

A Course book for Reading Poetry

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We realize that there are some weaknesses may be found in this book. These could affect the book. Thus any comments and suggestions are welcome to revise and improve the book.

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INTRODUCTION

The students, who take the Non Education Program or Language and Literary program have to study literature. There are three genre of literature they have to study; Poetry, Prose (Short Story and Novel) and Drama. They are taught to read critically and analyze by interpreting as well as evaluating those literary works. This must be not easy for students especially for those who never apply how to read critically and interpreting a poem. However this is not really difficult if they understand what the poem is, the poetic devices and how to read the poem.

The aims of writing this book is to help students develop their abilities in reading critically, understanding and appreciating poetry which is the compulsory subject in Language and Literary program. Poetry was born with language, as people have language, they also have poetry. That's why most people consider that poetry as old as language. Primitive people even use poetry in every situation in their lives. They use poetry to entertain, socialize and to cure someone who are in unhealthy condition, or they use them in event that relates to religious. Thus poetry is not a new thing for human being, we have it around us. We listen to it, and speak it out. It brings something to us, it can bring information and tell something that create the imagination of people who listen to or read it. As what Audre Lorde (in Guth and L.Rico 1997) says,

“Poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of light within on which we predicate our hopes and dreams towards survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action.”(hal, 45)

In other words, poetry may give us new perspectives that lead into new, wider and variety perception. This is what the readers may not get from any scientific texts.

As Johnson (2008) says that poetry can open our eyes to new ways of looking at experiences, emotion, condition of people, everyday objects, and more. It takes us on voyages with poetic devices such as imagery, methaphor, rhythm and rhyme. It is supported by Wordsworth (in Guth and Rico1997) who states that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings..... the poet's job is " to treat of things not as they are..... but as they seem to exist to the senses, and the passions. In short, poetry is able to touch your sense since it shares the experience, idea, ideology even the politic people apply in real world. The poem does not only give the information, it let us feel the suffering, and missery of life, or how hard people struggle for their right, freedom and life. Thus poetry is not just an art in written form to entertain. It makes the readers think, and open their mind wildly.

Language use in poetry has different from non literary work. The focus for poetry seems on using words. Sometimes it ignores the grammar of language but it still has meaning. There are some clues to help the readers to understand it. Certainly the way of reading is different in order to reveal the meaning and even what the the text itself wants. Thus to understand the poetry, there are some ways should be learned.

The book is divided into several units: it starts with the introduction, then move to unit one in which it deals with the experience to understand what poetry is, what elements or poetic devices we should learned before reading it. How to read the poetry is also one of the crucial ways the readers have to master. This is explained in unit two. The third unit is dealing with imagery, one of poetic devices. The unit four discusses the figurative language exists in poetry: they are methaphor, metonymy, personification and hyperbole. The unit five explains more about symbol and allegory. And the last unit (unit six) deals with poetic devices, paradox and irony. These are elements that should be mastered by students. Hopefully the book is able to motivate students in learning and provide them with the skill to analyze the poetry.

UNIT 1

WHAT IS POETRY

A. OBJECTIVE

After studying this chapter, you are expected to:

1. Be able to define poetry
2. Mention elements or poetic devices
3. Able to find out who the speaker is, in what occasion
4. To use the poetic devices to understand the poetry
5. To analyze the poetry

B. SNAPSHOT

Read the poem below !

1. Baa Baa black Sheep

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, Yes sir, three bags full
One for my master, one for my dame
And one for the little boy that lives in the lane
(Nursery Rhymes in ETF 2006)

Questions

1. What do you understand from the poem?
2. What does the poem say to us?

3. How do you feel when you read this?

This is one of Nursery Rhymes, it is for children. It uses the simple words such as *wool, bag, master, dame, little boy, live and lane*. These words are arranged in such ways, that make readers hear the voice who are in dialogues. The dialogue brings something to us implicitly. The sheep gives his wool to the one who he appreciates and to the one who is poor and really need it. As human being, we have to share what we have to other especially for people who need it. Even the poem is aimed for children however it indirectly forms the character of children to be human beings.

Another example.

<p>2 Snake Glides Keith Bosley</p> <p> Snake glides through grass over pebbles forked tongue working never speaking but its body whispers listen</p> <p>(in ETF 2006)</p>
--

Questions:

1. What is the effect of the words, *glides, grass, pebbles, forked tongue, never speaking and whisper?*
2. Notice the style of writing the poem, does it mean something to you?

3. What does the poem want to say exactly?
4. How is your reaction to the poem?

Now compare the poem to the text below.

The text

A snake is any numerous limbless scales reptiles. It is extremely long and narrow body. The jaws of snake are loosely jointed and extremely flexible for swallowing large prey. The pointed, backward-curved teeth are fused to the supporting bones of the head. There are no ears or movable eyelids. Snakes have good vision, They do not hear airborne sound waves, but can perceive low- frequency vibrations (100-700Hz) transmitted from the ground to the bones of the skull. A chemosensory organ opens into the roof of the mouth; it receives stimuli from the forked tongue that constantly tastes the surroundings as the animal moves along. Snakes have no larynx or vocal chords, but are capable of producing a hissing sound.

(Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia 2012)

Both of the texts are talking about a snake. However the way they communicate information is really different. The poet (the one who writes the poetry) must be someone who is interested in snakes. He may simply write about a snake like what the textbook or encyclopedia says. However when he writes in a poem, it certainly gives different impression. The words *glides through grass, over pebbles, forked tongue working, never speak, and body whisper* bring readers to experience what a snake is, how it looks like rather than tell what they are and

their characteristics. Those words or phrase help them to develop their own imagination. Thus the function of a poem is not to tell the readers but just lead them to experience by allowing them to participate in it imaginatively. Thus the readers can visualize it and even feel that they really see it is close to them where they can describe it clearly. It is a long slim body, usually in the grass, it moves silently. Its tongue is unique, like a fork. The way of language use makes the poem different from the scientific text. The non-literary text just describes directly, *A Snake*, and its characteristic. Everything is so clear that the readers are not necessary to experience it, they merely get information as it is. The words use in the text do not emerge the imagination and experience. Thus what is a poetry? How do we understand it.

C. DEFINITION

People in the world and in all period are familiar with the poetry since it gives them enjoyment, and information that deals with their life and their existence. They may read it or listen to it. Poetry comes smoothly into different class, status, position even different conditions of people. Even the children are provided by the poet what is called nursery rhyme. Thus the children play with it by singing a song or just speak it out, since the rhyme or repetition words in it make it sound interested and lovely.

The two poems above show that they exist to communicate information through experience. They indirectly invite readers getting involve imaginatively in them. They make readers aware that these are around their life. The poems in fact demand your attention. The language they use richer in meaning than ordinary one. The poets have potential to apply language to describe their own imagination and it affects the readers to develop their own imagination. According to Perrine and Arp (1992) literature can be used as a gear for stepping up the intensity and increasing the range of our experience and a glass for clarifying it. This is the literary use of language, for literature is not only an aid to living but a means of living.

Beside the language a poem also shows the beauty. Let's see a part of Wordsworth's poem below,

3. *Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way
They stretched in never – ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in springtly dance*
William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

The word *tossing their heads* in a poem gives information that flowers are blooming freshly along the bay. They are very happy to welcome the spring (from the phrase *springtly dance*), it is not talking about a dance. This is beautiful. In rising sun, they seem to glitter like a star since the colour is white like milk. Those words or phrases make readers think and visualize the beautiful situation when all the daffodils along the beach are blooming as the sun rises. The poem is not talking about the moral. But just the landscape that looks beautiful when the daffodils are blooming under the sun shines. Thus if the readers are always looking for the moral, lesson, message or the truth of life will be disappointed. Especially the readers from different cultures are going to misunderstand about this poem. They tend to ignore the words that really play the crucial role in producing the meaning such as *Tossing their heads in springtly dance*, the words *head* make them think they are human beings, while the word *Springtly dance*, means the situation of spring. Unfortunately many students do not think about it since they never have a spring season. Thus different cultures may have different expectations about poetry.

Poetry concerns with experience in different aspects such as life, beauty, philosophical truth, even death or pain. However the death, pain, or suffering, the

unpleasant things may not be unpleasant in poetry. It means poetry may invite the readers to see and think carefully something unpleasurable so that after reading poetry, they may understand even accept it normally. All the genres of literature have the same focus that give better understanding about experience. However poetry is recognized by the form and the arrangement of its lines. Perrine and Arp (1992) state that poetry is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature. In addition Kirszner and Mandell (2000) mention that one way of defining poetry is to say that it uses language to condense experience into intensely concentrated package with each sound, each word, each image, and each line carrying great weight. A poem has certain lines to put in stanza, rhyme, or pattern of consonant and vowels. The choice of words has certain value to the effect of the poem's meaning. The sentence or phrase may ignore the rule. Every line in poetry may begin with capital letter, or may not use capital letter at all. These characteristics makes poem different from prose or drama. A prose is written in sentences and are group in paragraphs, not in stanzas, while in drama, the sentences are arranged in a dialogue. Thus if people read poem, and there is no experience they get, it means they do not understand what they read. This is probably because of the poor reading ability or it could be a poor poem.

Poetry uses language to communicate experience. Therefore it has four dimension, known as multidimensional language (Perrine and Arp 1992). They add that when the readers read the poetry, they are going to involve their intelligence, sense, emotion and imagination. This is happened because of the language use in a poetry. The language adds dimensions of sensuous, emotional, imaginative to intellectual dimension. These dimensions create what we call poetry, that makes it differet from any other literary genre. The dimension are not going to work, unless the poetic support them.

Let's read the poems below and answer the questions

4 On a Night of Snow

Elizabeth Catsworth (1893- 1986)

Cat, if you go outdoors you must walk in the snow.
You will come back with little white shoes on your feet,
Little white slippers of snow that have heels of sleet,
Stay by the fire, my Cat, Lie still, do not go
See how the flames are leaping and hissing low. 5

I will bring you a saucer of milk like a marguirite,
So white and so smooth, so spherical and so sweet.
Stay with me, Cat. Outdoors the wild winds blow.

Outdoors the wild winds blow, Mistress, and dark is the night.
Strange voices cry in the trees, intoning strange lore, 10
And more than cats move, lit by our eyes' green light,
On silent feet where the meadow grasses hang hoar --
Mistress, there are portents abroad of magic and might,
And things that are yet to be done. Open the door!

(in Opraska and Trost 1998)

Questions

1. The poem is like a dialogue. Who do you think make a dialogue?
2. What words make you guest it?
3. Who wants to go out? What are the reasons to go out?
4. What is the purpose of the poem?

5. Ballad of Birmingham

Dudley Randall (b.1914)

(on the bombing of a church in Birmingham, Alabama 1963)

“Mother dear, may I go downtown
Instead of out to play,
And march the streets of Birmingham
In a freedom March today?”

“No, baby, no you may not go, 5
For the dogs are fierce and wild,
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails
Aren’t good for a little child”.

“But, mother, I won’t be alone
Other children will go with me 10
And march the streets of Birmingham
To make our country free”.

“No, baby, no, you may not go,
For I fear those guns will fire.
But you may go to church instead 15
And sing in the choildren choir”.

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,
And bathed rose petal sweet,
And drawn white glove on her small brown hands,
And whie shoes on her feet. 20

The mother smiled to know her child

Was in the sacred place,
But that smile was the last smile
To come upon her face.

For when she heard the explosion, 25
Her eyes grow wet and wild.
She raced through the streets of Birmingham
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe, 30
“O, here’s the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?”

(in Perrine and Arp .1992)

Questions

1. How does the poem differ from what you get in a newspaper?
2. What do the details in the fifth stanza (line 17-20) contribute to the meaning of the poem?
3. What is the aim of the poem?
4. Whose voices (speakers) are in the poem?. How do their attitude differ?
5. How do you feel after reading this poem ?
6. What do you get from the last stanza?

D. POETIC DEVICES

1. Voice or speaker

Poets tends to choose words and arrange them in a such way so that the readers are able to get impression that there is voice in a poem. The readers read the poem and heard the voice who is talking and is called a speaker. However the speaker, especially if the poem uses first person singular (*I, my, mine, me*), is not necessary the poet. It is wrong to consider that the voice in a poem is the poet voice. The speakers are created by the poet to fit the need of the poem who are going to say something about life, ideology, philosophy or nature. The speaker may speak in a variety of voices. Therefore the speakers can be human being such as a man, soldier, farmer, father, a woman, mother, even a child, or animal, such as a bird, a rabbit or even inanimate objects, like a tree, a wall or a stone etc.. They can be the representative of human being or behave like a human being. Thus in understanding a poem the important question to be asked is *who is the speaker*, and *what is the occasion?*, The two questions help you understand how the speakers' voice and why they say it. and these are going to affect your respon or perspective to the meaning of a poem.

A poem.

6. The Pasture

Robert Frost (1874-1963)

*I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to wacth the water clear, I may):
I sha'n't be gone long— You come too.*

*I'm going out to fecth the little calf 5
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.*

I sha'n't be gone long,---- You come too.

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Who is the speaker ? what is the occasion?
2. Which words help you guest the meaning?
3. What do you understand from first stanza?
4. What kind of person is the speaker?

There are some words help us guest who the speaker is. The phrase “*clean the pasture spring, and stop to rake the leaves away,* explain to us that the speaker has responsibility make the spring (a natural source of water) clean since it is the source of water that they need for life. The voice not only tell you but also invite you to do the same thing. The second stanza make it clear that the speaker must be a farmer who care about their cattles. There is a baby of a cow (*the little calf*) which was just born. It can be understood from the word *It's so young, and totters.* These phrases explain that the baby still weak, not strong enough to stand up, while the mother keep clean it by her tongue (*she licks it with her tongue*). This is also hard for students from different culture who never think that a cow gives a birth in the meadow. In their culture the cow mmust be in the barn and has a special room for it has a baby. That's why their perception will be different, and effect the meaning. Thus the readers also have to understand the culture in the poem, so that they do not misunderstanding and get different meaning.

