

POETRY (Literature in English)

APPROACHING UNSEEN POEMS
1) <i>OVERALL MEANING</i> - Subject Matter - Style of Writing - General Mood
2) <i>DETAILED ANALYSIS — Literary Techniques</i> - Diction - Imagery - Sound Devices - Rhythm, Rhyme, Repetition - Form & Structure - and more...
3) <i>DETAILED ANALYSIS</i> - Message - Mood - Persona's or Poet's Attitude
4) <i>PERSONAL RESPONSE</i> - How literary techniques add to poem's meaning (link 2 & 3) - What is the effect on reader

LOCAL / SINGAPORE POEMS

In addition to the above, do bring in your background knowledge of local events, language, places and cultural and social issues to your reading of the local / Singapore poems in order to offer deeper insights.

To do so, pay attention to:

1) *ALLUSION* — references to names of people, places, things, titles of texts, historical events

- Literal significance or extended meaning
- Relation to theme or conflict in the poem
- How the allusion (character / thing / event) is represented

2) *VOICE* — the use of local / Singlish, vernacular terms, local inflections of the speaker or characters in the poem.

- Profile of the character & their concerns
- Purpose of the use of the voice
- Effect of the use on reader

3) *THEME* — themes that connect to the Singapore context. (e.g: social issues, local culture)

Find Singaporean poems: <https://www.poetry.sg>

QUESTION TYPES (NOT JUST POETRY)

THEME: In what way does (writer) make (<u>theme</u>) so ____ ?
TWEDYA (To what extent do you)

COMMON ADJECTIVES

STRIKING

- *Definition:* very unusual or easily noticed, and therefore attracting a lot of attention
- What makes the subject of the question *stand out from the norm*?
- What traits make the subject *pop out*?

Common devices: Imagery, Juxtaposition, Contrast, Diction

DISTURBING

- Definition: making you feel worried or upset
- What causes the subject of the question to make you (the readers) feel *uncomfortable*, *anxious*, or *alarming*?

DRAMATIC

- Definition: very sudden or noticeable, or full of action and excitement:
- What makes the subject of the question so *thrilling*, *gripping* or *vibrant*?

Common devices: Irony, Imagery, Repetition

MOVING

- Definition: causing strong feelings of sadness or sympathy;
- What makes the subject of the question so *stirring*, *inspiring* or *touching*?

Usually its relationship / passage / specific stanzas that may be moving to the reader.

LITERARY DEVICES !

Irony: a situation in which something which was intended to have a particular result has the opposite or a very different result. - Dramatic irony, situational irony...
Juxtaposition: the fact of putting things that are not similar next to each other.
Alliteration: the use, especially in poetry, of the same sound or sounds, especially consonants, at the beginning of several words that are close together.
Personification: the act of giving a human quality or characteristic to something which is not human.
Metaphor: an expression, often found in literature, that describes a person or object by referring to something that is considered to have similar characteristics to that person or object.
Simile: (the use of) an expression comparing one thing with another, always including the words "as" or "like".
Paradox: a situation or statement that seems impossible or is difficult to understand because it contains two opposite facts or characteristics.
Symbolism: the use of symbols in art, literature, films, etc. to represent ideas. - Religious symbolism
Imagery: the use of words or pictures in books, films, paintings, etc. to describe ideas or situations; visual symbolism, or figurative language that evokes a mental image or other kinds of sense impressions, especially in a literary work. (e.g Vivid imagery) Useful words & phrases when using imagery as a literary device: - <i>The poet creates an image of ____ in our mind...</i> - <i>The writer's use of ____ imagery evokes feelings of ____ in readers...</i> - <i>The poet describes the ____ as _____, giving us the impression that...</i> - <i>Through the use of such imagery, the writer suggests that...</i>
Repetition: the act of doing or saying something again - Used to emphasise importance of a theme / thing in poem.
Diction: the writer's or speaker's distinctive vocabulary choices and style of expression in a piece of writing such as a poem or story. - The poet's <i>use of</i> _____ words... - Archaic diction (diction that is antique, that is rarely used), high diction (lofty sounding language), & low diction (everyday language)

TONE
- Solemn - Sarcastic - mocking
