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English Matric Poetry notes

Feel free to add any missing information (please respect the notes) :)

Loves Farewell written by

- a breakup
- Tone: determined and clinical - sympathetic
- Irony – say there is no hope (permanence of cancel vows) yet at end say may “recover”
- Personification of Love, Faith, passion, innocence

Structure

Repetition suggests he is not determined in his choice and needs to convince himself that the love/relationship is over

- Rhyming couplets
- Elizabethan Sonnet
- Love Sonnet- lyrical
- first person pronouns are used to reinforce conversational tone

To Althea, From Prison written by

Romantic/physical love makes him freer than the Gods - love personified, gentle intimacy in imagery, **contrast between imagery of liberty and confinement (juxtaposition)**

- **P2:** love of partying with friends, physical pleasures
- **P3:** love of his king, allowed to believe (a form of freedom)
- **P4:** If you have freedom of mind you cannot be truly imprisoned (Divine suggestion)

- Anaphora – repetition of word (“when” “our” ect.) at beginning of sentence
- Linnet: caged birds which sing
- Litany: listed / repetitive / recited
- Cavalier: refined, well dressed

Structure

- Metrical structure with rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD - rigidity reflect imprisonment
- Use of repetition and anaphora start P1-3 with “when” - break in P4 (freedom through imagination)

To the Night

- Apostrophe: directly address (Spirit of the Night= personified)
- Romantic Period -use of natural imagery (Nature)
- Introspective poem - melancholy possibly depressed
- Longs for the night (free from demands of society) - dislikes the day
- Tone: yearning, longing, melancholy - urgent/ demanding

Structure

- Lyrical with flow and repetition, enjambment - rhythm
- Rhyme pattern ABABCCD

Refugee Blues

- Tone: sad, depressed, despondent - ominous
- Yew- an evergreen tree, which produces red fruit(berries). Often found in churchyards.
- Juxtaposition of wealth/living standards highlights injustice and inequality

- Colon – indicates there is more to follow/ an explanation
- Irony clearly alive but say “officially dead” (clearly not)
- Daily bread biblical allusion
- Hitler and antisemitism predict/foreshadow WW2

Structure

- Blues song – repetition of “my dear” like a chorus
- Content also fits- discuss discrimination and inequality/injustice
- Rhyme pattern

The cry of South Africa

- SA personified as a mother (the speaker): maternal imagery (poignant/nurturing) extended metaphor
- Imagery of children (innocence/joyful) juxtaposed against harsher imagery
- Give - nuance of a request vs demand
- Tone: desperate, pleading, accusatory

Structure

- Enjambment, repetition of “Give me back my dead”

Penguin on the Beach written by Group Chat

- Apartheid extended metaphor - alienated in own home
- Manikin – small man
- Commercial *stain* – colonisation → greed/exploitation → *inequality cannot be erased*

- Expostulation – earnestly protest or reason with
- Knoll – rounded hill
- Lassoos - imagery of being trapped
- Sleaving – insulate/cover
- Ineffably – unutterable / cannot be expressed
- Triumphantly sad = oxymoron
- Biblical allusion- Jesus gave fish
- Themes: alienation, apartheid, inequality, exploitation
- Protest poetry

Lost or found world

- Metaphor- eyes = curtain= theatre
- Modern honey – money - greed, capitalism
- Wishes - deeds (change/advancement)
- Theme: struggling with identity and hope – will the new generation be able to assert their identity and achieve equality/justice
- Protest poetry (joined ANC, Black Consciousness Movement, MK)– resistance, identity
- Juxtapose fragility and harshness

I have my father's voice

- “When” = present tense - past tense (reflect on childhood)
- Tone: commanding - concerned/affectionate - humorous
- Pigeon-toed – walk with toes inwards

- Bluster – loud and aggressive noise with little effect
- Synecdoche: part symbolises the whole (voice-father)
- Metonymy- name of one thing replaces the name of another closely related thing
- Soweto Poets – 1970s BCM (identity, pride, independence, self-reliance, empowerment)
- Anger=good in Apartheid context - passionate / resistance
- Bequeath – inherit a legacy of struggle
- Distinguish between them – not going to be stereotype of his father
- He has a talent with words and literary devices

Structure

- Free verse, personal confession (collapses formal boundaries)

The Tenant

- Temporary in exchange for payment - cold
- “I didn’t even evict her” – conveys disbelief, speaker not responsible for end of relationship
- Indelible- cannot be removed
- Empty space – contradiction – feels too full for another- afraid of being alone

Poet conveys how memories influence our future negatively by teaching us to be afraid of consequences.

- Evident in that there is “no room” for someone new , yet the speaker is “afraid” of the “empty space” (loneliness of a life without love).