7. I'm nobody! Who are You?

Emily Dickinson (1830 - 1886)

I'm Nobody! Who are you?

Are you --- Nobody – Too?
Then there's a pair of us?
Don't tell! They'd advertise----
you know! 5

How dreary -----to be-----
Somebody!
How public--- like a Frog-----
To tell one's name----- the
livelong June----- 10
To an admiring Bog!
(in Opraska and Trost1998)

Questions.

1. Who is the speaker in this poem?
2. What do each speaker's words reveal about them?
3. What words helps you to find the speakers?
4. What is the purpose of the poem?

Clearly poetry depends on the speaker who tells or describes event, situation and condition, feeling even the ideas to the readers. Thus finding out who the speaker is, helps readers to interpret the poem so that they can analyze the meaning exactly covered by the text. By looking at the poem above, the speaker seems a person who are close to the readers. He/she has less self-esteem. It is shown by the words or phrases *I'm Nobody!*, in the first stanza. Then the words *Who are you?* seems for the readers. The speaker even finds someone who is in the same condition with him (*Are you --- Nobody – Too?/ Then there's a pair of us?/*) Even it sounds so close to the poet , nevertheles it does not mean the speaker is the poet, they may relate to the experience and attitude of the poet.

Analyze the poem below

8. Morning Song

Sylvia Plath (1932- 1963)

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.

The midwife slapped your footles, and your bald cry

Took its place among the elements.

Our voices echo, magnifying your arrival, new statue.

In drafty museum, your nakedness 5

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 10

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 15

Whitens and swallows its dull stars. And now you try

Your handful of notes;

The clear vowels rise like ballons

(Kirszner and Mandell. 2000)

Questions

1. Who is the speakers? To Whom is she speaking ?
2. What does the poem reveal about her?
3. What is the subject of the poem?
4. What does the fifth line mean?. How does it support the whole meaning?
5. How does the first stanza differ from the third ?

2. Word or Poetic diction

Another poetic devices is a *word* which is chosen and arranged in such a way in a poem by the poet. The choice of words is called *poetic diction*. The poets usually choose the words which is meaningful and may vary based on variety contexts to help the readers share the feeling and experience. Kirszner and Mandell. (2000) put the words into two categories; formal and informal diction. Formal diction is characterized by a learned vocabulary and grammatically correct forms. This category does not include colloquial words. While informal diction is the dictions or words of language which close to daily language, or everyday conversation. It includes colloquial words, slang, regional expression and even nonstandard words. In fact a language has been used in a variety and this is different from every level of society. The poets may take the word from different level, from the common words to the words which are rarely used in society. They use it to prompt the sense and imagination of readers so that they can catch what the poem is saying. As a Lucille Clifton (in Guth and Rico 1997) says;" I try to make each and every word carry its full measure and not just its meaning defined". The word may be chosen because of their meaning or just because of their sounds that is nice to be heard. Thus it is more refined and elegant than ordinary speech. These made the language of poetry different from the common language. Therefore a strong meaning of the poem is based on the choice of words or poetic diction.

Study the poem below

9. Fire works

Babette Deutsch (1895- 1982)

Not guns, nor thunder, but a flutter of clouded drums
That announce a fiesta: abruptly, fiery needles
Circumscribe on the night boundless chrysanthemums.

Softly, they break apart, they flake away, where

Darkness, on a svelte hiss, swallows them.

5

Delicate brilliance: a bellflower opens, fades,

In a sprinkle of falling stars.

Night absorbs them

With the sponge of her silence

(in Opraska and Trost 1998)

Not all the words used in this poem are familiar by the readers. Some words are not commonly used such as, *flutter*, *fiesta*, *fiery needles*, *circumscribe*, and *a svelte hiss*. However the words give certain nuance and have a certain effect to the meaning of a poem. This poem just wants to inform what and how the firework is. The words help the readers to imagine how beautiful is firework, its sound, its colourful like a flower. Even it is like a star falling down to the earth then gone in the air.

Study the poem below

10. The Fish

Elizabeth Bishop (1911- 1979)

I caught a tremendous fish
and held held him beside the boat

half out of water, with my hook
 fast in a corner of his mouth.
 He didn't fight 5
 He hadn't fought at all.
 He hung a grunting weight,
 battered and venerable
 and homely. Here and there
 his brown skin hung in strips 10
 like ancient wall-paper
 and its pattern of darker brown
 was like wall-paper:
 shapes like full-blown roses
 stained and lost through age. 15
 He was speckled with barnacles,
 fine rosettes of lime,
 and infested
 with tiny white sea-lice,
 and underneath two or three 20
 rags of green weed hung down.
 While his gills were breathing in
 terrible oxygen
 -the frightening gills,
 fresh and crisp with blood, 25
 that can cut so badly—
 I thought of the coars white flesh
 packed in like feathers,
 the big bones and the little bones,

the dramatic red and blacks 30
 of his shiny entrails,
 and the pink swim-bladder
 like a big peony.
 I looked into his eyes
 which were far larger than mine 35
 but shallower, and yellowed,
 the irises backed and packed
 with tarnished tinfoil
 seen through the lenses
 of old scratched isinglass. *fish gelatine* 40
 They shifted a little, but not
 to return my stare,
 ---it was more like the tipping
 of an object toward the light.
 I admired his sullen face 45
 the mechanism of his jaw,
 and then I saw
 that from his lower lip
 ----- if you would call it a lip----
 grim, wet, and weapon – like, 50
 hung five old pieces of fish-line,
 or four and a wire leader
 with the swivel still attached.
 with all their five big hooks
 grown firmly in his mouth. 55
 A green line, frayed at the end
 Where he broke it, two heavier lines,

and a fine black thread
 still crimped from the strain and snap
 when it broke and he got away. 60
 Like medals with their ribbons
 frayed and wavering,
 a five-haired beard of wisdom
 trailing from from his aching jaw.
 I stared and stared 65
 and victory filled up the little rented boat,
 from the pool of bilge
 where oil had spread a raibow
 around the rusted engine
 to the bailer rusted orange 70
 the sun-cracked thwarts,
 the oarlocks on their strings,
 the gunnels----- until everything
 was rinbow, rainbow, rainbow!
 And I let the fish go. 75

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. What words shows the feeling of the speaker to the fish?
2. Which words make the fish seem human being?
3. How does the words *battered* and *venerable* (line 8th) affect the meaning ?
4. Which words reminds you that it is a fish?
5. Why do you think the word *rainbow* is repeated? What are the effect of the repetition to the meaning of the whole poem.
6. Are you surprised to read the last line? Why do you think the speaker did it?

3.Repetition

The long poem above is not only rich with the words but also enriched with some repetition words. Many specific words are used in this poem, such as *barnacles, gills, isinglass, sullen face, swivel, crimped* and many other that makes readers pay attention. Besides the words enable the readers to activate their sense, and develop the imagination where they seem able to see the condition of the fish. The repetition words such as: *like wall- paper, like full blown roses, like feather*, make people visualize the things they compare. Then the word *rainbow* is repeated several times gives different impression and surely affect the meaning of the whole poem. This is the unique shape of the poem. Each poem has its own unique, since the poet has his own strategies to make readers focus and concentrate on the poem. Therefore the word repetition has certain purpose. Guth and Rico. (1997) mention that a second organizing strategy that poets employ is intentional, *purposeful repetition*. The repetition is purposeful when used to highlight, to emphasize. It can line up like and like or confront like and unlike.

Read the following poems and pay attention to the repetition.

11. People of Fire

Nidaa Khoury (Palestine)

Burn the generations.

Burn the olive leaves.

offer incense.

Burn their fingertips.

Smoke 5

Burn the dictionary of embracement

depart

Burn the cook books

Burn the kindling

boil their wit 10

and spread it
on the rooftops
They burn the remains of the candle
Illumine the shameful graves.
Wear ash and die as embers

15

(Translated by Linda Zisquit in The poetry of arab women 2001)

Questions

1. The word *Burn* is repeat several times. Do they mean something?
2. Why does the speaker say it several times?
3. What does the speaker want to tell us exactly?
4. How do you feel after reading the poem?

12. Solace

Dorothy Parker (1893- 1967)

There was a rose that faded young;
I saw its shattered beauty hung
Upon a broken stem.

I heard them say, “what need to care
With roses budding everywhere?”

5

I did not answer them.

There was a bird, brought down to die;
They said,” A hundred fill the sky—
What reason to be sad?

There was a girl, whose lover fled;

10

I did not wait, the while they said:

There's many another lad"

(in Guth and Rico.1997)

Questions

1. Mention the repetition words that you recognize in the poem.
2. What does the poem repeat several time?
3. What is the reaction of the speaker?
4. What is the purpose of the repetition words?
5. What is your respon to the poem?
6. Are you on the side of " I " or "they"

13. War Is Kind

Stephen Crane (1871-1900)

Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.

Because your lover threw wild hands towards the sky

And the affrighted steed ran on alone,

Do not weep.

War is kind

5

Hoarse, booming drums of the regiment

Little souls who thirst for fight,

These men were born to drill and die.

The unexplained glory flies above them,

Great is the battle god, gerat, and his kingdom--- 10

A field where a thousand corpses lie

Do not weep, babe, for war is kind.
Because your father tumbled in the yellow trenches,
Raged at his breast, gulped and died,
Do not weep. 15
War is kind.

Swift blazing flag of regiment,
Eagle with crest of red and gold,
These men were born to drill and die
Point for them the virtue 20

Make plain to them the excellence of killing
And a field where a thousand corpses lie.

Mother whose heart hung humble as a button
On the bright splendid shroud of your son,
Do not weep, 25
War is kind
(in Madden 2002)

Questions

1. What is the function of repetition words in this poem?
2. What diction makes the situation of war is not kind
3. What do you think the diction used in this poem to describe a war?
4. What exactly does the speaker want to say?
5. What is the aim of the poem?
6. How do you feel when you read the poem?

7. Is the war really kind?
8. What is the tone of the poem?

14. There's Someone

Benjamin Zephaniah

It may not be the one you're with
They may not have much love to give,
It may not be the girl next door
Or that nice boy the first floor,
It may not be the friend you taught 5
Who helps you out when you're distraught
You may not know this one that well
But there's someone who loves you.

It may not be the one you kissed
It may not be the one you've missed, 10
You may think someone is your friend
But then you find that they pretend,
When you are down and you are out
When you're in tears, sad, and in doubt,
Life may feel like a living hell 15
But there's someone who loves you

(in Academic of American Poets org. 2013)

Questions

1. Why do you think the words *there's someone* is repeated several time?
What is the aim of the speaker?

2. In what occasion the writer says this?
3. Do the repetitions affect the meaning of the poem?
4. Who is the speaker? State your quotation to prove it.
5. How do you feel when you read the poem?

4. Denotation and Connotation

The meaning of the word in the poem can be divided into two; denotation and connotation. The denotation is the real meaning, and the meaning of a word is defined by a dictionary. However the word has another meaning which may be different from the denotation. Perrine and Arp (1992) state that connotation is what it suggests beyond what expresses. It derives from the way and the circumstances in which it has been used. For instance the word *blue*, in the dictionary or denotation meaning is just colour. Thus *she is in blue* means she is wearing blue colour: the dress, shoes, even the bag in her hand. However the connotation meaning, she is sad or she is in a sad condition. The word *nest* is a place for the bird to live, yet in connotation, it may mean *family, security and comfort* etc. Connotation is crucial in the poem, for it can enrich the meaning. The poet tend to take advantage of the connotation which has more than one meaning. In the poem *Blackberry Eating*, the speaker wants to say that using white language is like eating blackberries, in the morning and in the beginning of winter. It is not nice, since the berries is sour and they are ate in the morning. However the black must speak the language for they are slave. They are forced to use the language, though it sounds strange in their tongue. Thus the meaning *Blackberries Eating* is not the real meaning but it is connotation rather than denotation meaning.

Let's see the following poem.

15. There is no frigate like a book

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take 5
Without oppress of toll.
How frugal is the chariot
That bears the human soul!

(in Perrine and Arp 1992)

The poet seems to explain how important a book is. Since this is a poem, the words used are not the same as in the non-literary text. The poet chose certain words to express his or her subject in a poem. The choice of words may make readers think more than what the poet means. These diction help the readers open their mind and build a new perception. This poem suggests that the book can bring the new world to the readers. Through reading the readers understand that the book is really powerful. It can open their mind, and let them come to a new world. This is emphasized by the second line / *To take us lands away*/. In other words a book may bring us to the place that far away from ours, to the unknown place. Moreover the word *frigate* shows the readers that a book is like a small ship with speed that bring them to the place they want immediately. The word is followed by *coursers*, means horses while *Chariot* means a car. These vehicles are very fast, used by people for any purposes. Thus a book brings the readers to the world they never see and visit before in a few minutes even seconds. They can see and understand something that they never even know before. By reading the poem the readers do not only understand but also can visualize. They are helped to develop their imagination. The choosing of the words certainly has a purpose. Uniquely the words may be taken from different level or area of language used by society that attract the attention.

Read and analyze the poem

16. Cross

Langston Hughes (1902- 1967)

My old man's a white old man

And my old mother's black.

If ever I cursed my white old man

I take my curses back

If ever I cursed my black old mother

And wished she were in hell,

I'm sorry for that evil wish

And now I wish her well.

My old man died in a fine big house.

My ma died in a shack.

I wonder where I'm gonna die,

Being neither white nor black

(in Madden 2002)

Questions

1. What different denotations does the title have?
2. Why does the speaker say sorry (third line in 2th stanza) to his/ or her mother?
3. What does the connotations of the words "*fine big house, and shack*" effect the meaning of the poem?

