed!"
She would say, grasping my face, twisting it this way and that, as though it were a cabbage she might buy.

But, this is not about her.
It's not her fault she too was raised to believe the greatest asset she could bestow upon her awkward little girl was a marketable facade.

By 16 I was pickled with ointments, medications, peroxides,
teeth corralled into steel prongs, laying in a hospital bed, face packed with gauze, cushioning the brand new nose the surgeon had carved. 
Belly gorged on 2 pints of my own blood I had swallowed under anesthesia. And every convulsive twist of my gut like my body was screaming at me from the inside out.........."WHAT did you let them do to you?"

All the while this never-ending chorus droning on and on
Will I be pretty
Will I be pretty
like the IV needle dripping liquid beauty into my blood,
Will I be pretty,
Will I be pretty,
Like my mother, unwinding the gift wrap to reveal the bouquet of daughter that her ten thousand dollars bought her
pretty
pretty
pretty.

And now I have not seen my own face in ten years,

I Have Not Seen My Own Face In Ten Years...

....but, this is not about me.

This is about the self mutilating circus we have painted ourselves clowns in.
About women who will prowl 30 stores and six malls to find the right cocktail dress, but who haven't a clue where to find fulfillment or how to wear joy-
Wandering through life, shackled to a shopping bag beneath the tyranny of two syllables.

About men, wallowing on bar-stools, drearily practicing attraction and everyone who will drift home tonight, crestfallen because not enough strangers found you suitably fuckable

This, this is about my own someday daughter, when you approach me, already stung-stained with insecurity, begging, "Mom, will I be pretty?"

I will WIPE that question from your mouth like cheap lipstick and answer, "No! The word 'pretty' is unworthy of all you WILL be and no child of mine will be contained in 5 letters...

You WILL be
pretty intelligent,
pretty creative
pretty amazing

but YOU
will NEVER be

merely
pretty."