

Analysing Unseen Poems



Read through the poem you have been given.

Consider:

1. Your interpretation - this could be anything from what the poem is about, what you think the poet is saying, how the speaker is feeling etc.
2. One question - is there something you're unsure of? Is there something you're not sure how to interpret?

Unseen Poetry

What do I do?!

LO: To understand what steps to take
when seeing a poem for the first time

To analyse a poem for language,
structure and form

To use subject terminology and comment
on its effect on the reader

Unseen Poetry

1. 30 minutes on first poem = 24 marks
2. 15 minutes on comparing second poem to first = 8 marks

1. 6 Points made on the poem covering the question AND language, structure and form
2. 4 similarities and differences to the language, structure and form.

V is for vocabulary

- ▶ Find what you think are the three most important words and phrases in the poem.
- ▶ Why do they strike you as important? Connotations? What do they make you think of/feel/imagine?

I is for Imagery

- ▶ Can you see any metaphors, simile, striking visual images in the poem? Anything that paints a picture.
- ▶ What do they make you think of/imagine? Does this link with the vocabulary in any way?

S is for Structure

- ▶ What is the poem made up of? Stanzas or all one? Any rhyme or rhythm? Does it add anything? Why has the poet chosen it?
- ▶ Anything else interesting structurally? Isolated lines? Patterns of repetition? Enjambment? Caesura?
- ▶ What are they there for?

I is for Intention

- ▶ **Use this for your conclusion.**
- ▶ **Why on earth did this poet write this poem? What message is he or she trying to give you about: life, love, nature, the universe, society, conflict, power human nature?**
- ▶ **What three key important things can we take away from the poem?**

T is for Tone

- ▶ **If this poem was a person what mood would they be in?**
- ▶ **If this poem was a party, what would the atmosphere be like when you walked in?**
- ▶ **Describe it in 3 words.**

The poet makes interesting choices of **vocabulary**. For example in the poem, the poet uses words such as and phrases such as which convey a picture of/ a mood of/ a feeling of to the reader.

In the poem the poet creates strong visual **images** by using metaphors/similes/symbols such as These paint a picture of in the reader's imagination causing them to think about/consider/see A second interesting image is when the poet describes using which leads the reader to picture and imagine

The poet has also made some interesting choices in how they chose to **structure** their work. In the poem the poem is organised into This creates a feeling or a rhythm which we might connect with. We also see patterns in the poem such as the repetition of This might emphasize for the reader.

The **tone** of the poem is one of This is suggested by the overall feelings of and creates an impression of for the reader.

As readers we are left with the feeling that the poet is giving us a clear message about The poet focuses on the issues of, and chooses to highlight The poet seems to have the **intention** of giving us a clear and precise picture of leaving us to think about

Poetry Analysis - Group

- ▶ You have 10 minutes to highlight and annotate your poem.

Challenge Yourself!
Can you think of an alternative interpretation of a word/phrase/technique?
Could it mean something else?

Consider:

- V - Vocabulary (Effective words)
- I - Imagery (Language techniques)
- S - Structure - line lengths, punctuation, rhyme, rhythm -
- I - Intention - why has the poet written this?
- T - Tone - how do you think the speaker is feeling? Why?

My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.
'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,
That regiment of spite behind the shed:
It was no place for rest. With sobs and tears
The boy came seeking comfort and I saw
White blisters beaded on his tender skin.
We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.
At last he offered us a watery grin,
And then I took my billhook, honed the blade
And went outside and slashed in fury with it
Till not a nettle in that fierce parade
Stood upright any more. And then I lit
A funeral pyre to burn the fallen dead,
But in two weeks the busy sun and rain
Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:
My son would often feel sharp wounds again.

27:1

In 'Nettles', how does the poet present ideas about being a father?

► Consider:

- V - Vocabulary (Effective words)
- I - Imagery (Language techniques)
- S - Structure - line lengths, punctuation, rhyme, rhythm -
- I - Intention - why has the poet written this?
- T - Tone - how do you think the speaker is feeling? Why?

27:2

In both 'Nettles' and 'Brothers', the writers present ideas about different family members.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the methods the poets use to present these ideas?

Brothers' by Andrew Forster

Saddled with you for the afternoon, me and Paul
ambled across the threadbare field to the bus stop,
talking over Sheffield Wednesday's chances in the Cup
while you skipped beside us in your ridiculous tank-top,
spouting six-year-old views on Rotherham United.

Suddenly you froze, said you hadn't any bus fare.
I sighed, said you should go and ask Mum
and while you windmilled home I looked at Paul.
His smile, like mine, said I was nine and he was ten
and we must stroll the town, doing what grown-ups do.

As a bus crested the hill we chased Olympic Gold.
Looking back I saw you spring towards the gate,
your hand holding out what must have been a coin.
I ran on, unable to close the distance I'd set in motion.

So, what links can we make?

- ▶ Remember methods!

Have a go:

In both 'Nettles' and 'Brothers', the writers present ideas about different family members.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the methods the poets use to present these ideas?

Use VISIT to structure your answer.