4. What are the effect of two lines in the last stanza to the whole meaning of the poem?
5. How do you think the feeling of the speaker? How do you know?
Explain it

17.Pathedy of Manners

Ellen Key (b. 1931)

At twenty she was brilliant and adored,
Phio Beta Kappa, sought for every dance;
Captured symbolic logic and the glance
Of men whose interest was their sole reward.

She learned the cultured jargon of those bred 5
To antique crystal and authentic pearls,
Scorned Wagner, praised the Degas dancing girls,
And when she might have thought, conversed instead.

She hung up her diploma, went abroad,
Saw catalogue of dome and tapestry, 10
Rejected an improverished marquis,
And learn to tell Wedgwood from freud.

Back home her breeding led her to espouse
A bright young man whose pearl cufflinks were real.
They had an ideal marriage, an ideal 15
But lonely children in an ideal house.

I saw her yesterday at forty-three,
 Her children gone, her husband one year dead,
 Toying with plots to kill time and re-wed,
 Illusions of lost opportunity 20
 But affraid to wonder what she might have known
 With all that wealth and mind had offered her,
 She shuns conviction, choosing to infer
 Tenets of every mind except her own.

A hundred people call, though not one friend, 25
 To parry a hundred doubts with nimble talk.
 Her meanings lots in manners, she will walk
 Alone in Brilliant circles to the end
 (in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. What do the words *brilliant* (1 and 28), *interest*, and *reward* (4), *cultured* and *jargon*(5) *Circles* (28) mean ? What are the effect of the words to the meaning the whole poem?
2. Which one of the point is talking about the speaker ? which one is talking about her mother?
3. How do you think the speaker feels about her mother?
4. Is the speaker sad or happy? How do you know?

5. Tone

If someone speak, we can hear his or her voice. From the voice we can decide that the speaker is sad, happy, angry, disappointed or whatever his or her feeling at that time. For instance, someone says *I am going to Hongkong tomorrow*. The statement and the meaning are so clear. However the meaning of the statement may vary depend on how the tone of the voice when it is uttered. It maybe serius for instance *OK. So I am going to Hongkong tomorrow*, This sounds straightforward, there must be something makes the speaker has to go. Then this may be happiness; *oh my God, I am going to Hongkong tomorrow*. The sound is called **tone** and it also found in the poem. Thus correct interpretation of the tone will help the listener understand the meaning of the statement, and the feeling of the speaker. Perrine and Arp (1992) mention that tone in literature may be defined as the speaker's attitude toward his or her subject, to audience even to his or herself. In poetry the tone is very crucial to understand the meaning of the poem. The tone is used to explain human emotions. It may be *joyful, sarcastic, resigned, angry, straightforward, nostalgic, admiring, disappointed etc.*

However it is not really easy for the readers to get the tone of the poem since they do not hear the speaker's voice exactly. The readers should learn how to get the tone of the poem, and develop their sense. In fact, all the elements of poetry or poetic devices can help the readers to get the tone such as: diction, repetition, connotation, imagery, figurative language, irony even the construction of the sentence. These devices work together to form the tone. The author chooses the certain words and within the words the mood or attitude are stated implicitly in order to express to the readers. When we read the poem *Cross* above, there are some dictions help us to catch the tone such as *my white old man, my black old mother*. The words show the contradiction of skin colour of the speaker parents, father is white and mother is black. This condition can not be accepted by society. The black woman can not live together with the white man even they love each other. There is another possibility, where a black woman is just the victim of the sex abused. The phrases *died in a fine big house, died in a shack* prove that the couple live separately and in different condition. It sounds *sarcastic*. It is more

difficult for the speaker as the child where no community accept her or him. He or she has been refused by white even the black society. The two last lines in a poem underline the meaning. The speaker is confused, sad even feel that there is no place for him or her in society. All the elements support the meaning and therefore the readers can get the sense of the poem and catch the tone.

Let's read and find out the tone of the poem.

18. October 1954

Kay Born (1903-1992)

Now the time of year has come for the leaves to be burning.
October, and the months fill me with grief
For the girl who used to run with the black dogs through them,
Singing, before they burned. Light as a leaf
Her heart, and her mouth red as the sumac turning. 5

Oh, girl, come back to tell them with your bell-like singing
That you are this figure who stands alone, watching the dead leaves burn.
(The wind is high in the trees, and the clang of bluejay voices ringing
Turns the air to metal. This is not a month for anyone who grieves.
For they would say that a witch had passed in fury if I should turn, 10
Gray-haired and brooding, and run now as once I ran through the leaves.

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. How do you feel when you read “ the leaves to be burning”? What does it mean?
2. How does the effect of the repetition to the meaning of the whole poem?

3. How many details help develop the *polarity* of youth and age?
4. How is the tone of the poem

Analyze the poem below.

19. An Orphan

Thurayya Malhass

I am an orphan

If I walk,

I trip on stones.

I am an orphan

if I tell

5

I choke with letters

I am an orphan

if my fingertips move the strings,

the clouds would weep

and surround the passion of the guitar 10

Is it you Moon, my guide?

Or is it you, Stars?

You sky?

Or you Universe?

Where is my way?

15

Where is my poem?

Where is my guitar?

I am an orphan

my steps

chains,

20

my tongue, knots
oh God,
when
when will you come back to me?

(Translated by Nasser Farghaly in in The Poetry of Arab Women 2001)

Questions

1. How do you feel when you read “ an Orphan”? What does it mean?
2. How does the effect of the repetition to the meaning of the whole poem?
3. How many details help yo develop an idea about the condition of the speaker?
4. How is the tone of the poem.
5. Write it down your respon toward the poem.

20. **Truth** (1949)

Gwendolyn Brooks (born 1917)

And if sun comes
How shall we greet him?
Shall we not dread him
Shall we not fear him
After so lengthy a 5
Session with shade

Though we have wept for him
Though we have prayed

All through the night years----
What if we wake one shimmering morning to 10
Hear the fierce hammering
Of his firm knuckles
Hard on the door?

Shall we not shudder?----
Shall we not flee 15
Into the shelter, the dear thick shelter
Of the familiar
Propitious haze?

Sweet is it, sweet is it
To sleep in the coolness 20
Of snug unawareness

The dark hangs heavily
Over the eyes
(in Guth and Rico1997)

Use the following questions to guide your analyses

1. Who is the speaker? What is the occasion?
2. What is the purpose of the speaker to say it?
3. How does ther feeling of the speaker?
4. How do you feel after reading the poem?
5. Write down your respon towards the poem

UNIT 2

HOW TO READ POEM

A. OBJECTIVES

1. to apply close reading
2. to annotate the text: Exploration an analysis
- 3.to give personal respon
4. to analyze the poem by using the poetic devices.

B. SNAPSHOT

Read the poem below !

21.

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees.
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze*

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

- 1.How do you read the poem? Is it Word by word?, line by line ? or sentence by sentence?
3. When you explore the poem, do you do annotation?
4. how many times do you read the poem to get the meaning?

5. do you use dictionary to find the difficult words?

6. do you use poetic devices to analyze the poem?

C. CLOSE READING

Reading activities have skills and strategies. These certainly are different depend on the text we are reading. Reading the poem may not the same as reading scientific text. By applying the reading poetry's tactic or strategy we can enjoy our reading as well as understand what we are reading. Poetry deals with human experience as what Madden (2002) says

“Reading poetry is a personal as well as a social
experience. It is a

personal in the way it offers us a reflection of our
own interior lives,

our thoughts and emotions expressed in the words of others; and it

is social in the way it offers us a glimpse of other people's interior

lives, the shared expression of their hearts and minds”

The quotation above reminds us that reading non literary text is different from reading poetry. When we read the non literary text, we just try to find information only. However when we read poetry, we are not involved in getting information only but we also involve our sense so that we get experience and evoke our feeling. Thus we can also understand that poetry is written to communicate the ideas, thought, or experience in human life to the readers. When you read a poem, you have to pay attention in detail: such as to the word to the lines whether it is a phrase, or sentence. Sometimes you need to arrange it back, such as to link one line to another line or more so that it can be seen or understood that those lines is just one sentence. Read it again to see the grammar. If there is a coma or fullstop, it may help us to understand.

In reading poetry some experts give several points. Reading poetry should be done by close reading. Close reading according to Madden is not a first reading but it is rereading. It is a process where the readers read the poem carefully, come into the poem in detail, consciously examine the poetic devices and how they contribute to its overall meaning. Thus in reading the readers need to mark up the text by doing: *underlining, circling, highlighting and making a note* in the margin. This helps you analyse the text by relating the points you already marked.

1. Annotation; Exploration.

22. African Diaspora
Chief Charles O. Okereke

In the diaspora he sat down;
 And there he wept,
 Remembering Africa,
 Mouth open, unable to a song

Eyes full of the ocean,
 Mouth imploded with praises:
 Though stacked full of memories
 Memories of motherland Africa

In bits he uttered;
 Africa, my cherished home;
 In the diaspora unable to a song
 I want to come to thee

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

From the annotation above the poem can be analyzed: there are several repetition words */diaspora/ 2x*, and */unable to a song/ 2x*, that give us clues to understand the meaning. These repetitions make us imagine that the speaker is in a very miserable condition. It is supported by the */wept/* in line 2, first stanza. The word “*Remembering*” and “*motherland Africa*” show the reason why the speaker is so sad. He is far from his homeland. Thus it is assumed that the speaker is black

who is forced to move to America. He was treated as a slave. He does not have power to rebel the white. This is supported by the 2 lines in second stanza / *Eyes full of the ocean/;* and /*Mouth imploded with praises/*which explain that he can not do anything except crying and praying. This condition also reflects the situation and condition of slavery at that time. They are inferior and live in a misery condition, that's why he is missing their happy life in their own country / *my cherished home/* Even this people is very poor and far from technology. However they are happy since they live with thier family and their own culture, tradition. The tone of the poem must sad and disappointed. Shortly annotation help readers make questions and dig meaning more deeply from the inside of the text, or things the text does not talk about.

2. Reading Poem

Another way to read the poem closely is suggested by Perrine and Arp (1992). According to them there are 5 points at least in reading poetry.

1. **Read a poem more than once.** Reading a poem is not like reading a newspaper, thus the readers need to read more than once so that they can develop their sense and understand what it means. It will hung on their mind.
2. **Keep a dictionary and use it.** When the readers read there must be word they don't understand. At least dictionary will help them, eventhough the meaning can be connotation, At least they have a basic to start, it will help them to think more.
3. **Read so as to hear the sounds of the words in your mind.** Remember poetry is written to be heard.; its meaning are conveyed through sound as well as through print. Thus the readers must read every words to get the feeling and develop the imagination.
4. **Always pay careful attention to what the poem is saying.** The readers should make the strong effort to follow the thought a poem offers, and to

grasp the ideas. Thus on the first reading the readers should determine the subject of the verbs and the antecedents of the pronouns

5. **Practice reading poems aloud.** The aim is to get sense and develop the imagination, so that the readers can grasp the meaning since the more you read the more you come close to the meaning.

While Guth and Rico (1997) say that a poem may open your new perspective. It may cause the readers laugh or even tear. This is supposed as the result of your interaction with the poem. They give the tips to read a poem.

1. *Give the poem close reading.* Be often to whatever the poem has to offer. Take in as much as you can. You may read first to get the general idea but you have to read it again in detail.
2. *Get your bearing.* Make questions to lead in reading such as; who is speaking in the poem? what is the situation or occasion? What seems to be the agenda? Is it about a nature? is it about confrontation between parent and a child? is it a confrontation of ideology? Is it about oppression?
3. *Respond to the poem as a whole.* Try to get a sense of its overall pattern. Look for key words or phrases that echo in the poem. For instance does the poem move from past to present or present into the past. Or does the poem convey two different ways of looking at the world?
4. *Get into the spirit of the poem.* Do not read the poem aloud without the expression, or feeling since it can not help you understand it. Even when reading silently, you have to feel something in the poem
5. *Be ready for personal response.* When we read a poem, it gives such experience, though it is not necessary to experience it directly. Yet at least you know how the feeling of losing someone that you love very much is.

In fact, the ideas of Madden and Guth and Rico come closely. These tactics can be combined together in order to read critically. Reading critically helps you understand the poem in detail so that the analyzing of the poem can be done.

Something that should be noticed is the reading should be done carefully, and several times. The first questions you made in the first reading will be different from the questions you express in the second reading. Therefore the understanding after reading will also be different. This way may enrich your ideas in analyzing and help you come to a certain perspective. While you are reading, you have to use pencil to highlight, circle, put an arrow even to take a note. Thus reading poetry can not be done just like reading a newspaper. You have to do something to help you focus that lead you to understand the poem you read. However the idea to look at dictionary suggested by Perrine and Arp is good since we never can left it behind. However the meaning is not always denotation, but dictionary may help the readers catch ideas when it is connotation.

Read the following poem

23.The Snail

William Cowper (1731-1800)

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self-collective power is such,
He shrinks into his house with much
Displeasure

Wherever he dwells, he dwells alone, 5
Except himself, has chattels ☆none, goods
Well satisfied to be his own
Whole treasure.

Thus hermit-like his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs, 10
And if he meet one, only feeds
The faster

Who seeks him must be worse than blind
--He and his house are so combined---
If finding it, he fails to find 15
Its master
(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Notes;

1. Read more than once,
2. Annotate any things help you to understand the poem
3. Don't forget to state who the speaker is, in what occasion and purpose does the speaker say it?
4. What is your respon after reading the poem?
5. Analyze the poem by applying the poetic devices.

