

Poetry @ A level

What do poets write poems about?

Learning (Mainly AO1 and 2 Today)

- ▶ **AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (personal response plus accuracy, clarity and TERMINOLOGY) (7 marks, 28%)**
- ▶ **AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (How does the writer get the meaning/message across? TERMINOLOGY too.) (6 marks, 24%)**
- ▶ **AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (context: genre, time and 'era') (6 marks, 24%)**
- ▶ **AO4 Explore connections across literary texts. (Comparison AND link to other texts from different times: implicit) (3 marks, 12%)**
- ▶ **AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (debate: your view first but considering other views) (3 marks, 12%)**

Warning: The next question may surprise you but it IS linked to the poem!

Why do people have sex?

How does this insect feed?



The **metaphysical conceit**, associated with the **Metaphysical** poets of the 17th century, is a more intricate and intellectual device. It usually sets up an analogy between one entity's spiritual qualities and an object in the physical world and sometimes controls the whole structure of the poem.

<http://www.britannica.com/art/metaphysical-conceit>

The Flea

BY JOHN DONNE

(FIRST PUBLISHED POSTHUMOUSLY IN 1633) JOHN DONNE (ALIVE: 1572–1631)

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest 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, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are 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 thy self, 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.

Source: *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (1996)

Why do you think this was published after the poet's death (posthumously)?

How sympathetic are you with the speaker? Why? Why not?

Whose voice is missing? Why?

What do you think she said:

- a) Before the poem begins?
- b) After?
- c) During?

Metre and Form

Rhyming scheme: AABBCDDDD.

Each rhyme=one argument

How does the control in the poem reflect the speaker's behaviour?

"me," "thee," and "be": Another triple at the end of the poem reflects...

iamb: unstress/stressed

tetrameter: 8 _____

pentameter: 10 _____

Context: Carpe Diem?

Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I: 1625-49