Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 

**Reading and Interpreting Sonnets and Villanelles**

The sonnet, one of the oldest, strictest, and most enduring poetic forms, comes from the Italian word sonetto, meaning “little song.”

The villanelle is a nineteen-line [poetic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry) form consisting of five [tercets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tercet%22%20%5Co%20%22Tercet) followed by a [quatrain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quatrain). There are two [refrains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refrain) and two repeating rhymes, with the first and third line of the first tercet repeated alternately until the last stanza, which includes both repeated lines.

**Directions**: For each poem in the packet, complete the following steps. See the references section at the back for models, definitions, and other resources.

**Step 1)** Re-read Foster Chapter 4 “If It’s Square, It’s a Sonnet”

**Step 2)** Number lines, Mark the rhyme scheme down the **right-hand side**. Mark the **quatrains/tercets/couplets.**  Scan the first stanza for meter using scansion (if applicable).

**Step 3)** Read & annotate the poem for the following items:

 **T**itle (How does the title relate to the rest of the poem? What is its deeper meaning?)

 **P**araphrase the poem section by section (put it into your own words!)

 **C**onnotation of words (Look up any unknown vocabulary!)

 **A**ttitude (What is the overall TONE? How does the TONE shift?)

 **S**hifts (Notice shifts in tone/mood, setting, speakers, sounds, etc.)

 **S**peaker (Who is the speaker of the poem? Different from the poet.)

 **T**itle revisited

 **T**heme

**\*Note: Many sonnets do not contain titles.**

**Assessment/Grading**

* Students with completed packets may use them as a resource on timed writing this quarter.
* The timed writing grading will be using the AP Scoring Rubric (Included)
* Listed below are possible essay questions that could appear on the timed writing.

**Option 1**) Explore how the poet uses humor in one of the poems you have studied.

**Option 2** Poetry can often make you see ordinary things in a new way. Explore how the poet does this in one of the poems you have studied.

**Option 3**) Explore how the poet movingly conveys a mood of sadness or regret in one of the poems you have studied.

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**POETRY TERMS**

**allusion**: a casual and brief reference to a famous historical or literary figure or event. The best sources for allusions are literature, history, Greek mythology, and the Bible

**alliteration**: the recurrence of initial consonant sounds-the repetition is *usually* limited to two words **Example**: “Ah, what a **d**elicious **d**ay!”

**anaphora:** repetition of word(s) for meaning **Example**: “blood” in Book the Second

**apostrophe:** A direct address to an absent or dead person or to an object, quality, or idea

Example: “O Captain, My Captain” was written upon the death of Abraham Lincoln (Whitman)

**assonance:** repetition of similar vowel sounds in a sequence of nearby words. **Example:** “sainted radiant maiden”

**cacophony:** the clash of discordant or harsh sounds within a sentence or phrase

**connotation/denotation:** the literary (dictionary) meaning of a word is its **denotation**. The **connotation** of a word involves feelings and emotions associated with it.

**hyperbole**: a figure of speech in which deliberate exaggeration is used for emphasis. **Example**: waiting for ages \* tons of money \* a flood of tears \* I nearly died laughing\* I tried a thousand times

**imagery:** representation through language of sensory experience either visual, sound (auditory image), smell (olfactory image), taste (gustatory image), touch (tactile image), or internal sensation (organic image), or movement or tension in muscles (kinesthetic image).

**juxtaposition:** two items placed side by side to create an effect, reveal an attitude, or accomplish a purpose **Example**: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness…” (Dickens 13).

**metaphor**: a comparison is made between two seemingly unrelated subjects without using *like* or *as*. **Example**: “All the world’s a stage” (Shakespeare) **extended metaphor:** metaphor that are carried over many lines

**metonymy**: the substitution of one term for another that is generally associated with it.

**Example:** “suits” instead of businessmen

**onomatopoeia**: the use of words which in their pronunciation suggest their meaning **Example:** hiss, bang, crunch, buzz, snap, crackle, pop, etc…

**parallelism:** use of two or more words, phrases, or sentences with the same grammatical structure **Example**: “Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream denied”

**personification**: the metaphorical representation of an animal or inanimate object as having human attributes—attributes of form, character, feelings, behavior, and so on—as the name implies, a thing or idea is treated as a person **Example:** The tree cried aloud, begging for attention.

**simile**: a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison, recognizable by the use of **“like” or “as.”** **Example**: Her vanity bled **like** a rusty nail.

**synecdoche:** a form of metonymy in which a part of an entity is used to refer to the whole

**Example**: “wheels” for “my car”

**synaesthesia:** the use of one kind of sensory experience to describe another **Example:** “heard melodies are sweet” (Keats)

**symbolism:** an object, animate or inanimate, which represents or stands for something else

**theme:** The essential idea, group of ideas, or philosophy that the writer wants the reader to understand from the story she is telling.