Analyze the poem below

24. My Women

Aviwe Bezu

My black women is black and beautiful
Her eyes are black and beautiful
as she smiled and admirer her beauty
she's a hard worker full of dreams
she keeps on trying whenever her dreams deems 5
my black women is black and beautiful

She bears and carries fruits for her fimaly
as she protects and proclaims her love.
look! There she acts and flies like a dove

for she's a career that cares continuously 10
my black women is black and beautiful.

She 's a victim of being hurt and raped
Although they steal and victimize her virginity
She's a co-creator with God
I love and respect my black women 15
My black women is black and beautiful.

(in Academic of American Poets org 2013)

25. To Daffodils

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early –rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay. 5
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even – song:
And having prayed together, we
Will go with you along. 10
We have short time to stay, as you:
We have as short a spring,
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die 15
As your hours do, and dry
Away

Like to the summer's rain
Or as the pearls of morning'dew,
Ne'er to be found again 20
(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Analyze the two poems but using poetic devices.

1. Which poetic devices are most used in both poem?
2. What does the speaker want to say exactly in each poem?
3. What does the connotation contribute to the whole meaning of each poem?

UNIT 3

IMAGERY

A. OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the imagery in the poem
2. distinguish the kinds of imagery : visual, hear, smell, taste and touch
- 3 Use imagery to develop their sense
- 4 Apply the kinds of imagery to reveal the meaning of the poem
- 5 Analyze the the poem

B. SNAPSHOT

26. Blackberry Eating

Galway Kinnell (1927)

I love to go out in late September
among fat, overripe, icy, black blackberries
to eat blakberries for breakfast,
the stalks very prickly, a penalty
they earn for knowing the black art 5
of blackberry- making; and I stand among them
lifting the stalks to my mouth, the ripest berrries
fall almost unbidden to my tongue,
as words sometimes do, certain peculiar words
like *strengths or squinched*, 10
many-lettered, one-syllabled lumps,
which I squeeze, squinch open, and splurge well
in the silent, starled, icy, black language

of blackberry-eating in late September

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Any words that make you see or feel something in your mind? Which one?
2. Do they effect to the meaning?
3. How do you feel when the speaker says */to eat blackberrie for breakfast?*
4. Can you imagine the taste of blackberries in the morning?
5. What are the function of the words “ *very prickly, and a penalty?*
6. Who do you think the speaker? In what condition is he or she? What does he or she wants to say exactly?
7. Do you think the poem really talk about Eating Blackberry? Why?

C. IMAGERY

*Poetry doesn't just come from the mind. Art is not
just a thing of the intellect, but of the spirit*

Lucille Clifton (in Guth and Rico 1997)

The poets express their ideas by using the words they have already chosen. These words are really amazing since they enable the readers to develop their sense. Thus it is not only the poets use their imagination, but their works also help readers develop their own. As Hall (in Guth and Rico 1997) says that Great literature, if we read it well, opens us up to the world. It makes us more sensitives to it, as if we acquired eyes that could see through things and ears that could bear smaller sound. The words used by the poem cause the readers to see or listen something in their mind. That is the unique of poetry. It is supported by Madden (2002) who states that an image is a mental picture prompted by words. Images

result from concrete language that appeal to our sense. It does not exist in the words on the text but in the minds of the readers. In other word, it was the sense and memories of the readers that emerge the picture.

In the poem above, the second line / *among fat, overripe, icy, black blackberries*/ prompt our sense. It seems we can see clearly how the blackberries hang on their branch. We seem also can touch in our mind how cold they are. It is emphasized by the word / *icy* / since the word / *September*/ gives the clue that it must be in autum. Then the line / *to eat blakberries for breakfast*/ gives us taste that blackberries are sour and it is in the morning. It must be not really nice for breakfast. But the speaker has to eat since he is hungry and has no food. The words / *the stalks very prickly, a penalty*/ make us imagine what a pain it is for a tongue, this is added by the word /*penalty* /, it is very hard for the speaker to avoid for he or she has to eat. The three lines above has shown at least three kinds of imagery where the readers can visualize the situation, feel the speaker's emotion even taste the berries in their mind.

Therefore by *image*, according to Guth and Rico (1997) we usually mean a picture we see in the mind's of eye. And poetic images are, visual, sound (where we can hear), taste, touch and feel. While Perrine and Arp (1992) state that Imagery is the representation of sense experience through language. And visual is a kind of imagery that occurs most frequently in poetry. One more thing is a smell (*olfactory imagery*) where the readers seem able to smell something in their mind. In short the imagery is something that touches and sharpens the readers sense in reading poetry and lead them to the deep analyzing. They are able to dig the meaning more deeply and reveal the untouchable meaning.

Now let's come back to the poem above. Nearly every lines in the poem above contains some image. The line six / *I stand among them*/ and line seven / *lifting the stalks to my mouth*/ make the readers think and see how difficult for the speaker being invaded, it makes their lives a misery. These people are forced to use the language that is so strange to their tongue. It is difficult for them to

pronounce and to speak with that language. This is supported by the utterance / *as words sometimes do* /. Thus imagery in this poem has already help us understand that the speaker does not really talk about eating blackberries. In fact. how difficult the life is under the domination of people who force them to come into a new life with different language and culture.

Read the poem below

27. The Black Snake

Mary Oliver (born 1935-..)

When the black Snake
flashed onto the morning road,
and the truck could not swerve-----
death, that is how it happens.

Now he lies looped and useless 5

As an old bicycle tire.

I stop the car

And carry him into the bushes.

He is as cool as gleaming
as a braided whip, he is as beautiful and quiet 10

as a dead brother

I leave him under the leaves

and drive on, thinking
about *death*: its suddenness,

its terrible weight. 15

its certain coming, Yet under

reason burns a brighter fire, which the bones
have always preferred.

It is the story of endless good fortune.

It says to oblivion: not me! 20

It is the light at the center of every cell.

It is what sent the snake coiling and flowing forward
happily all spring through the green leaves before
he came to the road.

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions;

1. What image makes you see the way the snake moves when it was alive?
2. What image help you see the way it looked after it had been hit?
3. What words makes you visualize the situation of the snake?
4. What does *it is the light at the center of every cell*/mean? What is its role in the poem?

28. One day in July

Dorothea Rosa Herliany (1996)

suddenly i was drowning

among thousands of people
i ran in every direction
caught by sorrow, trembling each moment,
feeling silent and empty inside 5

i couldn't do anything: i should
have wept but couldn't,
grief wound its chains
tightly around me

i couldn't say how sorry i felt 10
i couldn't sing
i could only pray
among the anxious houses of fear and

(Translated by Harry Aveling in Kill The Radio 2001)

Questions;

1. There are many words here that prompt the imagery. Did you find them?
2. How many kinds of imagery did you find here?
3. What are the effect of them to the whole meaning?
4. What feeling does it invite you to share.
5. Analyze the poem by using imagery in the poem

Poems for further study. Analyze the poems by using poetic devices and poetic image.

29. Remembered Morning

Janet Lewis (1899)

The axe rings in the wood,
And the children come,
Laughing and wet from the river;
All goes on as it should.

I hear the murmur and hum 5
Of their morning forever.

The water ripples and slaps
The white boat at the dock;
The fire crackles and snaps.
The little noise of the clock 10
Goes on and on in my heart
Of my heart parcel and part.

Oh happy early sir!
A girl comes out on the porch
And the door slams after her. 15
She sees the wind in the birch
And then the running day
Catches her into its way.

(Perrine and Arp 1997)

30. Lovelist of Trees

A.E.Housman (...)

Lovelist of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide

Now, of my threescore years and ten, 5
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room, 10
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

(in Perrine and Arp 1992)

31. Ka'Ba

Amiri Baraka (1964...)

“ A closed window looks down
On a dirty courtyard, and black people
Call across or scream across or walk across
Defying physics in the stream of their will

Our world is full of sound 5
Our world is more lovely than anyone's
Tho we suffer, and kill each other
And sometimes fail to walk the air.

We are beautiful people 10
With African imaginations
full of masks and dances and swelling chants
with African eyes, and noses, and arms
tho we sprawl in gray chains in a place
full of winters, when what we want is sun. 15

We have been captured,
and we labor to make our getaway, into
the ancient image; into a new

Correspondence with ourselves
and our Black family. We need magic 20
now we need the spells, to raise up
return, destroy, and create. What will be

the sacred word ?

(in Academy of American Poets org. 2013)

32. A Poem of Tears

Dorothea Rosa Herliany (1996)

so things have come to this
it no longer matters whether we weep or laugh.
it is all the same, we live among thousands
of fossils, clown from an age long gone
by this century's jokes 5

surely you can say nothing,
but it wouldn't matter anyway,
the air is full of nonsense,
we can only choose to listen in silence,
and stammer, to forget our convictions 10
to hate the foolishness we see in our mirrors
and in the picture of ourselves

surely there is nothing to weep for,
why should you? It is clear
we no longer believe 15
(Translated by Harry Aveling in Kill The Radio 2001)

UNIT 4
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGES

A. OBJECTIVES

1. discuss figurative languages in poems
2. identify the kinds of figurative language in the poem
3. Analyze the poem by using the figurative language

B. SNAPSHOT

33.Dreams

Langston Hughes (1943-

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

(in Huges 2003)

Questions:

1. Identify two things being compared in this poem!
2. Identify non-human objects which are given human qualities in this poem!

3. Does it affect the meaning of the poem?

C. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITION: THE URGE TO SPEAK FIGURATIVELY

Figurative language is usually associated with poems and verse. However, as poetry has already been part of human civilization since the beginning of time, figure of speeches (another name for figurative languages) are also abundant in our day-to-day use of language. One time we compare one thing with another. Another time, we say more than what we need or less than what it has to be. We also often endow non-human objects with human-like feeling and abilities. There are also moments when we mean one thing but we use a completely different thing to represent what we really mean. At times, we even address those who have departed and speak to non-human things around us fully aware that they will never return our call or replay our questions.

Thus why do we do this? Why do we have to use figurative languages, which according to Elder (2004) [are] not literal ways of saying something that it has to be interpreted in order to get the intended meaning (p. 292) when literal languages are there to fend off confusion? According to Gioia and Kennedy (2010) figures of speeches can tell us what literal languages fail to communicate (p.104). When one says that his sister is the lioness of the tennis court, he does not really mean that his sister is an animal playing some tennis. By comparing his sister to a lioness, he actually wants to tell us that as a tennis player, his sister possesses qualities usually attached to a lioness like power, shrewdness, and velocity. In other words, this comparison serves as a metaphor which communicates to us that

his sister is an excellent tennis player which makes her feared by her opponents in the tennis court. Thus, it is safe to say that figurative languages in help us to understand more because of their power to lend clarity and emphasis and most importantly they are able to make us see ordinary things under new lights, which adds newness into things which are otherwise old.

Poetry has always been hailed as being able to entice readers to read between the lines and/even beyond the lines. The usage of figurative language, which has been long associated with poetry, is to some extent responsible for reader's extra effort to understand poetry. However, far from being left behind, poetry has managed to keep its place as texts worth reading and contemplating about. Meanwhile, figurative language in poetry is also the one which is responsible for it because it adds some excitement in reading poetry because figurative languages casts novelty in things we thing we used to know. For those reason, Powel (2007) asserts that the "figures [of speech] captivates *the eye, we are drawn toward it through the rain, and lights the way Odysseus is drawn toward a different kind of siren howl in a different kind of century.*" In other words, without figurative languages poetry is just, to borrow Powel's (2007), "a mass of words, a clanging which does not move us."

34. Hedgehog

by Chu Chen Po

He ambles along like a walking pin cushion,
Stops and curls up like a chestnut burr.
He's not worried because he's so little.
Nobody is going to slap him around.

(Translated from the Chinese by Kenneth Rexroth
In Chu Chen Po 1970)

This brief poem, which was written in the ninth century, displays the rich use of figurative languages. In the first line, the poet compares how a hedgehog moves with a walking pin cushion. This comparison becomes very important because those who have never seen a hedgehog might be able to imagine and visualize what a hedgehog might look like: a small round organism with a lot of rounded tipped pins or blunt spikes sprouting out of its soft body. Moreover, when it *stops* and *curls* it will look like a *chestnut burr* which is also round and covered with rough spiky but bristly covering. These comparisons somehow show us that by being spiky like a pin cushion and burry like a chestnut burr makes a hedgehog look cute but unappetizing to be eaten which indicates how this animal deters its predator. In the third and fourth line, The poem makes it clear that a hedgehog is very small that sometimes people will not notice it because *it [will] not worried because [it]'s so little [and] [n]obody is going to slap [it] around* (line 3 and line 4). These lines also shed the light to us that this animal is solitary and fit to become a pet animal. Then, on how this animal moves, the poet has also carefully

chosen the word *amble* which means to walk at a slow, relaxed pace so readers can imagine that because of its smallness it seems to move slowly.

Up to this point, Chu Chen Po has compared hedgehogs to two different things and these comparisons make the picturing of the animal become less difficult, especially for those unfamiliar with it. If one does not know what a pin cushion is one can still use a chestnut burr to help her to picture what is being talked about in the poem and vice versa. More importantly, the objects used to describes the animal manage to readers know that a hedgehog is not a small version of a porcupine of which spikes are sharp and prickly. Meanwhile, a hedgehog is a walking pin cushion where by pins stabbed on a cushion will not hurt those who touch them because their sharp parts are safely shrouded by the flesh of the cushion. On the contrary, for those who have already familiar with the animal, they will find the comparison add more emphasis on what they have already known and enrich them since they know that a walking pin cushion and a chestnut burr somehow remind them of a hedgehog. Thus, although, we cannot take that literally a pin cushion can walk or an animal is given a human quality, figures of speech are indeed very powerful in helping us to get the picture clearer the way *Hedgehog* by Chu Cen Po has proven to us.