Structure

- Enjambment, free verse, no rhyme scheme – emotions overflowing/ cannot be controlled
- Use of white spaces to show loneliness

Assassination

- Themes: violence, innocence, resistance
- Garbage, rats- demeaning/ dehumanising - lowest creatures violent scavengers
- Short lines, diction, repetition - urgency
- Ironical/ sarcastic because the King was a pacifist- won't fire back
- Accusatory – police were complicit and should have protected him
- Visually powerful, chaotic
- Simple but powerful as it aimed to connect with the people – memorable, emotive and straightforward
- Tone : ironic, critical, bitter, urgent , angry
- Anaphora- repetition at beginning of the line (they)

Structure

- Syntax = wild - grammatical rebellion
- Free verse – pace fast with rhythm

Ulysses

- Greek hero in The Odyssey – Trojan war want to return home
- Speaker – dramatic monologue, reveals characteristics
- Clever and adventurous man defined by his travels

- Dismisses aged wifey and misses travel
- Scudding – move swiftly along water
- Hyades- constellation
- Achilles – warrior also in Trojan War
- Happy Isles – heaven vibe

Structure

- Iambic pentameter
- 3 stanzas

My last duchess

- vicious, repugnant, controlling, narcissistic, power-obsessed
- enjambment
- Objectify (literally) and control wife
- Fra Pandolf -famous artist
- Officious – annoyingly helpful
- Countenance – facial expression
- Munificence- extreme generosity
- Rhyme disappears when spoken aloud because of enjambment – show duke pretend to be off the cuff but actually obsessed with control

Structure

- Dramatic monologue from duke of Ferrara
- Enjambment
- Iambic pentameter

- Rhyming couplets AABCCDD

Portrait of a loaf of bread

- Religious allusion “man cannot live on bread alone” (parody) / “daily bread”, basic need
- Reap – separate chafe and grain– link apartheid
- Scythe- Biblical intertextuality (Ruth in fields made sheaves), reaper scythe
- Lyrical vs. harsh imagery
- Contrast/ juxtaposition à luxury and indulgence to gratitude and vulnerability (scaffold) to illustrate injustice and inequality
- Ironical laugh- not funny at all

Structure

- Free verse – doesn’t abide by to conventions

Nightsong City

- Typical evening in a shanty town
- A lyric – personal and political – separated from white lover by Immorality Act
- Tone: soft and affectionate (despite harsh message) like a lullaby to SA
- Lament for violence in SA – disgusted by sordid conditions
- Anger personified
- euphemistic

Dulce et Decorum Est

- It is sweet and good to die for your country

- Shod- horseshoe on
- Ironical – ecstasy (desperate and not positive in context)
- Boys -innocence
- Repetition, diction and punctuation - urgency
- Extended metaphor of gas=green sea (suffocate=drowning)
- Cud – grass rechewed by cows
- Ardent – desperate
- Accusatory tone

Structure

- Rhyming ABAB CDC

No longer mourn for me when I am dead

- Death knoll- summoned to heaven or hell
- Cynical -mock romantics at the time
- Self effacing- modesty or humility
- Apostrophe

Structure

Line 5 “Nay, if you read this line” Line refers to the entire poem = Synecdoche

- Shakespearean sonnet – 3 quatrains and a couplet
- Iambic pentameter
- ABAB CDCD EFEF GG

The wind begun to rock the grass

- Wind and nature (leaves etc.) personified
- Violent vs gentle imagery
- Flurried rhythm as storm builds intensity
- enjambment
- livid claw – blueish leaden colour or angry (pun)
- Domestic stability vs chaotic and unpredictable nature
- Reader involved in poetic process because left unfinished
- Dashes – transition between ideas

Structure

- Free verse

Nobody loses all the time

- Idiosyncrasy of syntax – lack of punctuation with flow
- Idiosyncrasy- abnormal or non-conventional
- Vaudeville- theatre/ mixed arts in France
- Sol- sun in Spanish (ironic)
- Allegory- picture or tale with a hidden moral meaning
- Nature- rebirth and regeneration
- Typographically exuberant – feels joyful and energetic
- Highfalootin- superior
- Victor Victrola – record player

- Missouri – river

Touch

- When (not if) – hope
- Untouched- emotion; literally not used/handled; figuratively has not affected speaker's emotions
- Untouchable – immune, unreachable, isolated; social circumstances dictate who you avoid or shun
- Out of touch- with reality/life/society/loved ones; lacks up to date/rect knowledge due to being in prison
- Repetition – monotony of prison life
- Paws- animalistic, savage, dehumanisation
- Want to feel human – please - plea/desperation