**tone**: the attitude of style or expression used to write

**TONE WORDS**

abhorring

accusatory

acerbic

admiring

adoring

allusive

ambiguous

ambivalent

antagonistic

anxious

apathetic

apologetic

apprehensive

audacious

authoritative

baffled

bantering

belligerent

bemused

benevolent

bewildered

biting

bitter

blithe

blunt

brisk

brusque

burlesque

candid

casual

celebratory

ceremonial

cheery

colloquial

commanding

compassionate

complimentary

conceited

conciliatory

condemnatory

condescending

confident

confused

contemptuous

contented

contentious

conversational

critical

curt

cynical

derisive

derogatory

desolate

despairing

desperate

detached

diabolic

didactic

diffident

direct

disappointed

disbelieving

disdainful

disgusted

disrespectful

dramatic

dreary

earnest

ebullient

ecstatic

effusive

elated

elegiac

elevated

eloquent

empathetic

encouraging

enraged

eulogistic

euphoric

evasive

exhilarated

expectant

exuberant

facetious

factual

fanciful

fatalistic

fearful

fervent

flippant

forceful

foreboding

formal

forthright

frantic

frivolous

frustrated

ghoulish

giddy

gleeful

gloomy

grave

grim

harsh

haughty

hilarious

holier-than-thou

hollow

hopeful

hopeless

horrific

hostile

impartial

impatient

incisive

incredulous

indifferent

indignant

inflammatory

informal

informative

insecure

insipid

insistent

insolent

instructive

intimate

introspective

ironic

irreverent

jocund

joking

jovial

joyful

joyous

laudatory

learned

lethargic

lighthearted

lively

lofty

ludicrous

lugubrious

lyrical

matter-of-fact

meditative

melancholic

mirthful

mock-heroic

mocking

mock-serious

modest

moralistic

mournful

mysterious

nostalgic

objective

ominous

optimistic

outraged

outspoken

paranoid

passionate

pathetic

patronizing

pedantic

pensive

pessimistic

petty

placid

playful

poignant

pompous

powerful

pretentious

proud

provocative

psychotic

questioning

reassuring

reflective

reminiscent

resigned

respectful

restrained

reticent

reverent

risible

romantic

sanguine

sarcastic

sardonic

satiric

scholarly

scornful

seductive

self-assured

self-deprecating

sentimental

serene

severe

shocked

shocking

sinister

skeptical

sly

solemn

somber

speculative

sprightly

stable

stately

stern

stolid

straightforward

strident

subdued

suspicious

sympathetic

taunting

tender

tense

terse

thoughtful

threatening

timorous

tragic

tranquil

turgid

unambiguous

uncaring

uncertain

unconcerned

understated

unsympathetic

urgent

venerative

vexed

vibrant

violent

vitriolic

whimsical

wistful

worshipful

**THE SONNET**

A sonnet is a lyric poem of fourteen lines, following one or another of several set rhyme-schemes. Critics of the sonnet have recognized varying classifications, but to all essential purposes two types only need be discussed if the student will understand that each of these two, in turn, has undergone various modifications by experimenters. The two characteristic sonnet types are the **Italian (Petrarchan)** and the **English (Shakespearean).**

The term **sonnet** is derived from the [Provençal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proven%C3%A7al) word *sonet* and the [Italian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_language) word *sonetto*, both meaning *little song*. By the [thirteenth century](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th_century), it had come to signify a [poem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry) of fourteen lines following a strict [rhyme](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhyme) scheme and logical structure. The conventions associated with the sonnet have changed during its history.

The first, the **Italian form**, is distinguished by its bipartite division into the octave and the sestet: the octave consisting of a first division of eight lines rhyming

**abbaabba**

and the sestet, or second division, consisting of six lines rhyming

**cdecde, cdccdc, or cdedce**.

On this twofold division of the Italian sonnet Charles Gayley notes: "The octave bears the burden; a doubt, a problem, a reflection, a query, an historical statement, a cry of indignation or desire, a Vision of the ideal. The sestet eases the load, resolves the problem or doubt, answers the query, solaces the yearning, realizes the vision." Again it might be said that the octave presents the narrative, states the proposition or raises a question; the sestet drives home the narrative by making an abstract comment, applies the proposition, or solves the problem.

So much for the strict interpretation of the Italian form; as a matter of fact English poets have varied these items greatly. The octave and sestet division is not always kept; the rhyme-scheme is often varied, but within limits--no Italian sonnet properly allowing more than five rhymes. Iambic pentameter is essentially the meter, but here again certain poets have experimented with hexameter and other meters.

**The English (Shakespearean) form**, on the other hand, is so different from the Italian (though it grew from that form) as to permit of a separate classification. Instead of the octave and sestet divisions, this sonnet characteristically embodies four divisions: three quatrains (each with a rhyme-scheme of its own) and a rhymed couplet. Thus the typical rhyme-scheme for the English sonnet is

**abab cdcd efef gg**.

The couplet at the end is usually a commentary on the foregoing, an epigrammatic close. The **Spenserian sonnet** combines the Italian and the Shakespearean forms, using three quatrains and a couplet but employing linking rhymes between the quatrains, thus

**abab bcbc cdcd ee**.

Certain qualities common to the sonnet as a form should be noted. Its definite restrictions make it a challenge to the artistry of the poet and call for all the technical skill at the poet's command. The more or less set rhyme patterns occurring regularly within the short space of fourteen lines afford a pleasant effect on the ear of the reader, and can create truly musical effects. The rigidity of the form precludes a too great economy or too great prodigality of words. Emphasis is placed on exactness and perfection of expression.

**Origins and History of the Sonnet**

The sonnet as a form developed in **Italy probably in the thirteenth century**. **Petrarch**, in the fourteenth century, raised the sonnet to its greatest Italian perfection and so gave it, for English readers, his own name.

The form was **introduced into England by Thomas Wyatt,** who translated Petrarchan sonnets and left over thirty examples of his own in English. Surrey, an associate, shares with Wyatt the credit for introducing the form to England and is important as an early modifier of the Italian form. Gradually the Italian sonnet pattern was changed and since Shakespeare attained fame for the greatest poems of this modified type his name has often been given to the English form.

Among the most famous sonneteers in England have been Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, and D. G. Rossetti. Longfellow, Jones Very, G. H. Boker, and E. A. Robinson are generally credited with writing some of the best sonnets in America. With the interest in this poetic form, certain poets following the example of Petrarch have written a series of sonnets linked one to the other and dealing with some unified subject. Such series are called sonnet sequences.

Some of the most famous sonnet sequences in English literature are those by Shakespeare (154 in the group), Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Spenser's *Amoretti*, Rossetti's *House of Life*, and Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. William Ellery Leonard, Elinor Wylie, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and W. H. Auden have done distinguished work in the sonnet and the sonnet sequence in this century. The brevity of the form favors concentrated expression of idea or passion.