1. Simile

The statement *he ambles along like a walking pin cushion* is figurative because it contains a simile or, a comparison of two things using some connectives such as, *like, as, than* and link verbs such as *resembles* (p. 106).

Meanwhile, Main and Seng (1965) emphasize that simile is a comparison of two essentially dissimilar things (p. 76) like what we find in *Hedgehog* where by an animal, a hedgehog, is compared to a walking pin cushion. On this ground, statements like ‘your face resembles my face’ or ‘she walks like my mother walks’ cannot be considered as simile. They are only two literal statements. Moreover, not all comparison between two different things can be considered as good similes. For example, ‘*life is like a firework*’ cannot be considered as a good simile because it does not make a full sense especially when it ends there. In other words, we can never figure out how life, an abstract concept, being compared to firework, a tangible thing. This is different with *Hedgehog ambles along like a walking pin cushion* which leaves us no gap so by the end of the sentence we understand what the speaker wants to say which makes it a perfect simile. Other examples of good similes are statements like ‘Murphy speaks Spanish as naturally as a cock can crow’ or ‘her youthful look is more beautiful than a budding rose.’

Here are some perfect examples of simile taken from selected poems:

She must know the weight of a man’s hand, The bruises that are like the wounds of Christ	The Mother’s Tale by Ai
Like the willow, I like to weep without tears Like the cherry tree, I tried to be sturdy and productive Like the mulberry, I like to keep moving	The Self and the Mulberry by Marvin Bell
Someone was before me at my water-through And I, like a second comer, waiting	Snake by D.H. Lawrence

I used to think that grown-up people chose To have stiff backs and wrinkles round their nose, And veins like small fat snakes on either hand, On purpose to be grand	Childhood by Frances Cornford
---	----------------------------------

Men that has seen her Drank deep and were silent, The women were speaking Wherever she went— As a bell that is rung Or a wonder told shyly, And O she was the Sunday In every week	The Planter's Daughter by Austin Clarke
---	---

As idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean	The Rime of The Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
--	---

So are you to my thoughts as food to life	Sonnet 75 by William Shakespeare you fit into me like a hook into an eye
---	---

In the icy moonlight he looks like some poor lost child. And when it's raining he almost seems human	Scarecrows by James Kirkup
---	-------------------------------

You Fit into me

	by Margaret Atwood
We lie back to back. Curtain Lift and fall, Like the chest of someone sleeping	The Suitor by Jane Kenyon

Read the poem below and underline all similes and decide what are two things being compared.

35. Willow and Ginkgo

Eve Merriam

The willow is like an etching,
 Fine-lined against the sky.
 The ginkgo is like a crude sketch,
 Hardly worthy to be signed.
 The willow's music is like a soprano 5
 Delicate and thin
 The ginkgo's tune is like a chorus
 With everyone joining in.

The willow is sleek as a velvet-nosed calf;
 The ginkgo is leathery as an old bull. 10
 The willow's branches are like silken thread;
 The ginkgo's like stubby rough wool.

The willow is like a nymph with streaming hair;
 Wherever it grows, there is green and gold and fair.

The willow dips to the water, 15
Protected and precious, like the king's favorite daughter.

The ginkgo forces its way through gray concrete;
Like a city child, it grows up in the street.
Thrust against the metal sky,
Somehow it survives and even thrives. 20

My eyes feast upon the willow,
But my heart goes to the ginkgo

(Merriam, Eve. 2013)

Questions:

1. What is the essential difference between ginkgo and willow?
2. To what extent do similes used to describe the two trees help you to visualize how they look like or what their characteristics are?
3. If the speaker's heart goes to the ginkgo, your heart goes to? Care to explain!

2. Metaphor

If similes are rather easy to spot because of the presence of connectives, metaphors are figures of speech which do not rely on any connectives. When one says that 'Woody is like a tiger in a golf course' he is comparing Woody with a tiger by using *like* as a connective which makes it as a simile. While 'Woody is the tiger in the golf course' is a metaphor which according to Gioia and Kennedy (2010) metaphor is "a statement that one thing is something else, which, in a

literal sense, it is not (p. 106).” In the case of Woody, we come to understand that Woody is very good golf player or he is a number one golf player as the tiger is the king of the jungle.

Amongst other tropes metaphors are used extensively in poetry even in our day to day conversation even science because, as Gioia and Kennedy (2010) put it, they are necessary instrument of understanding (p. 107). On the importance of metaphor, they are not alone since Lakoff and Johnson in Kovecses (2010) asserts that (1) the function of metaphor is to better understand certain concepts, and not just some artistic and aesthetic purpose, (2) is an evitable process of human thought and reasoning (p. x). These assertions make way to our understanding about the difference between metaphors and simile. While, similes only provide us with similarities in appearance between two things being compared, metaphors afford us similarities in morality, traits, or other intangibles characteristics. In other words, what we have in similes are one-dimensional comparisons, while those of metaphors are multi-dimensional. For example, ‘The scavenger forages like a pig’ might mean that the scavenger’s foraging resembles that of a pig, while ‘the scavenger is a pig’ might mean the scavenger is like a pig in appearance and mentality or morality. Going back to *Dream*, which opens our discussion in this chapter, Hughes uses metaphors to compare ‘dream’ to ‘life.’ When the speaker in Hughes’ poem asks readers to */hold fast to dreams/for if dreams die/Life is a broken-winged bird/That cannot fly/*, he tells us that if dreams die, thus life is just like a broken-winged bird. In other words, if we fail to dream thus our life is just like a bird which cannot fly. The phrase *a broken-winged bird* is also a metaphor

for death since a bird with a broken wing will not be able to fly. Meanwhile, flying is its nature: it is the essence of a bird's life thus failing to do so will mean the end of the bird, death. Another metaphor strengthening the speaker's message on the importance of dream to life is the speaker's instruction to */Hold fast to dreams/For when dreams go/Life is a barren field/Frozen with snow/*. The metaphor *a barren field* in the context of the poem is fully charged with the notion of nothingness, and infertility, therefore extinction. What is more is this barren field is also *frozen with snow* which indicates that life is difficult to the extent of impossible in this kind of situation. All in all, the metaphors used in *Dream* are very essential in our understanding of the message the poem tries to convey.

As metaphors are indispensable in the art of poetry, they also take several forms. If 'My love is a red rose' is a traditional or direct metaphor or explicit metaphors which takes the x is y formula, we also have some implicit or implied metaphors which, according to Gioia and Kennedy (2010), do not use any connectives or verb to be (p.106). 'Oh, my love has red petals and sharp thorns' is a perfect example for this type of metaphor. It is an implied metaphor since the speaker does not mention that his love is a rose but instead informs us that his love has red petals and sharp thorns, characteristic commonly associated with a stem of rose. Another type of metaphor is an extended metaphor in which a metaphor is introduced and developed throughout the poem. A nice example for this type of metaphor these stanzas taken from *My Shoes*.

36. My Shoes

Charles Simic:

Shoes, secret face of my inner life:

Two gaping toothless mouths,

Two partly decomposed animal skins

Smelling of mice nests

My brother and sister who died at birth

Continuing their existence in you,

Guiding my life

Toward their incomprehensible innocence

(in Poulain, 2006.)

In the first line the speaker is comparing his inner life with a pair of shoes. Then the speaker comes up with another metaphor *two gaping toothless mouths* and *two partly decomposed animal skins* to describe shoes themselves. It is clear for us that our full understanding of the comparison between shoes and inner life only comes when we continue reading the second stanza which informs about the speaker's dead siblings who are probably the owner of the shoes before they are handed down to the speaker.

Here are some good examples of metaphors taken from some selected poems:

Shall I compare

Shall I compare thee to a summers's day?	thee to a summer's day? By William Shakespeare
Oh, my love is a red red rose.	My love is a red red by Roberts Burns
The fog comes On little cat feet	Fog by Carl Sandburg
She is as in a field a silken tent	The silken tent by Robert frost
There now, where the first crumb Falls from the table You think no one hears it As it hits the floor	Solitude by Charles Simic
I came here because I was Mexican, a stick Of brown light in love with those Who could do it	Black Hair by Gary Soto
Love is the wild car of existence	In her day by Rita Mae Brown
Time, you thief	Jenny Kiss'd Me by Leigh Hunt
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I— I took the one less travelled by And that has made all the difference	The Road not taken by Robert Frost

Read the following poem

37.CHARLES SIMIC

Charles Simic

Charles Simic is a sentence.

A sentence has a beginning and an end.

Is he a simple or compound sentence?

It depends on the weather,
It depends on the stars above. 5

What is the subject of a sentence?
The Subject is your beloved Charles Simic.

How many verbs are there in the sentence?
Eating, sleeping and fucking are some of its verbs.

What is the object of the sentence? 10
The object, my little ones,
Is not yet in sight.

And who is writing this awkward sentence?
A blackmailer, a girl in love,
And an applicant for a job. 15

Will they end with a period or a question mark?
They'll end with an exclamation point and an ink spot.
(in Poulain, 2006)

Questions:

1. Whose voice is speaking in this poem?
2. What is being compared in the poem
3. Identify types of metaphor in this poem and care to explain.
4. In what way does the metaphors help to understand the message the poem wants to convey

OTHER FIGURES OF SPEECH

*The little buried mole continues blind,
Why flesh that mirror Him must someday die,*
(Yet do I Marvel by Countee Cullen)

Despite comparison makes up almost the entire realm of figures of speech, yet poets also use other figures of speech in their work. Reading the quotation above, we can't help but questioning about how only flesh that dies instead of whole body or person?

3 Metonymy

Such is an instance of metonymy or the situation in which, according to Meng and Seng (1965), a thing is not called by its own name the way we should have name it but by the name of the thing which resembles it or closely related to it (p. 108). To put in a simpler term, metonymy is the substitution of one name for another which is closely associated with it. In the case of *Yet do I Marvel* the word *flesh* is used to designate the notion of *body*.

Here are some good examples of metonymy¹:

I'm reading <i>Shakespeare</i>	It means that the speaker is reading plays or poems written by William Shakespeare.
She loves <i>Picasso</i>	It means she loves the painting of Picasso, not the painter himself.
Does he own any <i>Hemingway</i>?	It is a question whether one

¹ The content of the table is wholly adopted from Kovecses (2010: 172) however any explanation on the content belong to the writer

owns any books or stories written by Ernest Hemingway, American great writer.

America doesn't want another *Pearl Harbor* This statements means America as a country does not want to suffer another military defeat in war the way they lost Pearl Harbor to Japan.

Washington is negotiating with Moscow It means that the government of the United States of America, which is based on the city of Washington, is entering a negotiation with the government of Russia, which is based in the city of Moscow.

Nixon bombed Hanoi It means the U.S.A in which Richard Nixon was the president attacked Hanoi, Vietnam.

Read the following poem

38.To Lucasta, Going to the Wars

Richard Lovelace

Tell me not (Sweet) I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase, 5
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace

A sword, a horse, a shield.
Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore; 10
I could not love thee (Dear) so much,
Lov'd I not Honour more.
(in Kirsznner & Mandell. 2000)

Questions:

1. What are things we can associate with *chaste breast and quite mind*?
2. What is the metonymy the speakers use to describe war?
3. In this poem we can notice two contradicting atmospheres being described.

What is the role of metonymy used in the poem to create such an effect?

4 Synecdoche

The western wave was all aflame
(*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor
Coleridge)

Synecdoche is a kind of metonymy in which a part of a thing is used to stand for the whole or vice versa. Like what we have in the excerpt from Coleridge in which *wave* is used to stand for sea. Just like other tropes, synecdoche is also not the exclusive property of poetry. In other words we can find plentiful synecdoche in our day-to-day's use of language like in songs, speeches, advertisements even news.

Here are some examples of synecdoche:

Lend me your hand	This is a request for some help. In this case, somebody gives some help not just by literally lending her hands but also her entire presence. The word 'hands' is enough to represent the help because anatomically hands the organs designed to do many activities.
Lands ho. All <i>hands</i> on deck! (Treasure Island --Louise Stevenson)	The word 'hands' means the crews of the ship
Take thy <i>face</i> hence (Macbeths-William Shakespeare)	This imperative is to ask somebody to get out of the scene.
Get on the <i>wheel!</i>	This is an imperative to get on to a vehicle. Vehicles, especially modern ones, always have wheels to enable them to move.
English is my <i>bread and butter</i> .	English is the speaker's means to earn a living. Bread and butter are a part of human diet or food which is procured with money or some work.
I've got lots of <i>hired hands</i>	Hired hands means employees or paid workers
Dick the Shepherd blow his <i>nail</i> (Winter-William Shakespeare)	In this case, the shepherd does not only blow his nail but also his hand, but Shakespeare focuses on nail because it shows how cold the winter is.
The world treated me badly	The speaker might have a difficult life

like his parents or other figures of authority make his life miserable. In this case the phrase 'the world' is the whole concept which is used to describe those who have wronged the speaker in life.

Read the following poem

39.Fire and Ice

Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire

I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice, 5

I think I know enough of hate

To say that for destruction ice

Is also great

And would suffice.

(In Kennedy & Gioia. 2010.)

Questions:

1. Identify synecdoche employed in this poem and explain what it represents or is it being represented by?

2. What does 'it' in line six refer to?
3. If fire is the metaphor for desire thus what is 'hate' associated with?
Explain!

