

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 5 minutes to highlight and annotate the stanza you have been given.

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?

You could travel up the Blue Nile
with your finger, tracing the route
while Mrs Tilscher chanted the scenery.
"Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan."
That for an hour,
then a skittle of milk
and the chalky Pyramids rubbed into dust.
A window opened with a long pole.
The laugh of a bell swung by a running child.

This was better than home. Enthralling books.
The classroom glowed like a sweetshop.
Sugar paper. Coloured shapes. Brady and Hindley
faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake.
Mrs Tilscher loved you. Some mornings, you found
she'd left a gold star by your name.
The scent of a pencil slowly, carefully, shaved.
A xylophone's nonsense heard from another form.

Over the Easter term the inky tadpoles changed from commas into exclamation marks. Three frogs hopped in the playground, freed by a dunce followed by a line of kids, jumping and croaking away from the lunch queue. A rough boy told you how you were born. You kicked him, but stared at your parents, appalled, when you got back home

That feverish July, the air tasted of electricity.
A tangible alarm made you always untidy, hot,
fractious under the heavy, sexy sky. You asked her
how you were born and Mrs Tilscher smiled
then turned away. Reports were handed out.
You ran through the gates, impatient to be grown
the sky split open into a thunderstorm.

27:1

In 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class,' how does the poet present ideas about childhood memories?

► 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 ‘In Mrs Tilscher’s Class,’ and ‘Originally’ the speakers describe different attitudes towards their childhoods.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways in which the poets present these attitudes?

[8 marks]

So, what links can we make?

- ▶ Remember methods!

Have a go:

In both 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class,' and 'Originally' the speakers describe different attitudes towards their childhoods.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways in which the poets present these attitudes?

[8 marks]