**The Shakespearean Sonnet: An Overview**

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William Shakespeare wrote **154 sonnets**. A sonnet, a form of poetry invented in Italy, has 14 lines with a specifc rhyme scheme. The topic of most sonnets written in Shakespeare's time is love--or a theme related to love. Poets usually wrote their sonnets as part of a series, with each sonnet a sequel to the previous one, although many sonnets could stand alone as separate poems. Sonnets afforded their author an opportunity to show off his ability to write memorable lines. In other words, sonnets enabled a poet to demonstrate the power of his genius in the same way that an art exhibition gave a painter a way to show off his special techniques.
 Shakespeare addresses **Sonnets 1 through 126 to an unidentified young man** with outstanding physical and intellectual attributes. The first 17 of these urge the young man to marry so that he can pass on his superior qualities to a child, thereby allowing future generations to enjoy and appreciate these qualities when the child becomes a man. In Sonnet 18, Shakespeare alters his viewpoint, saying his own poetry may be all that is necessary to immortalize the young man and his qualities.
 In **Sonnets 127 through 154, Shakespeare devotes most of his attention to addressing a mysterious "dark lady"--a sensuous, irresistible woman of questionable morals who captivates the poet**. References to the dark lady also appear in previous sonnets (35, 40, 41, 42), in which Shakespeare reproaches the young man for an apparent liaison with the dark lady. The first two lines of Sonnet 41 chide the young man for "those petty wrongs that liberty commits / when I am sometime absent from thy heart," a reference to the young man's wrongful wooing of the dark lady. The last two lines, the rhyming couplet, further impugn the young man for using his good looks to attract the dark lady. In Sonnet 42, the poet charges, "thou dost love her, because thou knowst I love her."
 Shakespeare wrote his sonnets in London in the **1590's during an outbreak of plague** that closed theaters and prevented playwrights from staging their dramas.
 Generally, Shakespeare's sonnets receive high praise for their exquisite wording and imagery and for their refusal to stoop to sentimentality. Readers of his sonnets in his time got a taste of the greatness that Shakespeare exhibited later in such plays as *Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Othello*, and *The Tempest*. Sonnets 138 and 144 were published in 1599 in a poetry collection entitled *The Passionate Pilgrime* [Pilgrim]. The other sonnets were published in 1609 in *Shake-speares* [Shakespeare's] *Sonnets*. It is possible that the 1609 sequence of sonnets is out of its original order
 The Shakespearean sonnet (also called the *English sonnet*) has three four-line stanzas (quatrains) and a two-line unit called a couplet. A couplet is always indented; both lines rhyme at the end. The meter of Shakespeare's sonnets is [iambic pentameter](http://www.cummingsstudyguides.net/xfacts.html#Blank Verse) (except in Sonnet 145). The rhyming lines in each stanza are the first and third and the second and fourth. In the couplet ending the poem, both lines rhyme. All of Shakespeare's sonnets follow the same rhyming pattern.

**The Young Man, the Dark Lady, the Rival Poet, and W.H.: Who Were They?**

For centuries, literary sleuths throughout the English-speaking world have pored over old texts and dusty Shakespeare-era records to discover the identity of the person to whom Shakespeare's sonnets were dedicated, the mysterious "**W.H**.," and the identities of the three principal personas addressed or referred to in the sonnets: **the young man, the dark lady, and the rival poet**. So far, no one has produced enough undisputed evidence to identify any of these mysterious individuals by name.

The 1609 edition of the sonnets was dedicated to a person identified only with the initials W.H. and signed by a person identified only with the initials T.T.  The latter initials were probably those of the known publisher of the sonnets, Thomas Thorne. He might have (1) written the dedication to express his own wishes or (2) written or copied it to express the wishes of Shakespeare at the time that he was writing the sonnets.  If Thorne was expressing his own wishes, the W.H. to whom the sonnets were dedicated was not necessarily the young man to whom Shakespeare addressed the first 126 sonnets. Instead, W.H. might have been William Hall, an unimportant London printer known to have furnished manuscripts to other printers for publication; William Harvey, the husband of the mother of **Henry Wriothesley, the Third Earl of Southampton** (widely thought to have been the young man addressed in the sonnets); William Hathaway, Shakespeare's brother-in-law, or some other person. Thorne's dedication may have simply been an expression of gratitude to Hall, Harvey, Hathaway, or the other person for bringing the sonnets to Thorne's attention.  However, if Thorne was expressing Shakespeare's wishes, the initials W.H. in the dedication might in fact refer to the young man addressed in the sonnets.

**Anatomy of the Sonnets: Rhyming Pattern**

 The following presentation of Sonnet 18, one of Shakespeare's most famous, will help you visualize the rhyming pattern of the sonnets. I capitalized the last part of each line and typed a letter to the left of the line to indicate the pattern. The meaning of each line appears at right.