5. Hyperbole and Understatement

Every time she shakes some skinny gal lose her home
(From the Distinguished Annie Clark Tanner Lecture by Maya Angelou)

*A soiled baby, with a neglected nose, cannot be conscientiously regarded as a
thing of beauty."*

(Mark Twain)

The famous excerpt from Maya Angelou's lecture is an example of hyperbole or, according to Kirszner and Mandel (2000), intentional exaggeration (p. 673). In other words, this trope enables us to say more than necessary which is never meant to deceive or manipulate but to, as other figures of speech, give special effect or emphasis. Meanwhile, an understatement is exactly the opposite of overstatement or hyperbole. Mark Twain's said less than he means when he remarked that *a soiled baby, with a neglected nose, cannot be regarded conscientiously as a thing of beauty*. It is clear that this kind of statement makes the matter less important or less serious. These two tropes are very effective, as Kirzer and Mandell (2010) put it, in attracting the attention of readers (673). In the case of hyperbole, the exaggeration will enable the poet to convey overwhelming emotion or to satirize or to inflame or to give more emphasis on things being said. Whereas understatements will lead readers to look closely or read carefully to

what is being said in the poem because the poet leaves many things unsaid which incites readers to ponder more.

Here are some examples of hyperboles and understatements:

Tis whiter than an Indian Pipe—Emily Dickinson

An hundred years should go to praise

Thine eye and on thy forehead gaze;

Two hundred to adore each breast;

But thirty thousand to the rest----*To his Coy Mistress* by Andrew Marvell

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach----*How do I love Thee* by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

She lived unknown, and few could know

When Lucy ceased to be:

But she is her grave, and oh,

The difference to me!—*She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways* by William Wordsworth

One could do worse than be a swinger of birches – *Birches* by Robert Frost

The grave's a fine and private place,

But none I think, do there embrace—*To his Coy Mistress* by Andrew Marvel

Read the following poem

40. This is just to Say

William Carlos William

I have eaten

the plum

That were in
the ice box

and which 5
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

forgive me
they were delicious 10
so sweet
and so cold

(in Kennedy & Gioia. 2010.)

41.A Red, Red Rose

Robert Burns

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie,
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass, 5
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun; 10
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!
And fare-thee-weel, a while!
And I will come again, my Luve, 15
Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile!

(in Gioia, 2010)

Questions:

1. Identify examples of hyperbole and understatements in the poems above!
2. Why do William and Burns use hyperbole and understatement in their poems?
3. Do the figurative languages effect the meaning of the whole poem?

6. Personification

42, The Mouse

Elizabeth Coatsworth

*I hear a mouse
Bitterly complaining
In a crack of moonlight
Aslant on the floor*

(in Philips. 1996)

In this poem, we find out that a mouse personifies human. Such is the example of personification, a trope in which human feelings or characters are attributed to non-human objects (Barnet and Cain. 2003. p: 210). While, Main and

Seng (1965) asserts that personification is also a kind of metaphor in which of the two things being compared one member is a human being (p. 112). Like other figures, personification is also extensively used in our daily speech like when we refer to the power of money we use the statement ‘money talks’; or we warn our friends that ‘the wall has ears’ when it comes to talking about secrets.

Here are some good examples of personification quoted from selected poems:

Memory, that exquisite blunderer,	Amy Clampit
There’s Wrath who has learnt every trick of guerilla war fare, The shaming dead, the night-raid, the feinted retreat	W.H. Auden
Hope, thou bold taster of delight.	Richard Crashaw
The alarm clock meddling in somebody’s sleep	Brooks
Go, lovely rose	Edmund Waller
Let’s get back to the Malaysian sun which is now trying to behave like a European sun	Malaysian Sun Misbehaves by Omar Mohd Noor
I wish that gold would work real soon	Good Luck Gold by Jane S.

Read the following poem

43.The Storm

Sara Coleridge (children verse)

See lightning is flashing,
The forest is crashing,
The rain will come dashing,
A flood will be rising anon;
The heavens are scowling,
The thunder is growling,
The loud winds are howling,
The storm has come suddenly on!

But now the sky clears,
The bright sun appears,
Now nobody fears,
But soon every cloud will be gone

(In Philips.1996)

Questions:

1. Explain about the stages of the storm described in this poem!
2. What is the effect which is created by personification used in this poem unto readers' perception of the storm?

D. For Review and Further Studies

In this section you will be reading several poems especially selected to figuratively entice you to flex your figurative languages muscle. To make things less complicated and frightening these are some useful tips to help you recognize figures of speech used in poem. These strategies are developed by Elder (2004) and will be wholly adopted in this book. Thus, to recognize:

1. Simile and metaphor: is the author making a comparison between two seemingly dissimilar things?
 - Watch for the clue words *like* and *as* in similes.
 - Determines two things that are being compared and decide in what important way they might be alike.
2. Hyperbole: Is the author using an obvious exaggeration?
 - Determine what the exaggeration is?
 - Decide what point the author is trying to make or what effect is the author trying to achieve with the exaggeration.
3. Personification: Is the author attributing human characteristics to non-human or non living things?
 - Determine non-human or non-living things which are being given human characteristics.
 - Determine which human characteristics are being used.
 - Decide the points the author is trying to make.
4. Metonymy: Is the author using one thing to represent something else?
 - Determine what idea or object the closely related term or symbol represents.

- Determine what abstract concept a concrete term is used to represent.
5. Synecdoche²: is the author using a part of thing to represent the whole thing?
- Determine the idea or object that is used as the representation of the thing.
 - Determine the whole thing which is being represented.

Let's see the following poem

44. THE EPITAPH

Thomas Gray

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
 A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
 Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
 And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
 Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
 He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
 He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose)
 The bosom of his Father and his God

(in Kirsznner & Mandell. 2000)

² Elder does not provide a strategy to recognize synecdoche, thus the writers develop the strategy for that purpose. The strategy is adapted from Elder's strategy for metonymy.

Questions:

1. What are the prominent figures of speech identifiable in this poem?
2. What does the phrase *the lap of Earth* mean or what is the association that we might attach to it?

45.The Secret Sits

Robert Frost (Gioia)

We dance round in a ring and suppose,
But the Secret sits in the middle and knows

(In Kennedy & Gioia. 2010.)

Questions:

1. Identify tropes employed in this poem!
2. Care to explain why Frost writes the word 'Secret' in the capital letter?
3. In this poem we can imply that there is no such thing as secret because somebody or something must know about the thing being kept secret. How does this poem describe this implication?

46.Simile for her Smile

Richard Wilbur (Barnet tebal)

Your smiling, or the hope, the thought of it,
Makes in my mind such pause and abrupt ease
as when the highway bridgegates fall,
Balking the hasty traffic, which must sit
on each side massed and staring, while
Deliberately the drawbridge starts to rise

Then horns are hushed, the oilsmoke rarifies,
Above the idling motors one can tell
The packer's smooth approach, the slip,
Slip of the silken river past the sides,
The ringing of clear bells, the dip
And slow cascading of the paddle wheel.

(In Barnet, et.al. 2004)

Questions:

1. What we have in this poem is an extended comparison between two essentially dissimilar things. What are being compared and in what way does the comparison is extended?
2. Decide whether the comparison technique used is metaphor or simile or in such a way both? Care to explain!

47. To my Dear and Loving Husband

Anne Bradstreet (Kirzner)

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee:
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can,
I prize thy love more than whole Mine of gold 5
Or all the riches and the East doth hold.
My love is that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay
The heavens reward thee manifold I pray 10

Then while we live, in love let's so preserver,
That when we live no more, we may live forever
(In Kirszner & Mandell 2000)

Questions:

1. In what way does the hyperbole used in this poem describe the magnitude of the wife's love toward her husband?
2. Identify other dominant figures of speech used in this poem?
3. In what way do other tropes lend more emphasis to describe the depth of her love to her husband?

48. Love without Hope

Robert Graves (Children)

Love without hope, as when the young bird-catcher
Swept off his tall hat to the Squire's own daughter,
So let the imprisoned larks escape and fly
Singing about her head, as she rode by
(In Philips, (ed.).1996)

Questions:

1. What we have in this poem is an extended comparison between two essentially dissimilar things. What are being compared and in what way does the comparison is extended?
2. How does Graves convey the hopelessness of love without hope?

49. Skyscrapers

Rachel Field (Children)

Do Skyscrapers ever grow tired
Of holding themselves up high?
Do they ever shiver on frosty nights
With their tops against the sky?
Do they feel lonely sometimes,
Because they have grown so tall? 5
Do they ever wish they could just lie down
And never get up at all?

(In Philips. (ed.) 1996)

Questions:

1. This poem relies heavily on personification. Which element of the skyscrapers being described by the personification in this poem?
2. What is the effect of personification to the meaning of the whole poem?
3. Write down your respon.

UNIT 5
SYMBOL AND ALLEGORY

A. OBJECTIVE

1. identify Symbol and Allegory
2. Explain the different symbol from Allegory
3. reveal the meaning in the poem through symbol
4. reveal the meaning in the poem through Allgory
5. Analyze the meaning of the poem by using symbol or Allegory

B. SNAPSHOT

50. The Sick Rose

William Blake (1757-1827)

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm.

Has found out thy bed 5
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy

(in Perrine and Arp 1992)

Questions

1. Which words do you think as a symbol? Why?
2. What figures of language do you find beside the symbol?

3. How do they contribute to the meaning of the poem?
4. How many symbol do you find here?
5. How do the symbols here effect the meaning of the whole poem?

C. SYMBOL

*Symbols are the bridging language between
the visible and the invisible world.*

Angelis Arrien (in Guth abnd Rico 1997)

As human being, our lives are surrounded by symbol. We all know the commonly language of the symbol. For instance, the dove is a symbol of peace, hands jointed in a handshake declare brotherhood. Broken chain is the symbol of freedom. The sun can be the symbol of enlightment or the power. Even the colour can be used as a symbol such as, the Green may refer to the beginning of life cycle, naive or inexperience, vitality, even cool.

The poets use the symbol in their poem with a certain purpose. Symbols vary in the degree of identification and definition given by the poets. The symbol according to Perrine and Arp (1992) may be roughly defined as something that means more than what it is. It is the riches and at the same time the most difficult of the poetic figures. Both its richness and its difficulty result from its impression. Thus even the poets already stick to a certain meaning, the readers may catch more and suggest a great variety of specific meanings. The poem *The Sick Rose* by William Blake, above, seems to have two general symbols, *rose* and *worm*. Its language is so powerful that *rose* and *worm* is not just the relation between a *flower* and the *insect*. The rose may stand for something beautiful, desirable, adorable or good. Nevertheless the worm stands for something bad, undesirable, or corrupting agent. Therefore the *rose* is not necessary the symbol of a woman only while the *worm* is not for a man as her secret love. They must be something closed each other, spend the time together supported by the word *crimson joy*.

However the word *art sick* reveals the meaning that it was ended by a tragedy. The rose may also refer to a youth who died because of drug addiction. The worm can be also the symbol of death. Thus the meaning can be referred to how the beautiful life is destroyed by the jealousy or deceit, or drug. This is common found in the reality when someone life is ruined just by the rubbish things. It is impossible to know what exactly the meaning of symbols in the poets' mind. The symbol is so rich in meaning that need to be interpreted carefully. Though the meaning of symbols vary and are open, it does not mean that the readers are free to choose the meaning of symbols like what they want. All the interpretation of a symbolic poem should be tied firmly to the facts found in the poem. As the readers, you must not loose the string in the poem. Do not just go flying in your mind.

In a line with Perrine and Arp, Guth and Rico (1997) state that a symbol is something that you can see but that has taken on a meaning beyond itself. Powerful symbols activate a network of associations. The symbol is not static, it means it may a little bit change along with the changing of time, and periode. Guth and Rico add that the poets tend to use and adapt the traditional one, but they will also often give new symbolic significance to objects and events. Thus the readers are suggested to read the meaning of the symbol out of the poem. When the language of symbols becomes too conventional, the poets help it change a little bit so that it is fresh again. A long with the advance of technology, people may use the technology goods as a symbol to explain something relates to the life in modern life.

The following poem also attracts the readers' attention into the *rose* and the *water*. Both of these words has rich in symbolic and associations. The rose tends to be meaned something good, beauty and love. While the water means the source of life, and creat the oasis in a desert or rock, or something people need. Thus what are the symbolic rose and water in this poem?

51. To One Steeped in Bitterness

Denise Levertov (1964)

Nail the rose
to your mind's door
like a rat, a thwarted chickenhawk.
Yes, it has had its day.

And the water 5
poured for you
which you disdain to drink
yes, throw it away

Yet the fierce rose
stole nothing 10
from your cooped heart,
nor plucked your timid eye;
and from inviolate rock
the liquid light
was drawn, that's dusty now 15
and your lips dry

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

The readers do not only find a number of symbolic objects but also symbolic gestures. Besides, the readers can imagine how someone was offered the rose to be nailed in the door. At the same time he/she was offered the water to drink. But they are refused. This invites the interpretation more than just what the speaker says. This may reveal the attitudes or a state of mind. *Pouring the water* may mean friendship or hospitality while *to refuse it* may mean the opposite, hostility. Perrine and Arp add that there is no clear cut between image, metaphor, and symbol so that it is difficult to distinguish. However in general it can be said that **image means what it is, methaphor means something other than what it is, and the symbol means something more than what it is.** A symbol may function literally and figuratively at the same time.

Questions

1. What is likely to be the symbolic meaning of the rose?
2. How does the imagery from the words “ mind’s door”, in the secod line and the word “ cooped heart” in line 11th help you understand the meaning?
3. What is likely to be the symbolic meaning of the water?
4. How does the imagery from the word “ disdain to drink” in the line 7th and “liquid light” line 14th and ”drawn” line 15th help you understand the meaning?
5. What are the effect of symbolic and imagery to the whole meaning of the poem?

The following poem is written by Vachel Lindsay, who loves democracy. This poem is dedicated to Illinois reformer John Altgeld who was originally a judge in Chicago. He was the one who proclaimed that the workers sent to prison for their part in the Haymarket Riot of 1886, a major event in the labor movement, had been convicted unfairly. He was attacked by business owners, media and was even prevented his re-election. (Opaskar and Trost 1998)

52. The Eagle That Is Forgotten

Vachel Lindsay (1879- 1931)

Sleep softly.....eagle forgotten.....under the stone.

Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.

“We have buried him now,” thought you foes, and in secret rejoiced.

They made a brave show of their mourning, their hatred unvoiced.

They had snarled at you, barked at you, foamed at you day after day. 5

Now you were ended. They praised you,..... and laid you away.

The others that mourned you in silence and terror and truth,

The widow bereft of her crust, and the boy without youth,

The mocked and the scorned and the wounded, the lame and the poor

That should have remembered forever.....remember no more. 10

Where are those lovers of yours, on what name do they call

The lost, that in armies wept over your funeral pall?

They call on the names of a hundred high-valiant ones,

A hundred white eagles have risen the sons of your sons,

The zeal in their wings is a zeal that your dreaming began 15

The valor that wore out your soul in the service of man.

Sleep softly,.....eagle forgotten,under the stone,

Time has its way with you there and the clay Has its own.

Sleep on, O brave-hearted, O wiseman, that kindled the flame-----

To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name, 20

To live in mankind, far more..... than to live in a name.

(in Opaskar and Trost 1998)

There are many poetic devices, beside symbols help you analyzing this poem. such as repetition, imagery and figurative language and the speaker in a certain occasion and the tone.

Questions

1. The speaker first focuses on *Eagle*, but then move to human being emphasize by the word *braved –hearted*, and *wise man*. Why do you think it happens? What is the aim exactly?
2. The words *sleep softly* and *eagle forgotten* are repeated twice. What does text want to emphasize precisely?
3. What are really the symbols here? How is the effect of using symbol to the meaning of the poem?
4. How the imagery and other figurative language impact to the whole meaning of the poem?

Something that should be noted is some poets develop a symbolic language of their own that makes it private. However it is meaningful and it can help us understand especially when we learn more about the poets or read more poems by the same poets. Study the poems below by using poetic devices. Pay attention to the symbols used by the poets

53. A House of Rock

Dorothea Rosa Herliany (Indonesian)

in hundreds of years time, perhaps, my house will remain
a rock. floors of mud down

our naked, sore feet.
writing-desks are wedged
into our mouths, our hands 5
are locked in handcuffs

our thoughts could be fields of flowers: as beautiful
as the rainbow!

we enter the door to cross rivers.
the sun is glued over our roofs: arrogance 10
will not melt away. It will mix
with the mud

clever people draw letters
in our souls.
clever people write sick poems 15
in our minds.

clever people type them
on the rippling wind, tape them
onto their fat bellies.

my house : will be a house of rock. 20

(translated by Harry Aveling in Kill The Radio 2001)

54. How's dat

Benjamin Obadia Iqbal Zephaniah

No Sir

I don't play Cricket,

One time I try

Fearing a duck

I watch de ball fly towards me, 5

I recall every spin

An unforgettable air speed,

It bounced before me

Just missing a two day old ant,

Up it cum 10

A red flash

Lick me finger so hard

I thought me finger would die

Teacher tell me

I am good at cricket, 15

I teel teacher

I am not,

Teacher tell me

We luv cricket,

I tell teacher 20

Not me,

I want Trigonometry
Fe help me people,
Teacher tell me
I am a born Cricket, 25
But I never (well only once),
I don't play cricket.
(in Talking Turkeys. 1994)

D. ALLEGORY

Allegory is a kind of figurative language close to the symbol. Guth and Rico mention that in Allegory, symbols work together in a set pattern. Each of the symbol play its own role but they are realted eache other. In the poem *Uphill*, for instance, according to Guth and Rico, *the road, the hill, the inn, the darkness of day, the traveler and th other wayfares* plan its own role in the allegorical vision to show our spiritual journey to our final destination. Then poet seems to use religion for inspiration

Let's study the poem

55. Uphill

Christina Rosseti (1830-1894)

Does the road wind uphill all the way?

Yes to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend

But is there for the night a resting place?

5

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face

You can not miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before. 10

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at the door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labor you shall find the sum. 15

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Who are the two speakers in this poem?
2. What is the meaning of each symbol in this allegory?
3. What is the effect of this allegory to the whole meaning?
4. What makes the poem be outstanding in the nineteenth century manner?

Furthermore Perrine and Arp add that Allegory is a narrative or description that has the second meaning behind the surface. The real meaning is implicit, not stated clearly. Allegory has been defined as sometimes as an extended metaphor, sometimes as a series of related symbol. In fact it is different from metaphor and symbol. In Allegory there is one to one relation between the details and the single

set of implicit meaning. But the meaning tend to be definite. Allegory is less populer in modern literature and it is much less found in short poems. Thus allegory tend to be a series of symbol that related to each other so that the meaning can be revealed from the poem.

Study the following poems

56. Refugee Ship

Lorna Dee Cervantes (1981)

Like wet cornstarch, I slide
past my grandmother's eyes. Bible
at her side, she removes her glasses

The pudding thickens.

Mama raised me without language,

5

I'm orphaned from my Spanish name.

The words are foreign, stumbling

on my tongue. I see in the mirror

My refelction: bronzed skin, black hair.

I feel I'm captive

10

aboard the refugee ship.

The ship that will never dock.

El barco que nunca atraca

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Do the word *constarch* and *Bible* have symbolic meaning?
2. What does the speaker mean by “ *raised me without language* and an *orphaned*?”
3. What did the mirror tell the speaker?
4. What does it mean “ *The ship that never dock*’
5. What makes the refugee ship the symbol of the experience of million refugee in the world?

57.Wind and Water and Stone

Octavio Paz (1979)

The water hollowed the stone,
the wind dispersed the water,
the stone stopped the wind.
Water and wind and stone

The wind sculpted the stone 5
the stone is a cup of water,
the water runs off and is wind.
Stone and wind and water.

The wind sings in its turnings,
the water murmurs as it goes, 10

the motion less stone is quiet

Wind and water and stone

One is the other, and is neither:

among their empty names

they pass and disappear, 15

water and stone and wind

(translated by Mark Strand in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Do you think wind, water and stone are symbolic in Allegory?
2. What is their possible symbolic significance?
3. Why does the order of the three words vary in each stanza?
4. What is the effect of allegory to the meaning of the poem?

Poems for further study. Pay attention to the use of symbol or Allegory

58. My God! Your God!

Benjamin Zephania

So dis is de state dat your kind dreamt about?,

An after yu beating is dis yu way out,

Cause I was a witness, now I want to shout,

Explain to me, who is YOUR GOD?

Yu dreamt of a homeland, well others dream too, 5

De fruit was forbidden an now yu can't chew,

How can yu do dis, in de past it was you,

Is dis in de name of YOUR GOD?

Does YOUR GOD love children

Does YOUR GOD love peace 10

Could YOUR GOD bring justice to de Middle East,

Does YOUR GOD love anyone whatever dere kind,

Is YOUR GOD dis brutal, or is YOUR GOD blind?,

An is YOUR GOD willing to talk to nation,

Or did YOUR GOD come here to wipe out creation 15

My questions are childlike but I'm in confusion,

My question is,

Where is YOUR GOD?

(in Talking Turkeys 1994)

59. DEMOCRACY

Langston Hughes

Democracy will not come

Today, this year
 Nor ever
 Through compromise and fear

I have as much right 5
 As the other fellow has
 To stand
 On my two feet
 And own the land

I tire of hearing people say, 10
 Let things take their course.
 Tomorrow is another day
 I do not need my freedom when I'm dead
 I cannot live on tomorrow's bread

 Freedom 15
 Is a strong seed
 In a great need

I live here, too
 I want freedom
 Just as you. 20

(in Academy of American Poets org. 2013)

Unit 6

Paradox and Irony

A. OBJECTIVES

1. identify the paradox and Irony in the poem
2. identify the kind of irony in the poem
3. distinguish Paradox from irony
4. to reveal the meaning of the poem by using Paradox and Irony
5. analyze the poem by using Paradox and Irony

B. SNAPSHOT

60. A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

William Wordsworth (1800)

A slumber did my spirit seal;

I had no human fears:

She seemed a thing that could not feel

The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;

She neither hears nor sees;

Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,

With rocks, stones and trees.

(In Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Identify a contradiction between the first stanza and the second one?
2. Does the contradiction effect the meaning?
3. How do the words *No motion, no force, no hear and no sees*, emerge the meaning in this stanza
4. What is the speaker's purpose and what is the poem's purpose

C. PARADOX

Life is bounded by wonder on one side and terror on the other.

Sam keen (in Guth anf Rico 1997)

As a human beings, we sometimes face the condition which are contradiction in life. Let's say for instance, we feel lonely in a crowd. We feel alone while we are in the midst of a group of people. This contradiction situation makes sense on second thought. The physical presence of others around us is not enough, what we need is people who care and understand us. This condition is a paradox in life. It seems it is not true, but when we think carefully this condition may really happen, where we really do not enjoy the situation. Thus we may live with the paradox.

The poem *A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal* shows the apparent condition. The second line */I had no human fears:/* in the first stanza, explains that *I* is the one who may be an activist, so that she is brave to face a hard situation. However the first line in the second stanza */ No motion has she now, no force;/*gives opposite situation. This is supported by the second line */she neither hears, nor sees/*. This condition helps us, as the readers, think that there must something happen to her. She may be still alive but she could not do anything like before. The last two lines emphasize that she is not active anymore. Ironically she even does not know herself. Since she is a woman, the power group banned her so that she can not voice her idea anymore. She may even forget who she is before. The

apparent contradiction in the poem are able to help the readers to reveal the meaning behind the text. In other words, paradox helps the readers to analyze the poem by digging the implicit meaning.

Thus what is a paradox?. Here are the definitions of a paradox in literary works. Perrine and Arp (1992) mentions that paradox is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. It may be either situation or a statement. And as a figure of speech, paradox is a statement. While Guth and Rico (1992) say that a paradox is an apparent contradiction that begins to make sense on the second thought. It challenges us to keep more than one idea in mind at the same time. A paradox asks us to puzzle over the apparent contradiction and to balance off the conflicting points of view. In short, a paradox is used to make readers think that there is something behind the statement that should be considered.

The poets use the paradox to attract the attention, and make the readers consider what they read. There are many ideas that are not stated explicitly, especially in a poem. Let's say it is about love. The poet may show love a paradoxical emotion, such as joy and pain or hope and despair.

Let's see the poem below

61. I Have Come to the Conclusion

Nelle Fertig (born 1919)

I have come to the conclusion
She said
that when we fall in love
we really fall in love with ourselves-----
that we choose particular people
because they provide 5
the particular mirrors
in which we wish to see.

And when did you discover
This surprising bit of knowledge?

He asked. 10

After I had broken a few

Very fine mirrors

She said.

(in Guth and Rico 1997)

Questions

1. Can you find the paradox in the poem?
2. What is paradoxical?
3. What words help you to think about paradox?
4. What is your respon to the poem?
5. How is the paradox found in the poem help you analyze the poem.

62.We Wear The Mask

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872- 1906)

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes---

This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

5

Why should the world be otherwise,

In counting all our tears and sighs?

Nay, let them only see us, while

We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries 10

To thee from tortured souls arise.

We sing, but oh the clay is vile

Beneath our feet, and long the mile;

But let the world dream otherwise,

We wear the mask! 15

(in Madden 2002)

Questions

1. What is paradoxical here?
2. Who is “we” the speaker refers to?
3. How does the paradox influence the meaning?

The poem for further study

63. Our land

Langstone Hughes

We should have a land od sun,

of gorgeous sun.

And a land of fragrant water

Where the twilight is soft.

Bandoon hankerchief 5

of rose and gold.

And not this land

where the life is cold

We should have a land of trees

of all thick trees 10

Bowed down with chattering parrots.

And not this land where birds are gray

64.America

Claude McKay (1889-1984)

Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,

And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth

Stealing my breath of life, I will confess

I love this cultured hell that tests my youth!

Her vigor flows like tides into my blood, 5

Giving me strength erect against her hate.

Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood,

Yet as a rebel fronts a king in state,

I stand within her walls with not a shred

Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer.

10

Darkly I gaze into the days ahead,

And see her might and granite wonders there,

Beneath the touch of Time's unerring hand,

Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand

(in Madden 2002)

D. IRONY

As a human being, we sometimes do not want to tell directly what we see, how we feel and think. We tend to choose a certain word to express it. For instance, a lecturer announced your examination result. All the students waited curiously. The lecturer came and said: "I regret to say that all of you... pass and got A's and B's". This statement does not mean to hurt you or to be cruel. This is simply a device. The lecturer is just being ironic, he/she used it for a certain purpose of course.

Like paradox, *Irony* is capable of adding extra dimensions to meaning. It can communicate a great deal more than what is said. The example above shows what the lecturer meant is opposite with what he really said to his students. This is what the expert calls Verbal Irony. According to Guth and Rico (1997) *Verbal Irony* is a contrast between what we say and what we really mean. It is different from sarcasm and satire. Both of these figuratives are used to ridicule. Sarcasm is really aimed to cut the speech and intended to wound the feeling of the other. It is cruel and it tends to give hurt. While Satire is often found in literary works. Yet Irony is neither cruel nor kind. Verbal irony has the gradation, and this gradation depends on the different ways and degrees of emphasis.

Read the following poem.

65. *broken and beirut*

Suheir Hammad

no mistake made here
these murder are precise
mathematical
these people blown apart burn alive
flesh and blood all mixed together 5
a sigh no human being can take

don't know what to do with visions
of blown up babies so we
lame nails and lame tongue
which should protest 10
love those who can not
love us hate ourselves and become
obsessed wth puzzles

(in *The Poetry of Arab women* 2001)

How do you feel when you read this poem? there is a contradiction in it. The speaker in this poem is being ironic. He / she says that there is no mistake. It means it is done perfectly. How could murder be not a mistake especially to innocent people? The last two lines emphasize that the condition is horrible and sadism since we do not know whether the crops is human or not. It is really cruel where the *people blown up* and *burn alive* because of the bom even the missile. Thus the poem expresses that human right has already gone. It is so easy for people to kill each other without thinking that there is a right to life.