|  |
| --- |
| **Sonnet XVIII (18)** Addressed to the Young Man  *Quatrain 1 (four-line stanza)*  *.....................*    **A**  Shall I compare thee to a summer's **DAY**?*.....................*If I compared you to a summer day    **B**   Thou art more lovely and more temper**ATE**:*....................*I'd have to say you are more beautfiul and serene:    **A**   Rough winds do shake the darling buds of **MAY**,*.............*By comparison, summer is rough on budding life,     **B**   And summer's lease hath all too short a **DATE**:*..............*And doesn't last long either:   *.*  Comment: In Shakespeare's time, May (Line 3) was a summer month.  *Quatrain 2 (four-line stanza)*  *.*    **C**   Sometime too hot the eye of heaven **SHINES**,*................*At times the summer sun [heaven's eye] is too hot,     **D**   And often is his gold complexion **DIMM'D**;*.....................*And at other times clouds dim its brilliance;     **C**  And every fair from fair sometime de**CLINES**,*..................*Everything fair in nature becomes less fair from time to time,     **D**   By chance or nature's changing course un**TRIMM'D**;*.......*No one can change [trim] nature or chance;   *.*  Comment: "Every fair" may also refer to every fair woman. who "declines" because of aging or bodily changes  *Quatrain 3 (four-line stanza)*  *.*    **E**    But thy eternal summer shall not **FADE***.........................*However, you yourself will not fade    **F**    Nor lose possession of that fair thou **OWEST**;*................*Nor lose ownership of your fairness;     **E**    Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his **SHADE**,*..........*Not even death will claim you,     **F**    When in eternal lines to time thou **GROWEST**:*...............*Because these lines I write will immortalize you:   *.*  *Couplet (two rhyming lines)*  *.*    **G**    So long as men can breathe or eyes can **SEE**,*.............*Your beauty will last as long as men breathe and see,     **G**    So long lives this and this gives life to **THEE**.*.................*As Long as this sonnet lives and gives you life.   The rhyme scheme is as follows:   ............First stanza (quatrain): ABAB   ............Second stanza (quatrain): CDCD   ............Third stanza (quatrain): EFEF   ............Couplet: GG.   .......Notice that Shakespeare introduces the main point of the sonnet in the first two lines of Stanza 1: that the young man's radiance is greater than the sun's. He then devotes the second two lines of Stanza 1 and all of Stanza 2 to the inferior qualities of the sun. In Stanza 3, he says the young man's brilliance will never fade because Sonnet XVIII will keep it alive, then sums up his thoughts in the ending couplet.   |

**Sonnet 18 – “Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer’s Day?”**

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? *How is the tribute of this*
Thou art more lovely and more temperate. *sonnet objectified rather than*
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, *personalized?*
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, 5
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st, 10
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st.
     So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
     So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

**Sonnet 55**

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments *How does this sonnet sustain*
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme; *the theme of 18, yet alter the*
But you shall shine more bright in these contents *tone with its imagery?*
Than unswept stone besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn, 5
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room 10
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
 So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes.

**Sonnet 5**

Being your slave what should I do but tend *Can this sonnet be read platonically*
Upon the hours, and times of your desire? *or must it be interpreted*
I have no precious time at all to spend; *romantically?*
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end hour, 5
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose, 10
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are, how happy you make those.
 So true a fool is love, that in your will,
 Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.

**Sonnet 60 "Like as the Waves"**

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore, *What acts as the personified enemy*
So do our minutes hasten to their end, *in this sonnet? How does the*
Each changing place with that which goes before *imagery of the poem convey the*
In sequent toil all forwards do contend. *realities of aging?*
Nativity, once in the main of light, 5
Crawls to maturity, wherewith, being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow, 10
Feeds on the rarities of natures truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow;
 And yet, to times, in hope, my verse shall stand,
 Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

**Sonnet 73 – “That Time of Year Thou May Behold”**

That time of year thou mayst in me behold *How does the couplet appear act*

When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang *against the theme presented in the*

Upon those boughs which shake against the cold *quatrains, & how do we explain this*

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang. *apparent contradiction?*

In me thou seest the twilight of such day 5

As after sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth steal away,

Death's second self, which seals up all in rest.

In me thou seest the glowing of such fire

That on the ashes of his youth doth lie, 10

As the deathbed whereon it must expire,

Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

 This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,

 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

**Sonnet 79**

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid, *Look up the word “muse.” What is the*

My verse alone had all thy gentle grace, *proper connotation here? How does the*

But now my gracious numbers are decayed, *rival poet emerge in this poem? Is*

And my sick Muse doth give an other place. *There anything hypocritical in the*

I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument 5 *speaker’s accusations and claims?*

Deserves the travail of a worthier pen,

Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent

He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.

He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word

From thy behaviour; beauty doth he give, 10

And found it in thy cheek; he can afford

No praise to thee, but what in thee doth live.

 Then thank him not for that which he doth say,

 Since what he owes thee, thou thyself dost pay.

**Sonnet 100**

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long *What is the poet’s expressed problem?*
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might? *What is the couplet’s proposed*
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song, *solution?*
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem 5
In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there; 10
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.

 Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
 So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

#

# Sonnet 116 – “Let Me Not to the Marriage of True Minds”

Let me not to the marriage of true minds *Scholars frequently refer to this*
Admit impediments. Love is not love *sonnet as the* ***ultimate expression of***
Which alters when it alteration finds, ***idealized love****. Why might this be the*
Or bends with the remover to remove: *case? How can the last line be read*
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark, 5 *for two distinctly different meanings?*
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come; 10
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

**Sonnet 129**

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame *The opening line refers to the*
Is lust in action; and till action, lust *belief that each sex act shortened a*
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame, *man’s life. “Hell” is slang for the*
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust, *female genetalia. STD’s were*
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight, 5 *rampant in Shakespeare’s time, & he*
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had *was very likely infected. What is the*
Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait *speaker’s attitude towards his lust?*
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme; 10
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
  All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
  To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

**Sonnet 130**

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; *How does this sonnet subvert the*
Coral is far more red than her lips' red; *traditional love poem? Specifically,*
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun; *consider the attributes the poet*
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. *comments on.*
I have seen roses demasked, red and white, 5
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound; 10
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.
      And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
      As any she belied with false compare

**Sonnet 144**

Two loves I have of comfort and despair, *How does this sonnet seem to be a*
Which like two spirits do suggest me still: *direct commentary on the speaker’s*
The better angel is a man right fair, *love life?*
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil 5
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
Suspect I may, but not directly tell; 10
But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell:
  Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
  Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

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John Donne was born in 1572 in London, England. He is known as the founder of the Metaphysical Poets, a term created by Samuel Johnson, an eighteenth-century English essayist, poet, and philosopher. The loosely associated group also includes [George Herbert](http://poets.org/gherb), Richard Crashaw, [Andrew Marvell](http://poets.org/amarv), and John Cleveland. The Metaphysical Poets are known for their ability to startle the reader and coax new perspective through paradoxical images, subtle argument, inventive syntax, and imagery from art, philosophy, and religion using an extended metaphor known as a conceit. Donne reached beyond the rational and hierarchical structures of the seventeenth century with his exacting and ingenious conceits, advancing the exploratory spirit of his time.

Donne entered the world during a period of theological and political unrest for both England and France; a Protestant massacre occurred on Saint Bartholomew's day in France; while in England, the Catholics were the persecuted minority. Born into a Roman Catholic family, Donne's personal relationship with religion was tumultuous and passionate, and at the center of much of his poetry. He studied at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities in his early teen years. He did not take a degree at either school, because to do so would have meant subscribing to the Thirty-nine Articles, the doctrine that defined Anglicanism. At age twenty he studied law at Lincoln's Inn. Two years later he succumbed to religious pressure and joined the Anglican Church after his younger brother, convicted for his Catholic loyalties, died in prison. Donne wrote most of his love lyrics, erotic verse, and some sacred poems in the 1590's, creating two major volumes of work: *Satires*, and *Songs and Sonnets*.

In 1598, after returning from a two-year naval expedition against Spain, Donne was appointed private secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton. While sitting in Queen Elizabeth's last Parliament in 1601, Donne secretly married Anne More, the sixteen-year-old niece of Lady Egerton. Donne's father-in-law disapproved of the marriage. As punishment, he did not provide a dowry for the couple and had Donne briefly imprisoned. This left the couple isolated and dependent on friends, relatives, and patrons. Donne suffered social and financial instability in the years following his marriage, exacerbated by the birth of many children. He continued to write and published the *Divine Poems* in 1607. In *Pseudo-Martyr*, published in 1610, Donne displayed his extensive knowledge of the laws of the Church and state, arguing that Roman Catholics could support James I without compromising their faith. In 1615, James I pressured him to enter the Anglican Ministry by declaring that Donne could not be employed outside of the Church. He was appointed Royal Chaplain later that year. His wife, aged thirty-three, died in 1617, shortly after giving birth to their twelfth child, a stillborn. The *Holy Sonnets* are also attributed to this phase of his life.

In 1621 he became dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral. In his later years, Donne's writing reflected his fear of his inevitable death. He wrote his private prayers, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, during a period of severe illness and published them in 1624. His learned, charismatic, and inventive preaching made him a highly influential presence in London. Best known for his vivacious, compelling style and thorough examination of mortal paradox, John Donne died in London in 1631.

 Death, Be Not Proud (Holy Sonnet 10)

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee *The poet’s background reveals*
Mighty and dreadful, for thou are not so; *a noteworthy irony about the*
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow *message of the poem and the conceit*
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me. *it creates.*
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be, 5
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou'art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell, 10
And poppy'or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

"Unholy Sonnet 14" by Mark Jarman

After the praying, after the hymn-singing, *What appears to be the specific*
After the sermon's trenchant commentary *religious orientation of the speaker?*
On the world's ills, which make ours secondary, *Note pronoun shifts. Who is the*
After communion, after the hand-wringing, *target of the sonnet’s commentary?*
And after peace descends upon us, bringing 5
Our eyes up to regard the sanctuary
And how the light swords through it, and how, scary
In their sheer numbers, motes of dust ride, clinging--
There is, as doctors say about some pain,
Discomfort knowing that despite your prayers, 10
Your listening and rejoicing, your small part
In this communal stab at coming clean,
There is one stubborn remnant of your cares
Intact. There is still murder in your heart.

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Percy Bysshe Shelley

On July 8, 1822, shortly before his thirtieth birthday, Shelley was drowned in a storm while attempting to sail from Leghorn to La Spezia, Italy, in his schooner, the *Don Juan*.

“Ozymandias”

I met a traveller from an antique land *What is it that remains of the great*

Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone *Ozymandias, a king of kings? What*

Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand, *might the sonnet suggest about the*

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown, *durability of legacy?*

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command, 5

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:

And on the pedestal these words appear:

"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: 10

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.

“title???”

Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame, *After evaluation, what title would you*
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts, *give to this sonnet & why? (i.e. How would*
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame; *you conclude the statement, “This*
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts, *sonnet is a meditation on....”?)*
History is but the shadow of their shame, 5
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
By force or custom? Man who man would be, 10
Must rule the empire of himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

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**Edna St. Vincent Millay**

Poet and playwright Edna St. Vincent Millay was born in Rockland, Maine, on February 22, 1892. Her mother, Cora, raised her three daughters on her own after asking her husband to leave the family home in 1899. Cora encouraged her girls to be ambitious and self-sufficient, teaching them an appreciation of music and literature from an early age. In 1912, at her mother's urging, Millay entered her poem "Renascence" into a contest: she won fourth place and publication in *The Lyric Year*, bringing her immediate acclaim and a scholarship to Vassar. There, she continued to write poetry and became involved in the theater. She also developed intimate relationships with several women while in school, including the English actress Wynne Matthison. In 1917, the year of her graduation, Millay published her first book, *Renascence and Other Poems*. At the request of Vassar's drama department, she also wrote her first verse play, *The Lamp and the Bell* (1921), a work about love between women.