The second stanza also shows how naive the people are in this condition. Do they really not know how to do? Or are they apathetic since they already lose hope. It is a tragic to see the babies die unlogically. The third line “lame nails and lame tongue” make the readers think that the speaker wants to say something more than what he /she want to say. *Nail* is a sharp tool while tongue may also be sharp. Unfortunately both of this object are *lame*. In other word they are unable to function properly. The poet uses the word *nail* instead of Human being. How could human being has no reaction toward horrible thing in front of their eyes. There must be superior thing that force them to keep silent. It is really ironic where people are hopeless in facing the horrible world even they have to accept it.

However verbal irony may lead you to misunderstood. But if it happens the readers may go far away or may go with the opposite idea from what the text means. That is why the poet who uses the irony must be someone a skillful one in its use.

Another irony is known as Dramatic. This form of irony is more complex therefore the respon from the readers are expected to be more complex too. Dramatic irony according to Perrine and Arp (1992) is that the discrepancy is not between what the speaker says and what the speaker means but it is between what the speaker says and what the poem means. In other word, the choice of words applied by the poet in the poem may emerge the different ideas for the readers from what the speaker articulates, By reading the words the readers may come to a certain perception, or ideas which is different from what the speaker is voicing.

Read the following poem.

66.The Chimney Sweeper

William Blake (1757-1827)

When my mother dies I was very young,

And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry "weep! weep! weep!, 'weep!'
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head, 5
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,
"Hush, Tom! Never mind it, for, when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair,"

And so he was quite, and that very night,
As Tom was asleep, he had such a sight! 10
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And By came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins and them all free;
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run, 15
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;

And the Angle told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy. 20

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

(in Perrine and Arp 1992)

This is the situation in eighteenth century where the boy in four or five years old worked to clean up the chimneys of a rich people. They are sold by their parents to their master and got a very bad treatment. They sometimes suffer disease.

Questions

1. How does the speaker attitudes toward his life that different from others?
2. How are the meaning of line 3, 7-8 and 24 effect the meaning of the poem?
3. What irony that you find in the poem?
4. How is your respon to the lines “ were all of them locked up in coffins of black”?
5. What does the poem tell you exactly?

67.Immigrants

Pat Mora (1942)

wrap their babies in the American flag

feed them mashed hot dogs and apple pie
name them Bill and Daisy
buy them blonde dolls that blink blue
eyes or a football and tiny cleats 5
before the baby can even walk,
speak to them in thick English,
hallo, babee, hallo,
whisper in Spanish or Polish
when the babies sleep, whisper 10
in a dark parent bed, that dark
parent fear, “Will they like
our boy, our girl, our fine American
boy, our fine American boy, our American girl?”

(in Madden 2002)

Questions

1. How does the speaker's attitude toward the life they face?
2. What makes them confused after what they have done to their children?
3. What kind of irony, verbal or dramatic irony that you find in the poem?
4. How do the last three lines affect your response?
5. What does the poem tell you exactly?

The third one is called Irony of situation. Guth and Rico (1997) say that irony of situation is a contrast between what we expect and what really happens.

Everyone knows the story of Titanic, the luxurious unsinkable ship in early nineteenth century. The ship is believed as a unsinkable. However it went down and lost thousands people in it first trip. Many people did not believe it since the ship was a new and sophisticated. In literary works we often find the irony of situation.

Pay attention to the following poem

68.Garden of Stone

Michael Kaner (1998)

He wiped away the snow
and laid down a single rose
Thinking of what might have been,
and pain only the bereaved knows.

Another fear falls in a garden of stone..... 5

He could have been president.
a ballplayer or won a Nobel prize
But it 'll never come to be,
and we'll never look into his eyes.

They said it was routine. 10
Don't worry, we do it every day
But something went oh so wrong

now they don't know what to say

Another tear falls in a garden of stone.....

We watched the tubes and wires, 15
and they said that he was gone
A life snuffed out too early,
never to see another dawn

Another tear falls
in the garden of stone 20
Another day passess
and they're all alone

The world gets older
but he's still two
And we dream of things 25
he 'll never do

He 'll never ride a two wheeler'

Or take a bus to school,

All we have are our memories.

we've lost our precious jewel. 30

Never play in little league

never steal a first kiss,

We think of all those things

he's going to miss

Never go to college 35

never walk down the aisle,

Never know the joys of parenthood

we miss him all the while

Another tear falls in the garden of stone

(in Academic of American Poets org. 2013)

Questions

1. Is any different between the expectation of the parents and what the fact they have to face?
2. What is the contradiction in a fourth stanza?
3. What makes it become irony? How do the child die?
4. What is the aim of the speaker to tell this condition?
5. What does the irony of situation affect the meaning of the whole poem?

69.Boy in Hospital

D.H.Melhem

Boy in a hospital

lying among suddenly ancient ruins

that join the Temple of Jupiter

at Baalbek

to the gutted apartments 5

of Beirut

its building gluttoned

with collapsing life

with bodies

like fragment of statues 10

newly classical

Boy in hospital

your olive skin has the pallor of smoke

you have had your moment's attention

there is no sanctuary here 15

there is panic here

the wounded are wounded again

How black your eyes stare into the world
that tore from you
mother father sister brother 20
tore off your legs

There was no food or water
the walls kept going down
the burning sky keep falling

Boy in a hospital 25
you are the way to Beirut
the road of pain
the road of shouting corpses
of amputated legs thrown into street
with newspapers and expectations 30

to dance the *dabke*
to share your sister's and brother's laughter
rushing up the stairs
to your apartment
to taste your mother's stuffed grape leaves 35

from the enamel pot
to run along the beach
your hand safely in your father's
(in The Poetry of Arab women 2001)

Questions

1. How is the condition of the hospital ?
2. Do you think the boy get medical help?
3. What does the line 17th “the wounded are wounded again”mean?. What does the speaker want to emphasize ?
4. The boy in hospital but the speaker say “ you are the way to beirut”. What does the speaker mean?
5. Analyze the text by using the poetic devices, the speaker, repetition, symbol if any?, Irony and the tone

Poem for further study

70. Where the Sidewalk Ends

Shel Silverstein

There is a place where the sidewalk ends
And before the street begins
And there the grass grows soft and white,
And there the sun burns crimson bright,
And the moon-bird rests from his flight 5
To cool in the peppermint wind.

Let us leave this place where the smoke blows black
And the dark street winds and bends,
Past the pits where the asphalt flowers grow
We shall walk with a walk that is measured and slow. 10
And watch where the chalk-white arrows go
To the place where the sidewalk ends.

Yes we'll walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
And we'll go where the chalk-white arrows go,
For the children, they mark, and the children, they know 15
The place where the sidewalk ends

(in Madden 2002)

71. America

Robert Creely (1926.....)

America, you ode for reality!

Give back the people you took.

Let the sun shine again
on the four corners of the world

you thought of first but do not 5
own, or keep like a convenience.

People are your own word, you
invented that locus and term.

Here, you said and say, is
Where we are. Give back 10

What we are, these people you made,
Us, and nowhere but you to be.

(in Academic of American Poets org. 2013)

7. ANTHALOGY POEM

For Further Study

Here are some poems written by the Women from different countries and cultures. They are written surely for special purpose. Apply all skills and poetic devices you have learned in this book to analyze the poems below.

72. ghaflah- the sin of forgetfulness

DIMA HILAL (LEBANON)

born by the mediterranean
our mothers bathe us in orange-blossom water
olive trees and cedars
strain to give us shade
we come to america where they call our land 5
the East meaning different/dark/ dirty
we soon forget
our grandmothers combed hair like ours
we wish our hair blonde our eyes and skin light
we know barbie 10
looks better than scheherazade
we think french makes us sophisticated so
we greet each other with bonjour instead of salaam
proud of our colonizer's tongue
we forget the Qur'an sings in arabic 15

when we arrive
our fingernails pierced the palms of our hands
we stared at pictures of our children
eye sockets carved out by rubber bullets
on the 10 o'clock news 20
our brothers and sisters spit up blood and teeth
and CBS declares them 'terrorists'

now we runs away from bruises and broken born
body counts and funeral
we know we can not help anyway 25
we forget we once stood on the same ground
they die on
we look for the arabia package by the west
we escape into clubs to watch
blonde belly 30
dancers named jasmine
sashay almost naked
we eat pasty hummous at eight dollars a plate
and tell each other
how much we miss our home 35

(in The Poetry of Arab women 2001)

73. There is another sky

Emily Dickinson (American)

There is another sky,
Ever serene and fair,
And there is another sunshine,
Though it be darkness there;
Never mind faded forests, Austin, 5
Never mind silent fields –
Here is a little forest,
Whose leaf is ever green;
Here is a brighter garden,
Where not a frost has been; 10
In its unfading flowers
I hear the bright bee hum:
Prithee, my brother,
Into my garden come!

(Kirszner and Mandell. 2000)

74. A DREAM LIES DEAD

Dorothy Parker (Australia)

A dream lies dead here. May you softly go
Before this place, and turn away your eyes,
Nor seek to know the look of that which dies
Importuning Life for life. Walk not in woe,

But, for a little, let your step be slow. 5

And, of your mercy, be not sweetly wise
With words of hope and Spring and tenderer skies.
A dream lies dead; and this all muorners know:

Whenever one drifted petal leaves the tree –
Though white of bloom as it had been before 10
And proudly waitful of fecundity-
One little loveliness can be no more;
And so must Beauty bow her imperfect head
Because a dream has joined the wishful dead!

(Kirschner and Mandell. 2000)

75. Wild Geese

Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves. 5
Tell me about despair, yours and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,

over the prairies and the deep trees, 10

the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,

are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,

The world offers itself to your imagination, 15

calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting

over and over announcing your place

in the family of things.

(Kirszner and Mandell. 2000)

76. The Struggle Staggers Us

Margaret Walker

Our birth and death are easy hours, like sleep

and food and drink. The struggle staggers us

for bread, for pride, for simple dignity.

And this is more than fighting to exist;

more than revolt and war and human odds. 5

There is a journey from the me to you.

There is a journey from the you to me.

A union of the two strange worlds must be.

Ours is a struggle from a too-warm bed;

too cluttered with a patience full of sleep. 10

Out of this blackness we must struggle of forth;
from want of bread, of pride, of dignity.
Struggle between the morning and yhe night.
This marks our years; this settles, too, our plight

(Kirszner and Mandell. 2000)

77. Touched by Angel

Maya Angelou

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight 5
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain. 10
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
rom our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light 15

we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be
Yet it is only love 20
Which sets us free
(in Gillespie, et all .1994))

78.Equality

Maya Angelou

You declare you see me dimly
through a glass which will not shine
though I stand before you bodily,
trim in rank and making time,

You do own tu hear me faintly 5
as a whisper out of range.
while my drums beat out the message
and the rhythms never change.

Equality, and I will be free
Equality, and I will be free 10

You announce my ways are wanton,
that I fly from man to man,

but if I'm just a shadow to you,
could you ever understand?

We have lived a painful history, 15
we know the shameful past,
but I keep on marching forward,
and you keep on coming last.

Equality, and I will be free.
Equality, and I will be free 20

Take the blinders from your vision,
take the padding from your ears,
and confess you've heard me crying,
and admit you've seen my tears.

Hear the tempo so compelling, 25
hear the blood throb through my veins.
Yes, my drums are beating nightly,
and the rhythms never change.

Equality, and I will be free.
Equality, and I will be free 30

(in Gillespie et al, 1994)

79. Lullaby

Dorothy Parker

Sleep, pretty lady, the night is enfolding you;
Drift, and so lightly, on crystalline streams.
Wrapped in its perfumes, the darkness is holding you;
Starlight bespangles the way of your dreams.
Chorus the nightingales, wistfully amorous; 5
Blessedly quiet, the blare of the day'
All the sweet hours may your visions be glamorous-
Sleep, pretty lady, as long as you may.

Sleep, pretty lady, the night shall be still for you;
Silvered and silent, it watches you rest. 10
Each little breeze, in its eagerness, will for you
Murmur the melodies ancient and blest.
So in the midnight does happiness capture us;
Morning is dim with another day's tears.
Give yourself sweetly to images rapturous- 15
Sleep, pretty lady, a couple of years.

Sleep, pretty lady, the world awaits day with you;
Girlish and golden, the slender young moon.
Grant the fond darkness its mystical way with you;

Morning returns to us ever too soon 20
Roses unfold, in their loveliness, all for you;
Blossom the lilies for hope of you glance.
When you're awake, all the men go and fall for you-
Sleep, pretty lady, and give me a chance.
(in Gillespie et al. 1994)

80. To My Father

Diane di Prima

In my dreams you stand among roses
You are still the fine gardener you were
You worry about mother.
You are still the fierce wind, the intolerable force
that almost broke me 5
Who forced my young body into awkward and proper clothes
Who spoke of his standing in the community.
And men's touch is still a little absurd to me
because you trembled when you touched me.
What external law were you expounding? 10
How can I take your name like prayer?
My youngest son has your eyes.
Why are you knocking at the doors of my brain?
You kept all their rules and more.

What were you promised that you cannot rest? 15

What fierce, angry honesty in the darkness?

What can you hope who had preferred my death
to the birth of my oldest daughter?

O fierce hummer of tunes

Forget, eat the black seedcake 20

In my dreams you stand at the door of your house
and weep for your wife

(in Gillespie et al. 1994)

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