Millay, whose friends called her "Vincent," then moved to New York's Greenwich Village, where she led a notoriously Bohemian life. She lived in a nine-foot-wide attic and wrote anything she could find an editor willing to accept. She and the other writers of Greenwich Village were, according to Millay herself, "very, very poor and very, very merry." She joined the Provincetown Players in their early days, and befriended writers such as Witter Bynner, Edmund Wilson, Susan Glaspell, and Floyd Dell, who asked for Millay's hand in marriage. Millay, who was openly bisexual, refused, despite Dell's attempts to persuade her otherwise. That same year Millay published *A Few Figs from Thistles* (1920), a volume of poetry which drew much attention for its controversial descriptions of female sexuality and feminism. In 1923 her fourth volume of poems, *The Harp Weaver*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. In addition to publishing three plays in verse, Millay also wrote the libretto of one of the few American grand operas, *The King's Henchman* (1927).

Millay married Eugen Boissevain, a self-proclaimed feminist and widower of Inez Milholland, in 1923. Boissevain gave up his own pursuits to manage Millay's literary career, setting up the readings and public appearances for which Millay grew quite famous. According to Millay's own accounts, the couple acted liked two bachelors, remaining "sexually open" throughout their twenty-six-year marriage, which ended with Boissevain's death in 1949. Edna St. Vincent Millay died in 1950.

“I Shall Forget You Presently My Dear” by Edna St. Vincent Millay (**Recording)**

I shall forget you presently, my dear, *What point in the relationship is*

So make the most of this, your little day, *depicted here: beginning, middle, or*

Your little month, your little half a year, *end? What textual detail supports this?*

Ere I forget, or die, or move away,

And we are done forever; by and by 5

I shall forget you, as I said, but now,

If you entreat me with your loveliest lie

I will protest you with my favorite vow.

I would indeed that love were longer-lived,

And vows were not so brittle as they are, 10

But so it is, and nature has contrived

To struggle on without a break thus far,—

Whether or not we find what we are seeking

Is idle, biologically speaking.

“Love is not All” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink *How might this particular*
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain; *sonnet relate to the one that*
Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink *precedes it if the speaker is*
And rise and sink and rise and sink again; *the same person?*
Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath, 5
Nor clear the blood, nor set the fractured bone;
Yet many a man is making friends with death
Even as a speak, for lack of love alone.
It well may be that in a difficult hour
Pinned down by pain and moaning for release, 10
Or nagged by want past resolution’s power,
I might be driven to sell your love for peace,
Or trade the memory of this night for food.
It well may be. I do not think I would.

“I Will Put Chaos into Fourteen Lines” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

I will put Chaos into fourteen lines *Does the conceit of this sonnet*
And keep him there; and let him thence escape *effectively convey the*
If he be lucky; let him twist, and ape *challenge a poet encounters*
Flood, fire, and demon --- his adroit designs *when composing a sonnet?*
Will strain to nothing in the strict confines 5
Of this sweet order, where, in pious rape,
I hold his essence and amorphous shape,
Till he with Order mingles and combines.
Past are the hours, the years of our duress,
His arrogance, our awful servitude: 10
I have him. He is nothing more nor less
Than something simple not yet understood;
I shall not even force him to confess;
Or answer. I will only make him good.

## “Truth and Beauty” by Elizabeth Akers Allen

Strange Truth and Beauty are enemies, *Is the irony of this sonnet*

Treading forever on each other's toes! *reminiscent of any of*

Strange rhymes are always made of that which is *Shakespeare’s? Where is the*

Too false or silly to be said in prose! *pun in this poem?*

Now here's a sonnet by our village poet 5

"Inscribed to Kate," in most romantic style,

Whereas,--and one with half an eye might know it,--

He means Sophronia Tompkins, all the while.

He sings of "golden curls." If fiery tresses

Had heat to match their hue, *her* hair would burn;-- 10

He mentions "airy grace,"--while she possesses

A form as shapeless as an old-time churn,

 Heavens! after this I never shall inquire

*Why people always call the poet's song a* LYRE!

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William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon, *How is it that this sonnet*
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers; *might be more relevant today*
Little we see in Nature that is ours; *than when it was composed?*
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon, 5
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.--Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan [suckled in a creed outworn; (1)](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/wordsworth.html#1#1) 10
So might I, standing on this pleasant [lea, (2)](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/wordsworth.html#2#2)
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of [Proteus (3)](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/wordsworth.html#3#3) rising from the sea;
Or hear old [Triton (4)](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/wordsworth.html#4#4) blow his wreathed horn.

(1) Brought up in an outdated religion.  (2) Meadow.  (3) Greek sea god capable of taking many shapes.  (4) Another sea god, often depicted as trumpeting on a shell. Also the Little Mermaid’s dad.

Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:

Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

A sight so touching in its majesty:

This City now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;

All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep

In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:

Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;

*And all that mighty heart is lying still!*

John Milton

John Milton was born in London on December 9, 1608, into a middle-class family. He was educated at St. Paul's School, then at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he began to write poetry in Latin, Italian, and English and prepared to enter the clergy. After university, however, he abandoned his plans to join the priesthood and spent the next six years in his father's country home in Buckinghamshire, reading extensively in the classics and writing "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (1629), "On Shakespeare" (1630), "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" (1631), and *Lycidas* (1637). Milton traveled in France and Italy during this time and met Galileo Galilei, who appears in Milton's tract against censorship, "Areopagitica." In 1642, he married Mary Powell; even though they were estranged for most of their marriage, she bore him three daughters and a son before her death in 1652. < in Minshull Elizabeth and 1658, birth giving died who 1656, Woodcock more—Katherine twice marry would>

During the English Civil War, Milton championed the cause of the Puritans and Oliver Cromwell, writing a series of pamphlets on divorce, the freedom of the press, and support for the regicides. He also served as secretary for foreign languages in Cromwell's government. During this time, Milton was steadily losing his eyesight, going completely blind in 1651, but he continued his duties with the aid of [Andrew Marvell](http://poets.org/amarv) and other assistants. After the Restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660, Milton was arrested as a defender of the Commonwealth, fined, and soon released. He lived the rest of his life in seclusion in the country, completing the epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667) and writing *Paradise Regained* (1671) and *Samson Agonistes* (1671).

*Paradise Lost,* which chronicles the fall of Adam and his expulsion from Eden, is widely regarded as his masterpiece and one of the greatest epic poems in world literature. The poem had wide-reaching effect, inspiring Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* and [John Keats](http://poets.org/jkeat)'s *Endymion* and deeply influencing [Percy Bysshe Shelley](http://poets.org/pshel) and [William Blake](http://poets.org/wblak). Milton is thought by many to be the greatest English poet after [Shakespeare](http://poets.org/wshak). Milton died on November 8, 1674, in Buckinghamshire, England.

When I consider how my light is spent, *The poet’s background is vital to your*
E're half my days, in this dark world and wide, *conception of this sonnet.*
And that one Talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my Soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present 5
My true account, least he returning chide,
Doth God exact day labour, light deny'd,
I fondly ask; But patience to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts, who best 10
Bear his milde yoak, they serve him best, his State

Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o're Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and waite.

**1**] The date of composition is uncertain. V Milton's blindness, to which this is the first reference in his poetry, became virtually complete in 1652, but if the arrangement of his sonnets is (as it elsewhere appears to be) chronological, the date must be, like that of Sonnet XVIII, 1655. First printed in *Poems*, 1673. Light: power of vision, to be taken in conjunction with "this dark world." In a letter of 1654 Milton refers to a very faint susceptibility to light still remaining to him.

**2**] Ere half my days: we must not expect mathematical accuracy. But if we remember that Milton is speaking about his career in God's service, take its beginning in the avowed dedication to that service in Sonnet VII (1632), and assume the scriptural life-span of three score years and ten (which would mean life till 1678), 1652 falls before, and even 1655 does not extend beyond, the half-way mark of Milton's expected career of service.

**3-6**] The allusion is to the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30); death, like the outer darkness into which the unprofitable servant was cast, stands for the utmost in punishment; the Talent was a measure of weight and hence of value; there is here, of course, a play on the word in its modern sense of mental gift or endowment, in Milton's case his gift of poetry. **8**] fondly: foolishly.

### “Sonnet” by Billy Collins

All we need is fourteen lines, well, thirteen now, *Is it right to even call this poem*
and after this one just a dozen *a sonnet?*
to launch a little ship on love's storm-tossed seas,
then only ten more left like rows of beans.
How easily it goes unless you get Elizabethan 5
and insist the iambic bongos must be played
and rhymes positioned at the ends of lines,
one for every station of the cross.
But hang on here wile we make the turn
into the final six where all will be resolved, 10
where longing and heartache will find an end,
where Laura will tell Petrarch to put down his pen,
take off those crazy medieval tights,
blow out the lights, and come at last to bed.

##  “The Death of a Toad” by Richard Wilbur In what ways does this poem follow

A toad the power mower caught, *the form of a sonnet? In what ways*

Chewed and clipped of a leg, with a hobbling hop has got *does it not?*

To the garden verge, and sanctuaried him

Under the cineraria leaves, in the shade

Of the ashen and heartshaped leaves, in a dim, 5

Low, and final glade.

The rare original heartsblood goes,

Spends in the earthen hide, in the folds and wizenings, flows

In the gutters of the banked and staring eyes. He lies

As still as if he would return to stone,

And soundlessly attending, dies 10

Toward some deep monotone,

Toward misted and ebullient seas

And cooling shores, toward lost Amphibia’s emperies.

Day dwindles, drowning and at length is done

In the wide and antique eyes, which still appear

To watch, across the castrate lawn,

The haggard daylight steer.

**The Villanelle**

The highly structured villanelle is a nineteen-line poem with two repeating rhymes and two refrains. The form is made up of five tercets followed by a quatrain. The first and third lines of the opening tercet are repeated alternately in the last lines of the succeeding stanzas; then in the final stanza, the refrain serves as the poem's two concluding lines. Using capitals for the refrains and lowercase letters for the rhymes, the form could be expressed as: A1 b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 / a b A2 / a b A1 A2.

Strange as it may seem for a poem with such a rigid rhyme scheme, the villanelle did not start off as a fixed form. During the Renaissance, the villanella and villancico (from the Italian villano, or peasant) were Italian and Spanish dance-songs. French poets who called their poems "villanelle" did not follow any specific schemes, rhymes, or refrains. Rather, the title implied that, like the Italian and Spanish dance-songs, their poems spoke of simple, often pastoral or rustic themes.

While some scholars believe that the form as we know it today has been in existence since the sixteenth century, others argue that only one Renaissance poem was ever written in that manner--Jean Passerat’s "Villanelle," or "J’ay perdu ma tourterelle"--and that it wasn’t until the late nineteenth century that the villanelle was defined as a fixed form by French poet Théodore de Banville. Regardless of its provenance, the form did not catch on in France, but it has become increasingly popular among poets writing in English. An excellent example of the form is Dylan Thomas’s "Do not go gentle into that good night"

Contemporary poets have not limited themselves to the pastoral themes originally expressed by the free-form villanelles of the Renaissance, and have loosened the fixed form to allow variations on the refrains. Elizabeth Bishop’s "One Art" is another well-known example; other poets who have penned villanelles include W. H. Auden, Oscar Wilde, Seamus Heany, David Shapiro, and Sylvia Plath.

“Mad Girl’s Love Song” by Sylvia Plath

"I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;

I lift my lids and all is born again.

(I think I made you up inside my head.)

The stars go waltzing out in blue and red,

And arbitrary blackness gallops in: 5

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed

And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite insane.

(I think I made you up inside my head.)

God topples from the sky, hell's fires fade: 10

Exit seraphim and Satan's men:

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I fancied you'd return the way you said,

But I grow old and I forget your name.

(I think I made you up inside my head.) 15

I should have loved a thunderbird instead;

At least when spring comes they roar back again.

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

(I think I made you up inside my head.)

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| photo: New Directions Publishing Corp. |  |
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Dylan Thomas

Dylan Thomas was born in Wales in 1914. He was a neurotic, sickly child who shied away from school and preferred reading on his own; he read all of [D. H. Lawrence](http://poets.org/dhlaw)'s poetry, impressed by Lawrence's descriptions of a vivid natural world. Fascinated by language, he excelled in English and reading, but neglected other subjects and dropped out of school at sixteen. His first book, *Eighteen Poems*, was published to great acclaim when he was twenty. Thomas did not sympathize with [T. S. Eliot](http://poets.org/tseli) and [W. H. Auden](http://poets.org/whaud)'s thematic concerns with social and intellectual issues, and his writing, with its intense lyricism and highly charged emotion, has more in common with the Romantic tradition. Thomas first visited America in January 1950, at the age of thirty-five. His reading tours of the United States, which did much to popularize the poetry reading as new medium for the art, are famous and notorious, for Thomas was the archetypal Romantic poet of the popular American imagination: he was flamboyantly theatrical, a heavy drinker, engaged in roaring disputes in public, and read his work aloud with tremendous depth of feeling. He became a legendary figure, both for his work and the boisterousness of his life. Tragically, he died from alcoholism at the age of 39 after a particularly long drinking bout in New York City in 1953.

“Do Not Go Gentle into That Goodnight” by Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,

Old age should burn and rave at close of day;

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,

Because their words had forked no lightning they 5

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright

Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight, 10

And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight

Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,

Rage, rage against the dying of the light. 15

And you, my father, there on the sad height,

Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

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Elizabeth Bishop

Elizabeth Bishop was born in 1911 in Worcester, Massachusetts. When she was very young her father died, her mother was committed to a mental asylum, and she was sent to live with her grandparents in Nova Scotia. She earned a bachelor's degree from Vassar College in 1934.

She was independently wealthy, and from 1935 to 1937 she spent time traveling to France, Spain, North Africa, Ireland, and Italy and then settled in Key West, Florida, for four years. Her poetry is filled with descriptions of her travels and the scenery which surrounded her, as with the Florida poems in her first book of verse, *North and South*, published in 1946.

She was influenced by the poet [Marianne Moore](http://poets.org/mmoor), who was a close friend, mentor, and stabilizing force in her life. Unlike her contemporary and good friend [Robert Lowell](http://poets.org/rlowe), who wrote in the "confessional" style, Bishop's poetry avoids explicit accounts of her personal life, and focuses instead with great subtlety on her impressions of the physical world.

Her images are precise and true to life, and they reflect her own sharp wit and moral sense. She lived for many years in Brazil, communicating with friends and colleagues in America only by letter. She wrote slowly and published sparingly (her *Collected Poems* number barely a hundred), but the technical brilliance and formal variety of her work is astonishing. For years she was considered a "poet's poet," but with the publication of her last book, *Geography III*, in 1976, Bishop was finally established as a major force in contemporary literature.

Elizabeth Bishop was awarded the Fellowship of The Academy of American Poets in 1964 and served as a Chancellor from 1966 to 1979. She died in Cambridge, Massachussetts, in 1979, and her stature as a major poet continues to grow through the high regard of the poets and critics who have followed her.

“One Art” by Elizabeth Bishop

The art of losing isn't hard to master;

so many things seem filled with the intent

to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster

of lost door keys, the hour badly spent. 5

The art of losing isn't hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:

places, and names, and where it was you meant

to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or 10

next-to-last, of three loved houses went.

The art of losing isn't hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,

some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.

I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster. 15

--Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture

I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident

the art of losing's not too hard to master

though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster.

NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Mapping a Poem**

**Step 1🡪**Read the poem OUT LOUD.

**Step 2🡪** Number the lines down the *left-hand* side of the poem and identify any rhyme scheme on the *right-hand* side of the poem.

**Step 3🡪** Highlight all *punctuation* in yellow and all *capitalization* in pink.

**Step 4🡪** Divide into sections.

**Step 5🡪** Circle any unfamiliar vocabulary. Define these works on the back of the poem.

**Now…you are ready to analyze the poem.**

**TP-CASSTT: Poetry Analysis**

**T**itle Ponder the title. It is often the key to meaning. What comes to mind when you read the title?

**P**araphrase For each section, translate the plot into your own words. Do this on the literal level. What is happening in each section?

**C**onnotation Poems have multiple layers of meaning. Once you’ve written down the plot on the literal level, contemplate the poem for figurative meaning; Identify *metaphors*, *similes*, and *other poetic devices* and EXPLAIN their **significance**. Identify the techniques used and EXPLAIN what you see them contributing to the poem; trust your opinion!

**A**ttitude This means TONE. What is the writer’s and/or speaker’s attitude towards the subject? Does it change or remain the same? This is often the key to interpreting a theme. (Use DIDLS as a tool to help figure out tone.)

**S**hifts/

**S**peaker Who is the speaker of the poem? (1st person, 3rd person, etc.) Note all the shifts in tone, speakers, settings, and even sounds. Rarely does a poem begin and end in the same place. How does the poem progress?

**T**itle Revisit the title. Record any new insights on the meaning of the poem and/or the title.

**T**heme Determine what the poem is saying; recognize the human experience,
motivation, or condition suggested by the poem. Remember that theme is a complete statement of the human condition. What is the poem saying about life and what it means to be human? **There can be more than one correct answer, but you must be able to back up your theme with evidence from the poem**.